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HANSARD'S

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WILLIAM IV.

49° VICTORIÆ, 1886.

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THE FIFTH DAY OF MARCH 1886,

TO

THE TWENTY-FIFTH DAY OF MARCH 1886.

SECOND VOLUME OF THE SESSION.

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—o—

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—Civil Service Estimates—

(In the Committee.)

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £31,997, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces" 479

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £23,723, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 125, Noes 240; Majority 115.—(Div. List, No. 27.)

Original Question again proposed 487

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(2.) £1,625, Marlborough House.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £112,619, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens" 493

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £62,216, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 131, Noes 114; Majority 17.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

(4.) £47,865, Houses of Parliament.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 509

(5.) £500, Gordon Monument.

(6.) £192,221, Public Buildings, Great Britain.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 529

(7.) £19,060, Furniture for Public Offices, Great Britain.

(8.) £227,464, Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.

(9.) £29,150, County Court Buildings.

(10.) £6,370, Metropolitan Police Court Buildings.

(11.) £9,360, Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Committee—*continued*:

(12.) £258,000, Surveys of the United Kingdom.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 545
(13.) £19,742, Science and Art Department Buildings.
(14.) £11,477, British Museum Buildings.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 546
(15.) £17,598, Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 547
(16.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for constructing a new Harbour at Dover" 548

After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again," —(*Mr. Rylands*:)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*; Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [8th March],

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the better regulation of Railway and Canal Traffic; and for other purposes"

Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 553

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Acland, Mr. Attorney General*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 138.]

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2) Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Burt*) .. 598

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Select Committee on Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill.

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) [REMUNERATION TO OFFICERS, &c.]—

Considered in Committee 600

Resolution *agreed to*; to be reported *To-morrow*.

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THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS—EVENING OPENING—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That a humble address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty will be pleased to direct that the National Gallery, the British Museum, and the Natural History Museum shall be open to the public weekly on three week-day evenings till 10 p.m., in order that Her Majesty's subjects whose occupations during the day prevent them from visiting these institutions may have the advantage and enjoyment of studying the national collections,"—(*The Earl of Harrowby*) .. 608

After debate, Previous Question *moved* (*The Lord President of the Council, Earl Spencer*:)—After further short debate, on Question? Previous Question *affirmed*.

Original Motion *agreed to*.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

HARBOURS OF REFUGE—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in view of the existing depression of trade, and the large number of persons out of employment, this House is of opinion that the present is a favourable time for the Government to carry out certain valuable and necessary public works, more especially the formation of Harbours of Refuge, at various points upon the Coast,"—(*Mr. Dawson,*)—instead thereof 643

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—NOTICES OF QUESTIONS—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them vivâ voce in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained,"—(*Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson,*)—instead thereof 697

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor:*)—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 51, Noes 235; Majority 181.—(Div. List, No. 29.)

Words *added:*—Original Question put, and *negatived.*

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SUPPLY—Order for Committee read—*continued.*

Resolved, That Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them vivâ voce in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply,—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—MR. HENRY M'DOUGALL, AGENT OF THE GORMANSTOWN ESTATE, CO. MEATH—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of the Government to institute a prosecution of Mr. Henry M'Dougall, agent of the Gormanstown estate in the county of Meath, Ireland, who recovered money under the Arrears Act in a case in which no arrears were due, either under the section of the Arrears Act which is concerned with such cases, or for perjury,"—(*Mr. Clancy*) 713

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SUPPLY—Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 10]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 729

After some time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

Infants Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. Attorney General*) 739

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Bryce*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 139.]

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE—NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That the Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedure do consist of Thirty-three Members" 739

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—List of the Committee 741

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [11th March] *reported* 741

First Two Resolutions *agreed to.*

Third Resolution *postponed.*

Subsequent Resolution *agreed to.*

Postponed Resolution to be considered upon *Thursday* next.

High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Whitley, Mr. Forwood, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Hutton, Lord Claud J. Hamilton, Mr. Mather, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Agnew, Mr. Powell Williams, Mr. E. R. Russell*) 741

[1.45.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 15.

DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS—RESOLUTION—

Moved to resolve—

"That in the opinion of this House responsibility for the unfortunate occurrences of 8th February devolves on Her Majesty's Government collectively and not on any single branch of the executive,"—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) .. 741

After debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Murder of Patrick Finlay, Woodford, Co. Galway—Observations, The Duke of St. Albans:—Debate thereon 761 [8.30.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MARCH 15.

QUESTIONS.

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Scotland—Portree Pier, Isle of Skye—Death of Rev. Dr. Mackay—Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) 789

Education Department—Pupil Teachers' Scholarship Examinations—Publication of Results—Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 790

Supply—Class I., Vote 3, Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds—Questions, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 791

Egypt—The Papers—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 793

Egypt—The Soudan—Suakin—Questions, Mr. Dillon, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 793

Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Malicious Burning of Hay at Newcastle West, Co. Limerick—Compensation—Questions, Mr. W. Abraham (Limerick, W.); Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 793

Registration of Voters (Ireland) Act—Return of Forms to the Clerk of the Union through the Post Office—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 794

Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Woodford, Co. Galway—Questions, Captain M'Calmont, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 795

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Post Office (Ireland)—The Postmaster at Omagh—Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 797

Commissioners of Education (Ireland)—Examination Papers of National School Teachers—Question, Mr. P. J. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 797

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Inland Revenue—Customs Department (Ireland)—Confiscated Snuff and Tobacco—Question, Mr. Dwyer Gray; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 798

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MOTION.

PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (RULE 2, ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE)—PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE—THE SELECT COMMITTEE—CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Captain Verney*) .. 827

Whereupon a number of Members—less than 40 — rising in their places, the hon. Member could not proceed with his Motion.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

NAVY (EFFICIENCY)—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "now would be a suitable opportunity for the Sinking Fund to be suspended, or Terminable Annuities created, in order to put the Royal Navy in that state of efficiency which is necessary for the safety of the Empire, at the least possible expense to the Country, owing to the cheapness of material at the present time,"—(*Lord Charles Beresford*,)—instead thereof 827

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put: — The House *divided;* Ayes 206, Noes 98; Majority 108.—(Div. List. No. 31.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—NAVY ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) 61,400 Men and Boys.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 905

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

Marriages Validity Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 137]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*The Lord Advocate*) 906

Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

Lunacy (Vacating of Seats) Bill [Bill 85]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 906

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Coal Mines Bill [Bill 92]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 908

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Sir Joseph Pease:*)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 128, Noes 69; Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 32.)

Moved, "That the Committee have leave to sit again To-morrow,"—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross*) 914

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "To-morrow," in order to insert the words "upon Wednesday, the 31st day of this instant March,"—(*Mr. Sexton*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

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Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 10]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 12*th March*] 915

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [1st March],

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the transfer of the Ulster Canal and the Tyrone Navigation or Coal Island Canal from the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland to the Lagan Navigation Company; and for other purposes,"—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed*.. 922

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. John Morley, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 141.]

Liquor Traffic (Local Veto) Ulster Bill—*Considered* in Committee:—Resolution *agreed to*, and *reported*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Johnston, Lord Arthur Hill, Mr. De Cobain*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 142] 922

[2.15.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 16.

Parish Churches Bill No. 5)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Bishop of Peterborough*) 923

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months,")—(*The Lord Grimthorpe*:)—After debate, on Question, That ("now") stand part of the Motion? *Resolved in the affirmative.*

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

Women's Suffrage Bill (No. 10)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Denman*) .. 947

On Question? *Resolved* in the *negative.* [7.0.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 16.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill (*by Order*)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 948

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill, to insert a Clause providing that the Company shall, at the expiration of their present agreements with the contractors for, or tenants of, the bookstalls upon the premises of the Company, put such bookstalls up to public competition among the newsvendors and others being bonâ fide residents in the borough, or, if outside a borough, in the county in which such stalls are situate, and that the Company shall be bound to enter into no agreement for the letting of any bookstall for any period longer than three years,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Sexton*:)—Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *negatived.*

QUESTIONS.

MEDICAL ACT, 1858—Question, Dr. Foster; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 967

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MOTIONS.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS, 1866-1869—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866-1869, ought to be repealed,"—(*Mr. Stansfeld*) 98

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "due provision at the same time being made for the continued maintenance of hospital accommodation with adequate treatment of women voluntarily seeking admission and medical care,"—(*Sir John Kennaway.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 131, Noes 245; Majority 114.—(Div. List, No. 35.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

GROUND RENTS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That no system of taxation can be equitable unless a direct assessment be imposed on the owners of Ground Rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations, or other improvements, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes,"—(*Mr. Saunders*) .. 999

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the first word "on," in line 2, in order to insert the words "the question of imposing a direct assessment,"—(*Mr. Lawson,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed,

"That the words, 'That the question of imposing a direct assessment on the owners of Ground Rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations, or other improvements, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes,' be there inserted" 1048

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "improvements," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "be referred to the Select Committee on Town Holdings,"—(*Mr. Lawson,*)—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived:*—Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Rivers Purification Bill [Bill 101]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Edward Birkbeck*) 1049

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Sir Henry Roscoe*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived:*—Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill—

Select Committee *nominated:*—List of the Committee 1056

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee 1057

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, "That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, the sum of £544,772 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.* [1.0.]

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Church of Scotland Bill [Bill 6]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Finlay*) .. 1057

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now" and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 179, Noes 202; Majority 23.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1129

Words *added* :—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to* :—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.) Bill [Bill 44]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. E. R. Cook*) .. 1132

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, further Proceedings stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

SCINDE, PUNJAUB, AND DELHI RAILWAY COMPANY BILL [ANNUITIES]—

Considered in Committee 1135

Resolution *agreed to ;* to be reported upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

WAYS AND MEANS—
Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill— Resolution [16th March] *reported*, and *agreed to* :—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented*, and read the first time 1136

Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Colonel Dawnay, Mr. Morgan Howard*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 146] 1136

Land Transfer (Scotland) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Boyd-Kinnear, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Mason, Mr. M'Laren*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 144] 1136

Compulsory Purchase of Land Compensation Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Joseph Bolton, Mr. Jesse Collings*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 145] 1136

[5.55.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 18.

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill (No. 12)—

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) 1136

After debate, Motion *agreed to* :—House in Committee accordingly.

Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received *To-morrow ;* and Bill to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 37.)

[7.45.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 18.

QUESTIONS.

SCOTLAND—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN KIRKWALL—Question, Mr. Macdonald Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) 1153

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CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) 1184

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—

(In the Committee.)

NAVY ESTIMATES—DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

(1.) £2,902,900, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.—After long debate, Vote *agreed to* 1184

(2.) £964,400, Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1285

CIVIL SERVICES.

(3.) £3,403,400, Vote on Account, Civil Services and Revenue Departments.—[Then the several Services are set forth.]—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1286

(4.) £595 12*s.* 1*d.*, Civil Services Excesses, viz:—[Then the several Services are set forth] 1307

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY—REPORT—Postponed Resolution [11th March] *considered* .. 1308

(3.) £62,216, Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens.

Resolved, That the Postponed Resolution reported from the Committee of Supply on the 11th March be re-committed to the said Committee.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY again *considered* in Committee.

Moved, "That, in addition to the sum of £62,216 already granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, the sum of £50,403 be granted, making together the sum of £112,619" .. 1308

Moved, "That, in addition to the sum of £62,216 already granted to Her Majesty, &c., the reduced sum of £48,253, be granted, making together the sum of £110,469,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 65, Noes 141; Majority 76.—(Div. List, No. 37.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Compensation for Damages Bill [Bill 120]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Childers*) 1314

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* in Committee .. 1324

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Trees (Ireland) Bill [Bill 30]—
Bill, as amended, *considered* 1324
Bill *re-committed* in respect of New Clause; *considered* in Committee.
After short time spent therein, Bill *reported*; as amended, *considered*: to be read the third time *To-morrow*.

WAYS AND MEANS—
Considered in Committee 1325
(1.) *Resolved*, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ended on the 31st day of March 1885, the sum of £38,715 2*s*. 1*d*. be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.
(2.) *Resolved*, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £8,256,018 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.
Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

TOWN HOLDINGS—
Select Committee *nominated*:—List of the Committee 1325

Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal (No. 2) Bill — *Ordered* (*Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. James Stuart, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Burt, Mr. Henry Wilson*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 147] 1326

Post Office Sites Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Spencer, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 148] 1326
[2.45.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, MARCH 19.

SUNDAY (OPENING OF MUSEUMS, &c.)—RESOLUTION—
Moved to resolve—
"That whereas for many years past Parliament has voted, without comment or protest, funds to provide for the Sunday opening of Hampton Court Picture Galleries, Kew Gardens, the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital, and the Dublin National Gallery; that whereas a majority of the Trustees of both the British Museum and of the National Gallery have expressed a desire to open those institutions on Sunday afternoons; that whereas for many years museums, libraries, and art galleries have been opened free to the people on Sundays in many large provincial towns, with results of a highly satisfactory character; and further, seeing that no legislative impediment is offered to the Sunday opening of the Zoological Gardens in London to the wealthy classes of society, notwithstanding the much larger proportion of Sunday labour thereby involved as compared with a Government art collection; that, for the above reasons, this House is therefore of opinion that the time has now come when the principle already conceded should, in the interests of religion and education, be extended to the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis,"—(*The Lord Thurlow*) 1326
Amendment *moved*,
To leave out all the words after ("That,") and insert ("it is not desirable to open the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis on Sunday,"—(*The Viscount Midleton.*)
After debate, on Question, That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion? their Lordships *divided*; Contents 78, Not-Contents 62; Majority 16:—*Resolved* in the *affirmative*.
Division List, Contents and Not-Contents 1348
Original Motion *agreed to*.

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill (No. 37)—
Amendments *reported* (according to order); and Bill *re-committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* the 29*th instant* .. 1349

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2) Bill [H.L.] — *Presented* (*The Viscount Bury*); read 1ª (No. 40) 1350
[7.0.]

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 19.

QUESTIONS.

LIABILITIES OF HARBOUR COMMISSIONS—Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. C. T. D. Acland) .. 1350

TRINITY COLLEGE (DUBLIN)—TENURE OF HOLDING OF LANDS—Question, Sir James Corry; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1351

POST OFFICE—RURAL TELEGRAPHS—POSITION OF THE GUARANTORS—Question, Sir John Kennaway; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1352

POST OFFICE—COLONIAL POSTAGE—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) .. 1352

POST OFFICE—POSTAGE STAMPS—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) .. 1353

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT—THE WEST CLARE RAILWAY—Question, Mr. Cox; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1353

CERTIFIED INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS AND VOLUNTARY TRAINING HOMES—ASSISTED EMIGRATION OF CHILDREN — Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) 1354

ROMAN CATHOLIC REFORMATORY SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—CASE OF CHARLES M'CLINTOCK, OF ARDSTRAW, CO. TYRONE — Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) .. 1355

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND) — POSITION OF NEW ROSS INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1356

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS, LIMERICK DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Limerick Co., W.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1356

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SELECTION OF TEACHERS FOR MODEL SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1357

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THREATENING LETTERS—CASE OF MR. ROBERT TESKEY, CURRAHEEN, CO. LIMERICK—Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1357

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—MR. CRAWFORD, SHERIFF CLERK OF BERWICKSHIRE—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) 1358

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT, 1880—THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) .. 1359

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—WICKLOW HARBOUR—LOAN TO THE COMMISSIONERS—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1360

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE SUMMONING OF JURORS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley).. 1360

IRELAND—DISTRESS IN DUBLIN—Question, Dr. Fox; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1361

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (SCOTLAND)—GIRVAN HARBOUR—Questions, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1361

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS, HOUSE OF COMMONS—THE CONTRACT—Question, Mr. B. Kelly; Answer, Sir William Hart Dyke .. 1362

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE NEW CODE—Question, Mr. Boyd-Kinnear; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) .. 1363

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Royal Commission on Accidents in Mines—The Report—Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) 1364

Chambers of Commerce—Distribution of Parliamentary Papers—Question, Mr. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1364

The Irish National League—Meeting of the Kilbride Branch—Questions, Mr. Macartney; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1364

Parliamentary Franchise (Dublin)—The Collector General of Rates—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley).. 1365

Bankruptcy Court (London)—Appointment of Mr. Giffard as Registrar—Questions, Mr. Handel Cossham; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) 1366

Police (Scotland)—Dismissal of James Martin, Police Constable, Aberdeen—Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) 1366

Local Taxation—The Select Committee on Town Holdings—Taxation of Railway Stocks—Question, Mr. Milnes-Gaskell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) 1367

High Court of Justice—Circuit Arrangements—Question, Mr. Morgan Howard; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) 1368

Defences of the Empire—Coaling Stations—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) 1368

Africa (East Coast)—German Annexation of Territory Belonging to Zanzibar—Question, Mr. J. F. Hutton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1369

Inland Revenue—Taxation of Dogs—Exemption of Life-Saving Dogs—Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) 1370

The Bishopric of Jerusalem—Question, Mr. Seager Hunt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) 1370

Ireland—Policy of the Ministry—Questions, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) .. 1371

Ireland—The Dissenting Bodies and Home Rule—Questions, Mr. De Cobain, Mr. W. O'Brien; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1372

Parliament—Business of the House—The Proposed New Rules of Procedure—Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) 1373

Parliament—Business of the House—Arrangement of the Orders of the Day—Questions, Mr. Raikes; Answers, Mr. Speaker .. 1373

Government of India—The Joint Committee—Question, Mr. Magniac; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) .. 1374

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Supply—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Crown Duties—Resolution—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read—*continued.*

words "a limitation in point of time should be applicable to liabilities for duties to the Crown,"—(*Mr. Gregory,*)—instead thereof 1375

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

NATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is not just or expedient to embark in war, contract engagements involving grave responsibilities for the Nation, and add territories to the Empire without the knowledge and consent of Parliament,"—(*Mr. Richard,*)—instead thereof 1386

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 108, Noes 112; Majority 4.—(Div. List, No. 38:)—Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put: — The House *divided;* Ayes 109, Noes 115; Majority 6.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1421

SUPPLY,—Committee upon *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF SUPPLY—Observations, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Reply, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone):—Short debate thereon 1423

Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 10]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 15th March*] 1429

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported.*

Moved, "That the Bill, as amended, be taken into Consideration upon Monday next" 1446

Amendment proposed, by leaving out the word "Monday," in order to insert the word "Thursday,"—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Monday' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill, as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [18th March] *reported* 1447

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolutions:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Marriages (Hours of Solemnization) Bill [Bill 62]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Carvell Williams*) 1448

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS—
Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill— } Resolutions [March 18] *reported,* and *agreed to:*—

Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); *presented,* and read the first time 1454

[12.30.]

LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 22.

AFFAIRS OF BURMAH — Observations, Viscount Cranbrook; Reply, The Secretary of State for India (The Earl of Kimberley) 1455

THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS—EVENING OPENING—Queen's Answer to Address [March 12] *reported* 1455

Dore and Chinley Railway Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" 1455

Moved, "That the Second Reading of this Bill, and of any other Bill containing provisions for payment of interest out of capital during construction of works, be postponed until the 12th day of April next,"—(*The Lord Houghton.*)

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the tenure of lands under Trinity College, Dublin, and the Provost thereof in his corporate capacity; and on the working of the Trinity College, Dublin, Leasing and Perpetuity Act, 1851, with respect to the variation of rent, and its effect on the value of the interest respectively of the college, the perpetuity grantees, and the occupying perpetuity tenants of the lands,"—(*The Earl of Leitrim*) 1456

After debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MINIMUM OF ATTENDANCE AT YEOMANRY CAVALRY TROOP DRILLS—Question, Observations, Lord Harris; Reply, The Under Secretary of State for War (Lord Sandhurst:)—Short debate thereon 1467

Law of Evidence Amendment Bill (No. 19)—

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill,"—(*The Lord Bramwell*) 1469

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—House in Committee accordingly:—Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 44.) [7.45.]

COMMONS, MONDAY, MARCH 22.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—"SHAW v. LLOYD"—Question, Mr. W. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1473

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—RULES OF LOCATION OF CONSTABLES—Question, Mr. Alexander Blane; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1474

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—SECRECY OF THE BALLOT—Question, Mr. Everett; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 1474

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—SCHOOL GRANTS IN THE HIGHLANDS—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) 1475

POST OFFICE—MAILS TO THE UNITED STATES—Question, Mr. Samuel Montagu; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1475

IRELAND—DISTRESS IN THE TOWN OF WICKLOW—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1476

LAW AND JUSTICE—ESTABLISHMENT OF A COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL—Question, Mr. Shirley; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) 1477

ARMY—PENSIONS—CASE OF ISAAC HEMPTON—Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) 1477

THE RAILWAY CLEARING HOUSE (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) .. 1477

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—DUBLIN POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS—Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1478

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IRELAND—INVESTMENTS OF ENGLISH CAPITAL—Question, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1478

EGYPT — THE SYSTEM OF PENSIONS — Questions, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1478

EGYPT—COST OF THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION—Questions, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1479

ARMY (INDIA)—THE INDIAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS—Question, Mr. James Maclean; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) 1480

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE OF OFFICERS—Questions, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Addison, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) 1481

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—THE COLONIAL AND IMPERIAL NAVAL FORCES—Question, Mr. Baden-Powell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) 1482

CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT—POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) 1483

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 1483

AFRICA (RED SEA COAST)—OCCUPATION BY ITALY OF MASSOWAH—Questions, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1484

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE ANTRIM GRAND JURY—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Major Saunderson; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1485

IRELAND—HOME RULE—ALLEGED INTIMIDATION OF LANDLORDS—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1486

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—CHISLEHURST SCHOOL—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 1486

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CONTEMPT OF COURT—Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1487

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CASE OF DISTRICT INSPECTOR TILLY—Question, Mr. Cox; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1488

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—THE JOINT COMMITTEE—Question, Mr. Magniac; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) 1489

AFRICA (CENTRAL)—MURDER OF BISHOP HANNINGTON—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1489

EGYPT—THE GARRISONS IN THE SOUDAN—Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) .. 1490

COMMISSION ON DEPRESSION OF TRADE—THE SILVER CURRENCY—Questions, Mr. Goschen, Lord Randolph Churchill; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) 1491

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—PATENT BALLOT MACHINE—Questions, Mr. Coote; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) 1492

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—"BOYCOTTING"—CASE OF JOHN FORAN, GALLEY, CO. KERRY—Questions, Major Saunderson, Mr. E. Harrington; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1492

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MERCHANT SHIPPING—LOSS OF THE "OREGON," CUNARD LINER—Questions, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1493

INLAND REVENUE—THE LAND TAX COMMISSION—Question, Mr. Francis Powell; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) .. 1494

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CO. DONEGAL QUARTER SESSIONS—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley).. 1494

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—KINGSTOWN HARBOUR—Question, Mr. Peter M'Donald; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1495

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S—APPOINTMENT OF DR. DONALDSON—Question, Mr. Boyd-Kinnear; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) 1495

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT—THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY—Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1496

POOR LAW ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—THE QUEEN'S CO.—Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1497

STATE OF IRELAND—CONDITION OF CORK AND TIPPERARY—CHARGES OF THE JUDGES OF ASSIZE—Questions, Captain M'Calmont, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Hooper; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley).. 1498

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE "EXCELLENT" MERIT GRANT—Question, Mr. Woodhead; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 1500

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WRITING ROOM OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—Question, Mr. Lalor; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) 1500

IMPERIAL FEDERATION—CONFERENCE DURING THE COLONIAL EXHIBITION—Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) 1500

STATE OF IRELAND—"BOYCOTTING"—STATEMENTS OF CLERGYMEN OF THE IRISH CHURCH—Questions, Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), Mr. Speaker .. 1501

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) .. 1503

RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE—PROCEDURE AT QUESTION TIME—Questions, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone).. 1503

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL—Question, Sir Joseph Pease; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1505

AFFAIRS OF BURMAH—Question, Mr. Wodehouse; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) .. 1505

ARMY—THE INFANTRY OF THE LINE (NUMBERS)—Question, Mr. Brand; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) .. 1505

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEER CAPITATION GRANT—RESOLUTION—Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "for the thorough efficiency, maintenance, and development of the Volunteer

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read—*continued.*

Force, an immediate increase in the present capitation grant is absolutely and urgently necessary,"—(*Mr. Howard Vincent,*)—instead thereof 1506

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 187, Noes 166; Majority 21.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1534

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

EGYPT—COST OF THE ARMY OF DEFENCE—Observations, Sir George Campbell:—Short debate thereon 1537

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—DEFENCE OF COALING STATIONS—Observations, Mr. W. H. Smith:—Debate thereon 1543

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY—Observations, Mr. Mark Stewart 1564

ARMY—THE SOLDIER'S RATION—Observations, Dr. R. Farquharson:—Debate thereon 1569

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY ESTIMATES—DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT—

(1.) 151,867 Men, Land Forces at Home and Abroad.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1588

(2.) £4,457,300, Pay and Allowances.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the Service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £4,457,300 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom 1600

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

Highway Acts Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Duckham, Mr. More, Mr. Thomas Blake*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 149] 1600

[1.15.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 23.

PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after *Friday* the 25*th day of June* next [and other Orders] .. 1601

Union of Benefices Bill (No. 20)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Milltown*) .. 1601

Amendment *moved,* to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months,")—(*The Lord Bishop of London.*)

After short debate, on Question, That ("now") stand part of the Motion? *Resolved* in the *negative.*

Bill to be read 2ª *this day six months.*

India—Administration of Justice—Motion for an Address—
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return of the taxes and duties raised or levied on the administration of justice in India during the year 1885, whether by stamps, ad valorem duties, or otherwise, under the Act of the Governor General of India in Council in 1870, or any of the Acts referred to therein, or otherwise; and that the subject of the taxation of justice in India be referred to the Select Committee on the operation of the Act for the better government of India (1858), and certain other Acts relating to India,"—(*The Lord FitzGerald*) .. 1612
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Disturbances in the Metropolis—The Duties of Soldiers—Observations, Lord de Ros:—Short debate thereon 1617

Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) Bill (No. 28)—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Earl of Elgin*) .. 1624
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* next.

Idiots Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª (No. 46) 1627
[7.30.]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 23.

QUESTIONS.

Poor Law (England and Wales)—Collection of Rates at Crewkerne—Question, Mr. H. R. Farquharson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) 1628
Army (Ireland)—Death of Private Aherne at Belfast—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1629
Highlands and Islands (Scotland)—Distress in the Hebrides—Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) 1631
Lunatic Asylums (Ireland)—Return of Salaries, &c. of Chief Officers—Question, Mr. Cox; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1631
Intermediate Education (Wales)—Question, Mr. Yeo; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 1632
Piers and Harbours (Ireland)—Wicklow Harbour—The Baronial Guarantee—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1632
Railways (India)—The Bengal Central Railway Company—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) 1633
Burmah—Execution of Rebels and Dacoits—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) 1634
Charity Commissioners—Schemes of Allotments—Lady Dodd's Charity, Ellesborough, Bucks—Question, Dr. Foster; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) 1635
Parliamentary Papers—Public Sale—The Quarterly Lists—Question, Mr. Arthur Acland; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1636
Labourers (Ireland) Acts—Labourers' Cottages in Innishowen—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1636
Post Office (Ireland)—Postal Arrangements in Roscommon—Question, Mr. Hayden; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1637

POST OFFICE—REGISTERED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES—Question, Mr. David Smith; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1637

NAVY — PENSIONS FOR WIDOWS OF SEAMEN AND MARINES — Question, Captain Price; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) 1638

POLICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) — DISTURBANCE IN LEEDS—Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) 1638

NAVY—ENGINE-ROOM ARTIFICERS — Question, Colonel Hughes-Hallett; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) .. 1639

ARMY—CAVALRY TROOP OFFICERS—Question, Lord Ernest Hamilton; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) 1639

COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH ITALY—ITALIAN SHIPPING BOUNTIES ACT—Questions, Mr. Tomlinson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1640

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (IRELAND) — CANDIDATES' SOLICITORS AND THE SCRUTINY OF VOTES—Question, Mr. William O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1641

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—RELEASE OF IRISH MOONLIGHTERS—Question, Mr. Albert Grey; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1641

NAVY—ACCIDENT ON BOARD H.M.S. "ALBATROSS"—Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) .. 1642

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL—Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. William Redmond; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), Mr. Speaker .. 1642

MOTIONS.

LOCAL TAXATION (INCIDENCE)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That the present system under which, in England and Wales, the first Incidence of Local Taxation (with some slight exceptions) falls on the occupier and not on the owner of lands and tenements is unjust; that such owners ought in equity to bear at least a moiety of those charges; that the system under which country mansions are rated is unfair; and that the owners of ground rents in towns are liable to no part of those charges, the outlay of which is essential in order that the property may possess any marketable value whatever,"—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers*) .. 1643

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "while the apportionment of the payment of Rates between landlord and tenant may be desirable, as part of a complete scheme for remedying the admitted inequalities of the Incidence of Local Taxation, this House is of opinion that the financial injustice complained of can only be removed by a comprehensive measure, and that an equitable re-adjustment of Taxation, as between real and personal property, is urgently required,"—(*Sir Richard Paget,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 205, Noes 186; Majority 19.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1701

Main Question again proposed 1704

After short debate, Main Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 216, Noes 176; Majority 40.—(Div. List, No. 42.)

Main Question *agreed to.*

ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the whole question of guns, and the working of the Factories at Woolwich, Enfield, and Birmingham,"—(*Mr. Carbutt*) 1709

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

School Fees of Non-Paupers Bill [Bill 114]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Llewellyn*) .. 1721

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Joseph Chamberlain*:) —After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question put:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 6th April.

Lunacy (Vacating of Seats) Bill [Bill 85]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1726

Bill *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow*.

Marriages (Hours of Solemnization) Bill [Bill 62]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1726

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday*.

SUPPLY—
ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL—

Resolutions [22nd March] *reported*, and *agreed to*.

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 16th day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and then agreed to by the House, be now read; and the same was read, as followeth:—

That 61,400 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services, for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, including 12,900 Royal Marines.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill, to provide, during twelve months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army, and that Mr. Secretary Campbell-Bannerman, the Judge Advocate General, and Mr. Hibbert do prepare and bring it in.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 150] 1727

WAYS AND MEANS—

Resolution [22nd March] *reported*, and *agreed to* 1727

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill, That they have power to make provision therein, pursuant to the said Resolution.

MOTIONS.

FORESTRY—

Select Committee *appointed*, "to consider whether, by the establishment of a Forest School, or otherwise, our Woodlands could be rendered more remunerative."—(*Sir John Lubbock*) 1727

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE—

Select Committee *appointed*:—List of the Committee 1727

[1.15.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill [Bill 61]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Norton*) .. 1728

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. Secretary Childers*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*: —Bill *committed* to a Select Committee.

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Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment Bill [Bill 65]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Colonel Brookfield*) 1742
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Select Committee on the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Durham) Bill—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. Fry*) .. 1750
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Milvain.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gent-Davis*:)—Question put, and *negatived.*
Original Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 163, Noes 82; Majority 81.—(Div. List, No. 43.)
Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Redemption Bill [Bill 63]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton*) 1769
Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Select Committee on the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill.

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill [Bill 49]—
Order for Second Reading read 1769
After short debate, Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday* 7th April.

Married Women (Maintenance in Case of Desertion) Bill—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Pulley*) .. 1769
After short debate, Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* next.

Compulsory Purchase of Land Compensation Bill [Bill 145]—
Moved, "That the Order for Second Reading be discharged,"—(*Mr. Gregory*) 1771
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday* 7th April.

Drowned Persons (Discovery and Interment) Bill [Bill 123]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Colonel Hughes*) .. 1772
After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 7th April. [5.15.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 25.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS—EVENING OPENING—RESOLUTION—
Moved to resolve,
"That it would be expedient that museums should be opened by daylight only, and should be closed during the time of afternoon Divine Service, on Sundays,"—(*The Lord Denman*) 1774
On Question, *Resolved* in the *negative.* [4.45.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 25.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS (BARROW IN FURNESS) 1775

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. BARRON, COUNTY COURT JUDGE, CO. MONAGHAN—Question, Mr. W. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1776

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LAW AND JUSTICE—CARDIFF COUNTY COURT—WELSH WITNESSES—Question, Mr. A. J. Williams; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) 1777
LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—DEATH OF CORNELIUS COSGRAVE AT EDGEWORTHSTOWN, Co. LONGFORD—Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1778
SUNDAY CLOSING (IRELAND)—EXTENSION OF LEGISLATION — Question, Mr. T. Fry; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1779
NAVY—PEMBROKE DOCKYARD—Question, Mr. H. G. Allen; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) 1779
POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—TELEGRAPH OFFICE, SHANAGOLDEN, Co. LIMERICK—Question, Mr. W. Abraham (Limerick Co., W.); Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1780
NAVY—H.M.SS. "NILE" AND "TRAFALGAR" — Question, Mr. C. H. Wilson; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) .. 1780
THE DUCHY OF CORNWALL — THE COINAGE DUTIES — Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1781
POST OFFICE — ABBREVIATED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES — Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1782
THE PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER — THE VESTRY CLERK OF ST. PANCRAS — Questions, Mr. Baggallay; Answers, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings) 1783
THE PHŒNIX PARK (DUBLIN)—PRIVATE ENCLOSURES—Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) .. 1783
PRIVILEGE—FORGED SIGNATURES TO PETITIONS—Questions, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Sir Charles Forster 1784
LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—OMAGH DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM — Question, Mr. O'Hanlon; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1785
POOR LAW (IRELAND) — ELECTION OF GUARDIANS — MESSRS. J. W. PAYNE AND JOHN E. PAYNE—Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1786
POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — MAIL SERVICE BETWEEN ATHENRY AND GORT — Question, Mr. Sheehy; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1 786
LAW AND JUSTICE—"BRYCE *v.* RUSDEN"—SIR ARTHUR GORDON—Questions, Mr. Cobb; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) 1787
REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, &c.—6 & 7 WILL. IV. c. 85, s. 17—REGISTRAR OF MARRIAGES AT CONWAY—Question, Mr. Kenyon; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings) .. 1788
BANKRUPTCY — APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT RECEIVERS — Question, Mr. Lionel Cohen; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1788
ARMY — OFFICERS OF THE RESERVE CORPS — Question, Colonel Hughes-Hallett; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) 1789
MERCHANT SHIPPING—LOSS OF THE "OREGON," CUNARD LINER—Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Forwood, Captain Price; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1790
ARMY RECRUITING—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) 1791
CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE CURTIN FAMILY—Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1792

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SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE—THE GRÆCO-TURKISH FRONTIER—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1792
ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CONTEMPT OF COURT—Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1793
MADAGASCAR AND FRANCE—THE TREATY OF PEACE—Question, Mr. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1794
METROPOLIS—PROCESSIONS OF THE UNEMPLOYED—Question, Mr. Bristowe; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) 1794
SOUTH AFRICA—THE BOERS AND THE SWAZIES—Question, Sir Robert Fowler; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) 1795
IRELAND—GOVERNMENT LOANS FOR IRISH PURPOSES—Questions, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Parnell, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1796
POST OFFICE—ABBREVIATED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1797
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—THE JOINT COMMITTEE—Question Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) 1797
BURMAH, UPPER AND LOWER—THE MILITARY COMMAND—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) 1798
MINES REGULATION ACT—Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) .. 1798
POST OFFICE—TELEGRAMS—INCOMPLETE ADDRESSES—Question, Mr. Forwood; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1798
HALL-MARKING OF FOREIGN PLATE—Question, Mr. Forwood; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1799
TRADE AND COMMERCE—FOREIGN BOUNTIES ON SUGAR PRODUCTION—RETALIATORY DUTIES—Questions, Mr. Kimber, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) 1800
TRADE AND COMMERCE—BRITISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS ABROAD—INSTRUCTIONS TO H.M. AGENTS—Question, Lord William Compton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) .. 1801
VACCINATION—THE ISLAND OF RUGEN—Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1802
PRISON DISCIPLINE—TREADMILLS—Question, Mr. Ruston; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) .. 1802
TRADE AND COMMERCE—ANNUAL REPORTS FROM THE COLONIES—Question, Mr. Hutton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) 1803
NAVY—ROCHE'S POINT COASTGUARD STATION—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) .. 1804
GUN LICENCES (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) 1805
REGISTRATION ACT (IRELAND), 1885—NON-PAYMENT OF POSTAGE OF REQUISITION FORMS—Question, Lord Ernest Hamilton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1805
POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK—Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) 1806
TRADE AND COMMERCE—REPORTS ON FOREIGN TRADE—INSTRUCTIONS TO H.M. AGENTS—Question, Mr. Hutton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) 1806

IRELAND—A SEPARATE PARLIAMENT—Questions, Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. Speaker 1807

IRELAND—POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—Ministerial Statement, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt); Questions, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, Sir William Harcourt) 1808

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—ARMY ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £866,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887" 1809

After long debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £849,000, be granted, &c.,"—(*Sir George Campbell*) 1890

After further debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 66, Noes 290; Majority 224.—(Div. List, No. 44.)

Original Question again proposed 1907

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman:*)—Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal (No. 2) Bill [Bill 147]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Stansfeld*) .. 1908

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Compensation for Damages Bill [Bill 120]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1921

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 10]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1930

After debate, Bill to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) [ADVANCES]—

Considered in Committee 1950

Resolution *agreed to;* to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

Cape Race Lighthouse Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. C. Acland, Mr. Mundella, Mr. Osborne Morgan*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 151] 1950

Burial Grounds (Scotland) Act (1855) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Preston Bruce, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Mr. Donald Crawford*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 152] 1950

[3.30.]

NEW WRIT ISSUED.

Wednesday, March 17.

For *Cheshire County (Altrincham Division)*, *v.* John Brooks, esquire, deceased.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

FIRST SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 12 JANUARY, 1886, IN THE FORTY-NINTH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1886.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 5th March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Drill Grounds (24).
Third Reading—Marriages Validity * (11), and *passed.*
Royal Assent—Land Registry [49 *Vict.* c. 1].

DRILL GROUNDS BILL.

(*The Lord Sandhurst.*)

(NO. 24.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord SANDHURST), in moving that the Bill be now read the second time, said, as this was his first endeavour to pilot a Bill through their Lordships' House, he had to ask their Lordships to regard his shortcomings with leniency; and, on the ground of his inexperience, to forgive any errors of which he feared he must inevitably be guilty. The Bill which he asked their Lordships to read a second time was of a very simple nature, and he should have to occupy them but a very few minutes. The Bill was one—

> "For extending, with amendments, to grounds for drill and other military purposes the enactments relating to the acquisition and regulation of rifle ranges."

He must, therefore, refer to the two Acts of which this Bill was to be the extension. One was the Volunteer Act, 1863; the other the Artillery and Rifle Ranges Act, 1885. In the first of these, a power was given to Volunteer corps, with the assent of the Secretary of State, to acquire land for artillery and rifle ranges; and it was now contemplated to extend this power in order to acquire land for drilling purposes for Volunteers and all other military forces. These powers related merely to the acquisition of land. The Act of 1885 contained power for the Secretary of State to make bye-laws which should secure the safety of the public, and, at the same time, prevent any intrusion on the ranges to the inconvenience of the corps using them. It was intended to embody powers to that effect in this Bill, with the slight difference and addition that, if necessary for the safety of the public and to secure the body of troops exercising from molestation, the grantors of the land should themselves make the bye-laws, subject always, of course, to the sanction of the Secretary of State. Of course, the ordinary law of trespass was sufficient for drill grounds in the possession of the Secretary of State or of the corps. Public Parks being public property, there was no power to exclude anyone, or to inclose any plot of ground temporarily during military exercises. He might add that he had reason to believe that many Corporate Bodies were most anxious to give them these facilities; but they had no power to do so. They therefore proposed by this Bill to give them this power. Their Lordships, especially any noble Lords who had served either in the Regular or Irregular Forces, must know how difficult it was, not to say impossible, to manœuvre a regiment when surrounded and pressed by a crowd of enthusiastic spectators. With the new Infantry extended order, he ventured to say it was impossible. The provisions of this Bill would inflict no injury on the public by temporarily excluding them from a small plot of ground during the short time of drill. The Volunteers were very enthusiastic and zealous for instruction. Their efficiency was already at a high standard. This Bill would give facilities for raising that standard; and as he knew there were few warmer sympathizers with the Volunteers than their Lordships, he had every confidence in asking them to read it a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Sandhurst.*)

Viscount CRANBROOK said, he must compliment the noble Lord opposite upon the exceedingly clear and able manner in which he had moved the second reading of the Bill. He should give the noble Lord every assistance in his power in carrying the measure into law, as he entirely approved its principle.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

FEMALE INSPECTORS OF WORKSHOPS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount ENFIELD rose to ask, Whether in any future appointments of Factory and Workshop Inspectors Her Majesty's Government would favourably consider the possibility of selecting a certain number of female Inspectors for those factories and workshops where women only are employed? Considering the interest taken in the various fields that were now open for female industry and ability, he was anxious to ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Home Secretary could see his way to act in the sense of his Question on the Paper; and he did so for two reasons—first, because steps had been taken in this direction with, he believed, very advantageous results by the appointment some years ago of a talented lady, now, unhappily, no more, the late Mrs. Nassau Senior, as an Inspector of district and workhouse schools; and last year, on the action of the late President of the Local Government Board, two ladies of distinguished personal abilities and high social standing received somewhat similar appointments within the Metropolitan area; and, secondly, because he believed also that in many instances women were great sufferers from the pressure of work and defective sanitary arrangements in workshops; and on this head he should like to quote certain expressions which appeared in the letter of an artizan to one of the public journals not very long ago—

> "The sanitary condition of factories is a subject which may well engage the attention of trade unionists; the greatest sufferers from overcrowded factories at present are women; there is much sentiment written and spoken about female workers, and probably a genuine desire to make the everyday life of factory women a little less dreary than it is; but there has been as yet no vigorous effort made in the direction of such a piece of practical reform as the appointment of female Factory Inspectors. Women's eyes can see women's grievances quicker than men's can, and there is no sound argument against the appointment of women to inspect factories where women only are employed. Sir William Harcourt has recognized the claims of working men to be represented among Factory Inspectors, and deserves their gratitude; but he should go a little further, and recognize the claims of working women as well."

Since 1881 seven appointments had been made of persons who, from their previous practical working experience in various trades, were duly qualified to act as Factory and Workshop Inspectors with every prospect of their utility; and he should hope that a certain number of intelligent women conversant with the duties and requirements of their sex in various trades would prove valuable auxiliaries to the present Inspectors.

LORD THURLOW, in reply, said, that the question raised by the noble Viscount's Question was one of great interest; but, at the same time, it was one of extreme difficulty. The subject had occupied the attention of the Home Department for several years, and it was still under consideration. The difficulties in the way of following the suggestion of the noble Lord were greater than at first sight one might be inclined to fancy. There was a great difference between the duties of a Poor Law Inspector, which Mrs. Senior discharged, and those of a Factory and Workshop Inspector. This subject had been dealt with at considerable length in the Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1879 and 1880; and that official expressed the opinion that the duties which devolved upon a Factory Inspector could not be discharged by a lady. The Chief Inspector said the day's work of a Factory Inspector sometimes extended from 6 or 8 in the morning to 8 and 10 o'clock at night; and he was forced to the conviction that it was work for a man and not for a woman, the multifarious duties being really incompatible with the character of a woman. In a previous Report the Chief Inspector referred to the exposure to which Inspectors were subjected, and the necessity for examining machinery in workshops could not be undertaken by women. Those were some of the difficulties which stood in the way of carrying out the suggestion. He was instructed to say that at the present moment, at any rate, there was no intention to appoint a female Inspector of Factories and Workshops. The subject, however, remained under the attention of the Home Office, and from time to time it would be considered to what extent and how far the suggestion could be carried out.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 5th *March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Educational Endowments, Mr. H. G. Allen *disch.*; Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan) *added*; Salmon and Trout Fishing (Ireland), *appointed.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—R.P.

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Leeds Hydraulic Power Company*; Lincolnshire Marshes and East Coast Railway*; Louth, Mablethorpe, Sutton, and Willoughby Railway.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Metropolitan Commons Provisional Order* [132].

Second Reading—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) [128]; Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.) [34], *put off;* Trees (Ireland) [30].

QUESTIONS.

MINES REGULATION ACT—THE BOG COLLIERY EXPLOSION.

MR. MASON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will inquire into the cause of an explosion of fire damp which occurred in Bog Colliery, Yorkhall, on 2nd November last, whereby three men were injured; if it was the duty of the manager to have reported the explosion to the Inspector of Mines; whether the Inspector's attention was called to the accident eight days thereafter; and, what action was taken thereupon?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS): As soon as the hon. Member called my attention to this explosion I at once made inquiry into the matter. It appears that the Inspector visited the mine on November 10, the accident having occurred on the second of that month. Undoubtedly, it was the duty of the manager to report the accident, and he probably did so. The accident was caused by the fall of a roof, in which it seems that a small quantity of gas was lurking. This was driven out by the concussion of a fall, and ignited at one of the lamps which the men were using. As no gas had been seen in the colliery for two years naked lights were used. The Inspector attaches no blame to the men under these circumstances. In consequence of this accident safety lamps are now being used in the mine.

venience of the corps using them. It was intended to embody powers to that effect in this Bill, with the slight difference and addition that, if necessary for the safety of the public and to secure the body of troops exercising from molestation, the grantors of the land should themselves make the bye-laws, subject always, of course, to the sanction of the Secretary of State. Of course, the ordinary law of trespass was sufficient for drill grounds in the possession of the Secretary of State or of the corps. Public Parks being public property, there was no power to exclude anyone, or to inclose any plot of ground temporarily during military exercises. He might add that he had reason to believe that many Corporate Bodies were most anxious to give them these facilities; but they had no power to do so. They therefore proposed by this Bill to give them this power. Their Lordships, especially any noble Lords who had served either in the Regular or Irregular Forces, must know how difficult it was, not to say impossible, to manœuvre a regiment when surrounded and pressed by a crowd of enthusiastic spectators. With the new Infantry extended order, he ventured to say it was impossible. The provisions of this Bill would inflict no injury on the public by temporarily excluding them from a small plot of ground during the short time of drill. The Volunteers were very enthusiastic and zealous for instruction. Their efficiency was already at a high standard. This Bill would give facilities for raising that standard; and as he knew there were few warmer sympathizers with the Volunteers than their Lordships, he had every confidence in asking them to read it a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Lord Sandhurst.*)

Viscount CRANBROOK said, he must compliment the noble Lord opposite upon the exceedingly clear and able manner in which he had moved the second reading of the Bill. He should give the noble Lord every assistance in his power in carrying the measure into law, as he entirely approved its principle.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* next.

FEMALE INSPECTORS OF WORKSHOPS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount ENFIELD rose to ask, Whether in any future appointments of Factory and Workshop Inspectors Her Majesty's Government would favourably consider the possibility of selecting a certain number of female Inspectors for those factories and workshops where women only are employed? Considering the interest taken in the various fields that were now open for female industry and ability, he was anxious to ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Home Secretary could see his way to act in the sense of his Question on the Paper; and he did so for two reasons—first, because steps had been taken in this direction with, he believed, very advantageous results by the appointment some years ago of a talented lady, now, unhappily, no more, the late Mrs. Nassau Senior, as an Inspector of district and workhouse schools; and last year, on the action of the late President of the Local Government Board, two ladies of distinguished personal abilities and high social standing received somewhat similar appointments within the Metropolitan area; and, secondly, because he believed also that in many instances women were great sufferers from the pressure of work and defective sanitary arrangements in workshops; and on this head he should like to quote certain expressions which appeared in the letter of an artizan to one of the public journals not very long ago—

> "The sanitary condition of factories is a subject which may well engage the attention of trade unionists; the greatest sufferers from overcrowded factories at present are women; there is much sentiment written and spoken about female workers, and probably a genuine desire to make the everyday life of factory women a little less dreary than it is; but there has been as yet no vigorous effort made in the direction of such a piece of practical reform as the appointment of female Factory Inspectors. Women's eyes can see women's grievances quicker than men's can, and there is no sound argument against the appointment of women to inspect factories where women only are employed. Sir William Harcourt has recognized the claims of working men to be represented among Factory Inspectors, and deserves their gratitude; but he should go a little further, and recognize the claims of working women as well."

Since 1881 seven appointments had been made of persons who, from their previous practical working experience in various trades, were duly qualified to act as Factory and Workshop Inspectors with every prospect of their utility; and he should hope that a certain number of intelligent women conversant with the duties and requirements of their sex in various trades would prove valuable auxiliaries to the present Inspectors.

Lord THURLOW, in reply, said, that the question raised by the noble Viscount's Question was one of great interest; but, at the same time, it was one of extreme difficulty. The subject had occupied the attention of the Home Department for several years, and it was still under consideration. The difficulties in the way of following the suggestion of the noble Lord were greater than at first sight one might be inclined to fancy. There was a great difference between the duties of a Poor Law Inspector, which Mrs. Senior discharged, and those of a Factory and Workshop Inspector. This subject had been dealt with at considerable length in the Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1879 and 1880; and that official expressed the opinion that the duties which devolved upon a Factory Inspector could not be discharged by a lady. The Chief Inspector said the day's work of a Factory Inspector sometimes extended from 6 or 8 in the morning to 8 and 10 o'clock at night; and he was forced to the conviction that it was work for a man and not for a woman, the multifarious duties being really incompatible with the character of a woman. In a previous Report the Chief Inspector referred to the exposure to which Inspectors were subjected, and the necessity for examining machinery in workshops could not be undertaken by women. Those were some of the difficulties which stood in the way of carrying out the suggestion. He was instructed to say that at the present moment, at any rate, there was no intention to appoint a female Inspector of Factories and Workshops. The subject, however, remained under the attention of the Home Office, and from time to time it would be considered to what extent and how far the suggestion could be carried out.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 5th March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Select Committees — Educational Endowments, Mr. H. G. Allen *disch.;* Mr. William Abraham (Glamorgan) *added;* Salmon and Trout Fishing (Ireland), *appointed.*

Supply—*considered in Committee*—r.p.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Leeds Hydraulic Power Company*; Lincolnshire Marshes and East Coast Railway*; Louth, Mablethorpe, Sutton, and Willoughby Railway.*

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Metropolitan Commons Provisional Order* [132].

Second Reading — Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) [128]; Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.) [34], *put off;* Trees (Ireland) [30].

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CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED "BOYCOTTING" OF NATIONALISTS.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a notice posted at the Beragh (county Tyrone) Railway Station; whether the Alexander Steen referred to occupies the position of Stamp Distributor and Registrar of Births, &c. for the Clogher District; whether all persons named in the notice as those for whom he carts goods were, with the exception of officials, supporters of the Orange candidate at the election then pending, and all the persons, without exception, posted as traders not approved by him, were supporters of the Nationalist candidate; whether the author of this notice is the "A. Steen" whose name was signed to a placard summoning an Orange counter-demonstration at the time and place fixed for a lawful Nationalist election meeting, the placard being couched in the following terms:—

> "Loyalists and Orangemen of South Tyrone, assemble in your strength at Clogher on the 3rd December inst. and hurl back your country's invaders.
>
> "A. Steen.
>
> "Clogher, 28th November, 1885."

Whether, in response to this appeal, a number of Orangemen did assemble for the purpose of attacking the Nationalist meeting, to the imminent danger of the public peace; whether Steen's name is also signed as one of the Committee of "the North West of Ireland Registration Association" to a handbill summoning "a meeting of Loyalist electors" in the court house, Clogher, on the 20th February, for the purpose of forming a branch of the Association; and, whether, under these circumstances, Steen will be retained in his offices, or whether he will be prosecuted for boycotting? I am, Sir, sorry that the Rules of the House will not permit me to put the terms of the placard on the Notice Paper.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley), in reply, said, that Alexander Steen did hold the position mentioned. He had made inquiries, and had been unable to ascertain whether it was his signature that had been appended to the Notice which the hon. Member had been good enough to send him. He had been advised that a prosecution for "Boycotting" could not be sustained on that notice. He could not obtain evidence through the Constabulary that Alexander Steen was the person who had signed the placard. He was informed that the meeting of Orangemen was the first summoned.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: If I am able to give the right hon. Gentleman evidence that Steen was the person who called the Orange demonstration, and that was called subsequently to the Nationalist meeting being convened, will that give ground for the dismissal of Steen from his position?

Mr. JOHNSTON: May I ask whether it is to be a subject for dismissal the taking part in an anti-rebel demonstration?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: In reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I cannot promise dismissal until the evidence is laid before us.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Are we to understand that Nationalists are the only people who can——["Order!"]

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE WORTHING MAGISTRATES, SUSSEX.

Mr. BRADLAUGH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been drawn to the case of George Skinner, 60 years of age, sentenced by the Worthing Magistrates to one month's imprisonment with hard labour for stealing coal value 1½*d.* notwithstanding it was his first offence; and, whether he will take any action in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Childers): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to this case. It appears that the prisoner stole 15 lbs. of coal, and the sentence was unanimously agreed upon by a bench of six magistrates. The theft was a deliberate one, and there appears to have been a good deal of coal-stealing in the neighbourhood. I see no reason to interfere with the discretion of the justices.

LAW AND JUSTICE—IMPRISONMENT FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT.

Mr. THOMAS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has seen the report in *The South Wales Daily News* of the case of a poor woman, seventy years of age, who has been imprisoned in Cardiff Gaol for contempt of court since last April; whether the case has been reported to the Home Office; and, whether he will cause full inquiries to be made into the circumstances of the case as to her ability to obey the order of the court?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Childers): The hon. Member may not be aware that the Home Secretary has only a limited jurisdiction over County Court cases. This case has not been officially reported to me, and all I can do is to call the attention of the County Court Judge to the matter. I have accordingly given instructions that a letter should be written to him asking for his observations on the case.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) ACT—REMUNERATION OF POOR RATE COLLECTORS.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the sum of £15,000 granted by Parliament for the remuneration of Poor Rate collectors in Ireland for extra duties imposed on them under the Representation of the People Act, 1884, and the Registration Act, 1885, has been found to be totally inadequate to pay for the work so done by these public servants; whether the Nenagh Board of Guardians were furnished by Collectors O'Brien and Carroll for balance of their bills for this service, which the guardians considered moderate, but had no power to pay out of the Rates; whether he will inquire into these two cases, which are but samples of others similar in the several unions throughout Ireland; and, whether a further sum will be provided adequate to pay off the balance that remains due on the fair claims of the Irish Poor Rate collectors for the faithful performance of imperative and onerous duties; or, if not, how is the balance to be discharged?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler): The officials named in the 11th section of the Registration (Ireland) Act, 1885, have been paid at the rate of about 3*d.* for each additional name placed on the registers in 1885—that is, the excess of the names in 1885 over those in 1884—subject to certain limitations. There is no doubt that in some cases, especially among the poor rate collectors, the officers were not sufficiently remunerated for the work done; but the poor rate collectors were required by the above-named Act to assist in carrying into effect the duties imposed upon the clerk of the Union, and the Local Government Board have advised Boards of Guardians that it is competent for them to make payments to the clerk of the Union, under the authority of the Parliamentary Voters Act, 1850, to enable him to pay poor rate collectors for assistance afforded in the preparation of the lists; and in this manner poor rate collectors in several Unions in Ireland have received additional remuneration when the Boards of Guardians considered that they had not been sufficiently paid from the Parliamentary grant. The Local Government Board is aware that the collectors in Nenagh have addressed the Board of Guardians on this subject, but has not seen the particulars of their claims. When the Boards of Guardians refer the matter to them they will advise them to the above effect.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (IRELAND)—QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION—JUDGES LAWSON AND O'BRIEN.

Mr. CHANCE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Justice Lawson and Mr. Justice O'Brien, now members of the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland, were formerly Judges of other Divisions of the High Court; does the said Division possess an almost exclusive jurisdiction in matters of criminal appeal; what were the circumstances under which such transfers were made; and, what special qualifications possessed by Mr. Justice Lawson and Mr. Justice O'Brien rendered their transfer to the Queen's Bench Division desirable?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley): The two appointments referred to were made on the recommendation of the then Lord Lieutenant, with the concurrence of the Lord Chancellor of the day, as the arrangement, in their judgment, most suitable in the circumstances.

TRADE STATISTICS—THE TRADE OF IRELAND.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, with the aid of the Excise and Customs officials, and with the co-operation of private firms and companies, he can obtain an approximate Return of the values and quantities of the principal articles sent annually from England to Ireland, and from Ireland to England, and also exported and imported annually between Ireland and Foreign Countries and British Possessions?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA): The trade of Ireland has been hitherto treated as part of the internal trade of the Kingdom; and consequently no distinct figures, showing the aggregate of that trade as distinguished from the rest of it, have been given. The total value of the exports and imports in the direct trade between Ireland and foreign countries will be found in the trade accounts, with particulars of principal articles at one or two ports. I will see whether the figures cannot be brought together, so as to be shown as a whole. As regards the trade between Great Britain and Ireland I have consulted the Customs authorities; and they tell me that the information asked for could not be procured officially and accurately without considerable increase of expense as well as much delay and inconvenience to trade, and that an alteration of the law would be necessary for the purpose. The Returns would be very interesting and valuable, and I should be very glad to give them if, on inquiry, I find it could be done without interfering too seriously with trade; but I fear that an approximate Return obtained in the way the hon. Member suggests would not be sufficiently accurate or trustworthy to be made the basis of official statistics.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL asked the Secretary for Scotland, How it is intended that the grievances of the managers of the voluntary schools in Scotland shall be considered; and, whether the Order of Reference to the Royal Commission now inquiring into the operations of the English Education Acts may be enlarged, so as to admit of such grievances being received and considered by the Commissioners?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN): In answer to the hon. and gallant Member, I may say I am not prepared to assent to the statement that the managers of voluntary schools in Scotland suffer from any grievance, and the Department have received no statement bearing upon any such grievance. I have had some conversation with the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and I shall be glad to have more; but he will remember that the conversation did not go beyond the general structure of the Act. As I stated to the House last night, the Order of Reference to the Royal Commission is not likely to be extended, nor is it desirable that it should be extended, to Scotland.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT —PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

MR. DUCKHAM asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he is aware that during the past year several of the outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia in Great Britain have been traced to Irish cattle, and that it has seriously depreciated their value in the markets of Great Britain; that as for many months past the disease in Ireland has been confined to Dublin and a limited area around that city, whether he will, in the interests of the stock owners of Ireland and Great Britain, press upon the Privy Council of Ireland the desirability of rigidly enforcing the provisions of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act of 1878; and, in order that the United Kingdom may be free from a disease which has imposed such serious national losses for so many years past, whether he will also press the same upon the local authorities in Great Britain?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Mr. HENEAGE): During 1885 several Reports were received from Inspectors of Local Authorities of outbreaks of pleuro-pneumonia in Great Britain, which were attributed to the introduction of Irish cattle. In every case where it appeared on inquiry that the animals had been recently landed, the attention of the Irish Government was called to the circumstance, in order that the animals might be traced to their origin. I must, however, remind my hon. Friend that in a large proportion of the cases reported the animals had been a long time in this country before the disease was detected among them, and in those cases it was impossible to come to any conclusion as to whether or not the animals were infected before leaving Ireland. The Privy Council are in frequent communication with the Irish Privy Council on the subject, and are satisfied that they are fully alive to the importance of dealing with this disease. I would only further remark that the disease is not spread by the movement of obviously diseased animals, but by the movement of animals which have been herded with diseased ones, and the Act of 1878 only provides for the compulsory slaughter of diseased animals. Whenever it appears that Local Authorities are not acting with the necessary stringency, the Privy Council invariably urge them to adopt measures for the purpose of stamping out the disease.

MR. DUCKHAM: I beg to give Notice that I shall take the earliest opportunity of moving that the Act be so amended.

ARMY—REWARDS FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICES.

MR. T. H. BOLTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the reward for distinguished or meritorious service, under the Royal Warrant of 1884, is reserved for officers above a certain rank; and, if so, on what grounds this practice has been established?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): Officers of all ranks are eligible for rewards for distinguished or meritorious service; but as length of service necessarily forms a factor in determining claims, it follows that officers in the higher ranks are most frequently selected. A proportion of the grant is specially reserved for quartermasters. I may add that no change has been recently made in the rules which are observed in the selection of officers.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—ACCOMMODATION FOR MEMBERS.

MR. PYNE asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he would increase the number of lockers to the number of Members of the House?

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked, whether the First Commissioner of Works would use his best endeavours to bring about a near approximation of the number of seats in the House to the number of Members?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (who replied) said: In consequence of a representation from the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Office of Works brought the subject of providing 40 additional lockers under the consideration of the Treasury, but were informed by the Lords of the Treasury that they were not prepared at present to sanction the expenditure, estimated at £250. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Mitchell Henry) has entered into a rather wider question than that of lockers, and perhaps he will give Notice.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked the hon. Gentleman whether he would convey to the Treasury the information that if the Treasury did not conform to the wishes of the House the House would make it rather warm for the Treasury?

ARMY—SUPPLY OF MARTINI-HENRY RIFLES.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE asked the Secretary of State for War, How many Martini-Henry rifles there are in store in the United Kingdom at the present moment; and, whether the re-arming of the Forces at Home and in India with the new rifle arranged for by the late Government is entirely suspended; and, if not, how many of these arms it is proposed to turn out at the Enfield Royal Small Arms Factory during the coming year?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): I do not think that it would be for the good of the Public Service that I should give the information asked for in the first part of the noble Lord's Question. As regards the new rifle, there is no intention of suspending its manufacture. It will be more convenient if I state the arrangements which are to be made when I move the Estimates.

ARMY—ENFIELD SMALL ARMS FACTORY—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, having regard to the present condition of trade and manufacture, he will cause the order to discharge 800 workmen from the Enfield Small Arms Factory, on the 1st April, to be reconsidered, and ascertain if the services of some or all of those workmen could be usefully retained for a longer period?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN): The order in question was issued as a warning to the workmen of a reduction which then seemed probable; but I am glad to say that our final arrangements are so made that I hope any abrupt dismissal on a large scale will be avoided.

Sir HENRY TYLER: Will that apply to other establishments of the War Department?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That order was not issued at other establishments.

Viscount FOLKESTONE: Could the right hon. Gentleman say whether he anticipates having to reduce the number of workmen in the Enfield Small Arms Factory?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no certainty on that subject; but I can promise that every possible care will be taken that it shall not be abrupt or inconvenient to the workmen, or involve unnecessary hardship.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—LOAN TO THE WEST CLARE RAILWAY COMPANY.

Mr. COX asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If his attention has been directed to the following Resolution adopted by the County Clare Grand Jury:—

> "Resolved, That the Grand Jury, in the interest of the ratepayers, regret very much the delay that has taken place in the withholding of the loan of £50,000 by the Treasury towards the making of the West Clare Railway, and most earnestly urge that the Board of Works will take the necessary steps to facilitate the loan to enable the contractor to complete the line, and which loan has been practically sanctioned by the Treasury for a considerable time. Every requirement of the Board of Works has been complied with, and their inspector satisfied with the work executed. The ratepayers are enduring great hardships in having to pay the whole interest on the money expended, amounting to £1,600, as the Treasury does not become contributory until the completion of the line; and, in consequence of the contractor, from want of funds, having had to nearly cease work, and much distress amongst the labourers of the district has resulted, we consider the matter should meet no further delay;"

and, whether he will hasten the completion of the loan, as recently promised?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler): My attention has been called to the Resolution referred to. I cannot admit that the wording of the Resolution accurately represents the position of the Treasury with regard to the loan applied for by the West Clare Railway. The conditions laid down by the Treasury for the advance of the loan have not yet been entirely satisfied; but everything that we can do shall be done to hasten the settlement of the matter.

THE ROYAL LIVER SOCIETY—REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR.

Dr. CLARK asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If, considering that the Royal Liver Friendly Society has an annual income of about £400,000, and nearly a million of members, he will lay upon the Table of the House the Report of the Inspector, the honourable E. Lyulph Stanley, to the Registrar of Friendly Societies, on the condition of the Royal Liver Society?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler): I shall have no objection to lay the Report on the Table if the hon. Member will move for it.

METROPOLIS—PUBLIC MEETINGS.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, having regard to recent occurrences, he will now adopt measures for prohibiting in future public meetings from taking place in Trafalgar Square or other similar places, and confining such meetings, under proper restrictions, to certain parks or open spaces to be specified; and, whether he will issue instructions that an adequate force of mounted police shall always be on duty and in readiness on such occasions?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Childers): No, Sir; I am not at present prepared to issue any general order as to the places and the manner of holding public meetings. The policy to be followed in each case must be guided by the circumstances of that case. The question of the employment of mounted police on these occasions is now engaging my attention, its importance having been urged by the recent Committee of Inquiry.

DISQUALIFICATION OF VOTERS—THE LABOUR TEST.

Mr. BIGWOOD asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether those who, as a test of their willingness to work, seek and obtain employment and pay from the relieving officers in the labour yards of the various boards of guardians will be disfranchised for so doing; and, if so, whether steps will be taken to prevent such disqualification under the present exceptional circumstances?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jesse Collings): The task of work which is required by Boards of Guardians in the case of able-bodied persons applying for relief is intended as a test of destitution. The Guardians do not pay for the work, but give such relief in the cases in which the test is imposed as the circumstances may require. Relief by the Guardians where the persons are set to work is attended with the usual statutory disqualification, and this disqualification could only be removed by legislation. Where the circumstances admit of it, we think it very desirable, having regard to the present distress in certain districts, that the Local Authorities should expedite the commencement of works which are contemplated by them; and that in the employment of labour they should act in concert with the Guardians. If the works are undertaken without the intervention of contractors, the officers of the Guardians might refer to the Local Authority for employment the persons who appeared to be most deserving of such assistance, and persons so employed would be saved from the disqualification which attaches to relief from the rates. There should, of course, be strict supervision of the men employed, such as would be the case on the part of a person who contracted for the work. The wages should probably be less than the usual rate, and the acceptance of the work would then be a proof of need, and it would afford no inducement to continue the employment when other opportunity of obtaining work offered. It is intended by the Board to press upon the Local Authorities the adoption of such arrangements as those where exceptional distress prevails.

CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS—THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR.

Mr. PICTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a case proceeding at the Marylebone Police Court, in which a woman is accused of having procured two girls, aged twelve and thirteen, for immoral purposes; and, whether he will instruct the Public Prosecutor to take care that any male persons who may be implicated shall not escape without being brought to trial?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Childers): My hon. Friend may rest assured that this case is being most carefully watched, and that no efforts will be spared on my part to bring to justice any persons who may be implicated in the committal of the alleged offences. But the case is still *sub judice*, and it would be premature for me to take any action at present.

LAW AND POLICE—COST OF THE POLICE FORCE.

Mr. JAMES STUART gave Notice that he would ask the Home Secretary, Whether his attention had been called to the fact that by a recent Return as to the cost of police in 252 provincial boroughs, it was shown that the average cost was equivalent to a poundage of 5¾*d.* on the rateable value, of which 2½*d.* was borne by the Consolidated Fund, and 3¼*d.* by the local rates; whether the cost of the police in the Metropolis, exclusive of the City, was equal to 9*d.* in the pound on the rateable value, of which 4*d.* was borne by the Consolidated Fund and 5*d.* by the rates; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman would direct the Committee which was to inquire into the organization and administration of the Metropolitan Police to inquire into the causes of the great excess of the cost of the police in the Metropolis over other large centres of population.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Childers): If my hon. Friend will speak to me I shall be happy to give him the Returns.

Mr. DWYER GRAY: Will the same apply to Dublin?

Mr. CHILDERS: That is a question for the Irish Government to determine. I have nothing to do with the Irish police.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MURDER OF PATRICK FINLAY, AT WOODFORD, CO. GALWAY.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a man named Patrick Finlay was shot dead on Wednesday at Woodford, county Galway; whether he had been boycotted for several months for having paid his rent to Mr. Lewis, of Ballynakill, county Galway, whose house was blown up in December last; and, whether he had been afforded police protection?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): Patrick Finlay, process server, was shot dead at Derrycraig Wood, near Woodford, in county Galway, on Wednesday, the 3rd instant. Finlay, I am informed, had been obnoxious since the middle of December last, in consequence of having served processes on Sir Henry Burke's property, and also on the property of Mr. Lewis, whose house was attempted to be blown up in December last. Since the 26th of that month Finlay had been constantly watched by the police, and an escort accompanied him when leaving his residence; but on the day of his murder he evaded the vigilance of the police by leaving his house unobserved through the back door in order to proceed to a wood to cut timber for firewood, and in the wood he was afterwards found murdered.

MR. GILL: I should like to ask, Sir, whether there are not circumstances mentioned in to-day's London papers which would suggest that the death was accidental?

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT: And I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there are not circumstances which show the connection between this "death" and the National League?

[No reply.]

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—"BOYCOTTING" — THE NATIONAL LEAGUE.

MR. MACARTNEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a report in *The Roscommon Herald*, of 27th February 1886, of the proceedings of the Longford Branch of the Irish National League, in which Mr. Wilson, the Vice President, is reported as follows:—

> "The League is averse to public or open boycotting, I believe, and they want country branches to do things quietly till we see what Parliament will do for us, and hence we are admonished to be as little aggressive as we possibly can for a time;"

and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any steps to protect the public against the less aggressive form of "Boycotting" indicated in this statement?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY): The hon. Member will excuse me, but I do not quite see the object of this Question. Surely the less aggressive "Boycotting" is, the better; but the hon. Member may rest assured that whenever there is evidence to sustain a prosecution for a breach of the law in respect of intimidation the law will be put in motion. I do not take the hon. Member as regarding the present as a specific instance of "Boycotting."

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

RESOLUTION.

MR. LABOUCHERE, in rising to move the following Resolution:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is inconsistent with the principles of Representative Government, that any Member of either House of the Legislature should derive his title to legislate by virtue of hereditary descent,"

said, that the Prime Minister had lately described himself as an "old Parliamentary hand;" and, though he himself would not have ventured to speak in such terms of the right hon. Gentleman, it was obviously the doing of one who thoroughly understood Parliamentary tactics that Motions such as the present were arranged to come on upon Fridays. By this arrangement Members were asked not to vote according to their opinions; but it was asked that all those who wished the government of the country to be properly carried on should vote against any Motion standing on the Paper on these occasions and in favour of going into Supply. He maintained that if this were insisted on, and if hon. Members were to be told that whatever was the grievance brought forward, and however strongly they might think on the subject, as a matter of fidelity to the Government, they were to vote against it, discussion would be an end. He trusted, therefore, that the Prime Minister would allow them to vote upon this Motion according to its merits, and he hoped that this would extend to the occupants of the Treasury Bench. He was sure that many of them entirely agreed with the Motion which he had brought forward, and he had no doubt that they had been delighted when they saw that he had put it down, and that they were most anxious and eager to vote in favour of it. At the last General Election they had had an authorized programme and an unauthorized official programme. The unauthorized programme went somewhat further than the authorized one; but it seemed to be in accordance with the wishes, opinions, and views of that House, since it had been upon an item of the unauthorized programme that the late change of Ministry had taken place a few weeks ago. Besides these, the people had a programme of their own. It was expected that the Government would shortly propose a radical change in those fundamental laws which regulate the legislative relations between England and Ireland, which hon. Members opposite regarded as the very basis of the Constitution. But they had a grievance on this side of the Channel as well as the Irish, and that grievance affected the Irish as much as it affected themselves. They desired to repeal any species of union between the elective legislator and the hereditary legislators, and both in Ireland and England they asked that that union should be treated as they would treat the Castle in Ireland. Last year they had passed a Reform Act. Some time before that Lord Beaconsfield, in speaking of the House of Lords, had said that it practically represented 26,000,000 of population in this country who had not votes. No Conservative would raise that argument at present. They had taken away that electorate from the House of Lords, and the decisions of the House of Commons were now, to all intents and purposes, the decisions of the whole country. Such an argument was only possible when representative government was a mere sham. The country was now becoming democratic, and hereditary legislators were an anachronism in a democracy. There were Liberals, perhaps, who thought differently. The term "Liberal" was at present a somewhat vague one; and, for his own part, he did not profess quite to know what a Liberal was. He himself was a Radical, and consequently he knew what Radicals were. Owing to the independence and frankness of their nature, Radicals sometimes differed upon small points; but they were entirely united in this opinion—that all legislative rights should spring from the people, and they all objected to the existence of any hereditary Legislature in this country. If any hon. Gentleman told him he was a Radical and took an opposite view, he would say to that Gentleman, with the utmost respect, that he regarded him as a humbug. If such an hon. Gentleman was under the impression that he carried his constituency with him in opposition to the Motion which was now brought forward, he would recommend him to consult his constituency. He thought that there had not been one Radical or Liberal meeting during the whole of the last Election campaign at which this Resolution would not have been carried almost unanimously; and if any Gentleman questioned that—he referred to Gentlemen on his own side of the House—let him call a meeting of his constituents, and let him decide by what they thought. He was himself in favour of a single Chamber; but his Motion did not go so far as that, and the House was not asked to give an opinion upon that point. Perhaps the House had not made up its mind whether there ought to be one Chamber or two. It was true, however, that they had the highest authority—he was speaking of hon. Members opposite—for the existence of a single Chamber. Lord Beaconsfield himself had said that nobody wanted a second Chamber, except a few disreputable individuals, and that it was a valuable institution for any Member who had neither distinction nor character nor talents. [*Cries of* "Where?"] Well, it was in one of Lord Beaconsfield's early works, and he never clearly gathered that his Lordship had altered his opinion. The hon. and gallant Member for Buckinghamshire (Captain Verney) had put down an Amendment to this Motion. He confessed he could not quite make out what that Amendment meant; but, so far as he could understand it, it seemed to imply that the second Chamber was an evil, but a necessary evil, and that they should be satisfied with the evils which they had, and should not fly to others that they knew not of—in fact, that they might go further and fare worse. But, in his own opinion, the House of Lords was not quite so innocuous. It was powerless for good, but it was powerful for evil, as he trusted he would be able to show them. Up to 1832 the aristocracy had been paramount in this country not only in the House of Lords, but in the Executive and in the House of Commons. In 1797 a Petition had been presented to that House, representing that 306 Members were almost entirely returned either by noblemen or borough-mongers who wanted to become noblemen. Since 1832 popular government had advanced by leaps and bounds, and there was now a permanent antagonism between that House and the other House. In these two Houses they had two antagonistic principles, which could no more unite together than oil and water. Who was the first Peer in ordinary cases? He did not wish to make personal remarks, but they knew very well that the first Peer had very often been a borough-monger, or a person who had done some service, or a Court favourite. The other day he had asked the Secretary to the Treasury a Question with regard to the services of the ancestors of one Peer. The hon. Gentleman had evaded the Question, and had asked him to go back to sixteen hundred and something to find out what they were. He had before maintained that because a man had been clever and had gained a Peerage it did not follow that his son was clever too. The Prime Minister had once contested that proposition, and cited the case of the two Yorkes, father and son, who had been Lord Chancellors; but the right hon. Gentleman had forgotten to mention that the second of them felt so strongly that he was not fit for the position that he had blown out his brains as soon as he had gained the appointment. Peers, like humbler individuals, had mothers as well as fathers. They did not spring from the heads of their fathers, as Minerva had sprung from the head of Jove; and, in fact, mothers had as much to do with the intellect of the son as fathers had. Painters, poets, or lawyers were not hereditary. It was true that in France there had been hereditary lawyers; but one of the first things the Revolution did was to sweep away hereditary lawyers, as he would have that House sweep away hereditary Peers. If there were to be hereditary legislators they did not adopt the right plan. They ought to find the most intelligent persons in the country, take them when young, bring them up to be legislators, and, when they had reached the years of maturity, marry them to Girton girls, and then, perhaps, they might get some sort of result. But when the hereditary Peers had condescended to be born, what was their training, and what were their amusements? Were they such as were likely to make them efficient legislators? In the House of Lords there were Peers connected with the Naval and Military Services. Now, though, no doubt, military training made a good soldier, no one would assert that the training of a soldier was good for making a legislator. The Peers lived in the country and were great Thanes—bulls of Bashan—great men in a small locality. When they came to London for the season they occupied their time much as most idle men did. He had never seen in what they did or said any sign on the part of the great bulk of Peers of any attempt to educate themselves for the duty of legislators. One would suppose that they would go to the House of Lords to learn how to legislate. What was the fact? Hon. Gentlemen sometimes went themselves to the House of Lords to look on, and he thought that the best cure for those who admired the House of Lords was to go and look at it when sitting. On great occasions they flocked up from all parts of the country, and sat on their Benches like sheep, and voted like sheep; but, on ordinary occasions, a visitor would find some Peer making a speech to half-a-dozen others until the dinner hour approached, when all present vanished like ghosts. The mass of Peers did not attend except when some great division was to take place. They did not, like Members of the House of Commons, attend regularly to learn their business. Some Peers, no doubt, had devoted themselves to politics. But how were they rewarded? We were so exceedingly grateful to them for doing it, that, whenever their Party came into power, we at once gave them some Office, and felt proud of their condescension in taking into their charge some portion of the affairs of this great Empire. No doubt, there were some excellent men in the House of Lords who were exceptions; there were men like Lord Salisbury and Lord Rosebery, who were exceedingly able men; but there were albinos in Africa, and this fact did not entitle anyone to describe the Natives of Africa as white men. They knew that every Member of this House possessed the greatest wisdom; but in a former House of Commons there were some fools, and they could not say it was a House of fools because there happened to be half-a-dozen fools among them. Neither could they say the House of Lords was a House of wisdom because it contained a few able men. The fact was that their system was this. It was as if they took a lady's lap-dog and bred it up in a drawing-room, and then imagined he would turn out a good sheep-dog. Their whole system was bad. It was said that the House of Lords did not entirely consist of hereditary Peers, and that it was constantly being recruited from the cream of the nation. But was that the fact? Who were the Gentlemen who were ordinarily made new Peers? Some of them were politicians, but politicians who had been bores and nuisances in this House, and were kicked upstairs. It was not generally the rule to select the new Peers from politicians, but to select Gentlemen who were rich men, who had inherited large estates, or who had made large fortunes and bought large estates. He would take an instance, since it was one of the latest, the case of Sir Henry Allsopp. He selected the case of this Gentleman not invidiously, for he believed he was a most respectable man, but as being a typical one. This Gentleman brewed beer, and by so doing he acquired a fortune. No one could say that he distinguished himself very much as a politician. No doubt, he voted very often for his Party in the House of Commons, and very likely he subscribed to the Carlton Club. As a consequence, Sir Henry Allsopp was made a Baronet. No one objected to Sir Henry Allsopp or anybody else being made a Baronet. It would be almost cruelty to animals to refuse anyone a Baronetcy who asked for it. A Baronetcy pleased the Gentleman himself, and was a matter of perfect indifference to everyone else, except, perhaps, his wife. He would as soon think of refusing a thistle to a hungry and pleading donkey. But Sir Henry Allsopp was not satisfied with his Baronetcy, and he was considered worthy of the dignity of a Peerage. This afforded good cause of complaint, for it gave him and his descendants the hereditary right of legislating for the country. It was often said that the House of Lords was retrograde. This was scarcely surprising. What was the first step that Sir Henry Allsopp took when he had become a Peer? He wrote to *The Times* complaining that he had been described as a brewer, and saying that he had ceased brewing; and at a bucolic festival which occurred in the country shortly afterwards, when his tenants congratulated him on being made a Peer, some gentlemen present suggested that Lord Hindlip was descended from one of the Plantagenet Kings. He (Mr. Labouchere) had taken this Gentleman as an instance, and he did not exactly know whether or not he had a son. An hon. Member near him said he had a son in this House. Well, would that hon. Gentleman, if he survived his father and went up to the other House, prove a useful Member of that House in connection with commerce? Would he allude to the paternal butt? In all probability he would think much of his Plantagenet ancestors, and that the respected vendor of intoxicating liquor, to whom he owed his title, would be entirely forgotten. He did ask upon what principle in the world were they to assent to Sir Henry Allsopp's son, grandson, and great-grandson hereditarily ruling over them? The House of Lords consisted entirely of men belonging to one class, whereas the boast of the House of Commons was that in it every class was represented. Last year one of the reasons given for reducing the expenses of elections was that poor men might come into the House, and now there were nine working men sitting on that side of the House. Lord Salisbury had said that—

> "In these days any institution that is sectional in its character, and has not the interest of the whole community for its object, is necessarily doomed."

Trying the House of Lords by this test, Lord Salisbury ought, if he considered the matter, and happened to have a seat in the House of Commons, to support this Motion. There were in the Upper House 402 hereditary Peers. They owned among them 14,000,000 acres, producing a rental of £12,000,000, which was an average of 35,000 acres each, and an average income of £30,000. A great deal had been said about the Irish Land League; but could anyone conceive a more pernicious Land League than that which existed in this country? Of course, being landlords; they legislated in the interests of landlords; and, as a consequence, our Land Laws were the disgrace and opprobrium of the country. These Gentlemen beat people off the land to make way for game; there were vast tracts of land uncultivated. Even at death they shirked paying the Death Duties; the farmers had no fixity of tenure; and the labourers were almost starving. Moreover, these Gentlemen appeared to think that 35,000 acres was the proper share for a gentleman; but when starving labourers came forward and asked for a miserable three acres and a cow they were treated with contumely. What could be more absurd than to suppose that any single class, when they had the power, would legislate for any class except themselves? They might as well, in an assembly of cats and mice, imagine the cats would legislate in the interests of the mice. It might be thought that, being so rich, these noble Lords were personally independent. But was this the case? A more self-seeking body of men did not exist. ["Oh!"] He would prove it. There were three Orders of Knighthood which were conferred without any pretence of merit in the recipients, being simply given for the purpose of keeping them sweet, as he might call it, to the Government. In addition, almost half the Peers were Privy Councillors, and a large number of them were Lords Lieutenant. When a Ministry was turned out, Gentlemen in the Upper House fought hard for places with a salary. They were ready to accept a place in the Government or at Court, and to perform duties which Gibbon said the noblest of Roman Emperors would not have caused the meanest patrician to do for him. One Gentleman got a sum of money for looking after the Queen's dogs, another Gentleman for looking after the Queen's horses, and a third for looking after the Queen's footmen. He had been counting up what they received from the State, and, leaving out of consideration the sums received by Royal Peers and Bishops, Members of the House of Lords annually received out of Government funds £338,776. When it was proposed that Members of the House of Commons should be paid, it was said that this would be degrading, and would destroy its independence. Yet a very small sum of division showed that these hereditary Peers, notwithstanding their vast wealth, were paid out of the public Treasury an average of £700 per annum each for their services. But that was not all; they had relatives. There was a very valuable book published annually —namely, *The Financial Reform Almanack.* [*Much laughter.*] He could understand that some hon. Members opposite did not like that publication. It appeared from it that the relatives of Peers had received from 1855 up to the present date £120,000,000 sterling. As some slight mistake might have been made in the calculation, he would deduct £20,000,000 from the total. Surely £100,000,000 was a very considerable sum for some 400 or 500 families to have received from the Exchequer in 30 years. It appeared that each Duke had, since 1855, had 56 relatives living upon the public Exchequer. It might be asked why not, on the ground that these relatives were just as good as other people; but it must be remembered that other people also wanted to live. In 1873, the present Prime Minister stated that there were multitudes of competent men who would gladly take the places of the worst paid public servants. Lord Palmerston used to say, "The best man for a place is the man I like best;" and so, apparently, thought the Peers. Last year the House of Commons passed a Corrupt Practices Act. He regretted that its scope had not been extended, so as to include the cases of corrupt practices occurring in the other House. Hereditary legislators possessing hereditary votes seemed to consider that they had a perfect right to take them to the best market. An ideal Upper Chamber would be above all partizanship, and would hold the balance equally between the Parties in the Lower Chamber. Did the House of Lords perform any such office? ["No!"] There was no more partizan Assembly in the country. The air of the House of Lords was too foul and stagnant for Radicals to live in it. There was no Radical there; even Liberalism drooped in that House. The Upper House was an Assembly of Conservative partizans. Therefore, when the Conservatives were in power the House of Lords was perfectly useless, because they concurred, as a matter of course, in everything proposed by the Tory Government. But when the Liberals were in power the success of their measures depended upon the goodwill of the Conservative Leaders in the Upper House. At the beginning of the last Parliament a Bill was brought in by a Liberal Prime Minister enjoying the confidence of the country for the purpose of providing compensation for disturbance in Ireland. The Government held that the Bill was necessary in order to enable men to rule justly in Ireland, and yet the Bill was thrown out by the House of Lords. Remembering that fact, he laid every outrage that had been committed in Ireland since that period at the door of the other House. Of the measure in question the Prime Minister had said—

> "It was an Act which would have averted by far the greater part of the dangers and difficulties that have arisen. The House of Lords had committed one of the most deplorable errors of judgment which ever misled or bewildered a public Assembly."

Then the House would remember that later in the existence of the late Liberal Government a Franchise Bill passed through the House, and that the House of Lords consequently refused to pass it. The Conservatives in the country were apparently opposed to it. What followed? There was an Autumn Session, and the Prime Minister had to go hat in hand to the Leader of the Conservative Party and make terms with him, the Conservatives being at that time in a minority in the House of Commons. It would be remembered that when Amendments were afterwards proposed by a Liberal Member, the reply in many instances that came from the Ministerial Bench was that such Amendments, although not objectionable in themselves, could not be acceded to by the Government, because they were not within the scope of the bargain made between the Leaders of the two Parties. That was an instance of the way in which the Upper House acted as a Tory Caucus. Now, was not such a state of things extremely humiliating? He could understand that Conservatives wished to perpetuate such a state of things; but he was surprised that there should be Gentlemen on his side of the House who also wished to perpetuate it. He could only suppose that they were afraid of their own principles; that after professing those principles on the hustings, in order to secure their return to Parliament, they were exceedingly grateful when they found that the action of the House of Lords was likely to prevent the embodiment of those principles in legislation. What was the spirit that animated the House of Lords? Lord Hertford, who had all the attributes of an average Peer, had lately stated that the speeches of Mr. Chamberlain and others belonging to that right hon. Gentleman's Party were incentives to disorder and riot, and that the Attorney General had delivered revolutionary speeches; and the noble Lord asked whether it was not a strange thing to put a man in the position of Under Secretary for Home Affairs who at one time was under police surveillance? He added that he supposed we might soon see a notorious burglar, like Peace, supersede Sir Edmund Henderson at the head of the police, and went on to say—

> "It behoved them all to do their best to spread loyal and Conservative principles, so that when the time came they might get rid of the Socialistic, Republican, Radical Government, and put in its place one containing men like Lord Salisbury and other noted Conservatives."

The spirit disclosed in the remarks of Lord Hertford animated nearly the whole of the House of Lords, and it was high time that Liberals should proclaim that they would not be coerced and bullied any longer. Now, what was the position of affairs? The Prime Minister had recently returned to power with a large majority from England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland; and it was his intention to produce on the 1st of April—[Mr. GLADSTONE dissented]—well, some time in the month of April, a scheme which he had not yet revealed, but which in all probability would be a scheme of Home Rule for Ireland. Lord Salisbury, however, had declared that if such a scheme were proposed the House of Lords would fulfil their duty and reject it. Lord Salisbury thus claimed the right to veto any measure passed in the House of Commons, and to provoke a Dissolution at his pleasure. He held that that would be an outrageous right to grant to anybody; but Lord Salisbury was the very last man who ought to possess such power, because he was the candidate for the Premiership at the last General Election, and the country had declared that it had no confidence in him. That he should be able to prevent the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury from carrying out the policy which he held to be desirable would be most monstrous. Liberals, it appeared, could only hope that they would be able to bribe the other House into agreeing to the wishes of the House of Commons. Much was sometimes heard about the integrity of the Empire; but he had observed lately that the rights and property of landlords were also much talked about, and it was possible that the House of Peers would allow the integrity of the Empire to drop out of sight if clauses were inserted in the contemplated legislation for the purpose of giving to the landlords far more than they had any right to expect. When Liberal reforms were proposed in the House of Commons, were Liberals always to be threatened with a Dissolution, and to be forced to bribe or coerce a privileged class into agreement? Lord Beaconsfield once stated that the legislation of the future would be in the direction of weakening the great landed class in the Constitution. He could only hope devoutly that it would. It seemed to him that, in accordance with that sound principle, they ought not to maintain the existence of an hereditary class of landlords, who openly avowed that they were there in order to prevent the House of Commons doing that which was for the benefit of the country. Even in Liberal Cabinets the baneful influence of the House of Lords was felt. In the last Cabinet there were, perhaps, not quite so many Peers as usual; but almost every Member of that Cabinet was a relative of a Peer. The only two who were not were the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross), and the right hon. Gentleman the late Minister for War (Mr. W. H. Smith). And what did the aristocracy say of them? They contemptuously admitted them, and said—"We will admit Marshall and Snelgrove." In the present Cabinet, too, there were a good many Peers, and two Members of the Government outside the Cabinet were Peers. There were two objections to that. One was that a Peer, when he was a Member of the great Executive Council of the Nation, must have very great influence; and, as a rule, Peers were not so liberal as Members of the House of Commons. Therefore, that was a bad thing. But a stronger objection was that the great Offices of State ought to be represented by their heads in the House of Commons. No doubt their subordinates were very excellent and intelligent Gentlemen; but he had always observed that when a question was asked of any one of them, they said that the noble Lord at the head of the Office had said so and so. If the House of Commons did represent the country, the heads of the great spending Departments should sit in that House. The evils of the House of Lords were obvious. Almost every other institution in the world had some counterbalancing advantage; but the House of Lords was the only Assembly that he ever knew of that had absolutely no counterbalancing advantage. The Peers might be very excellent men, but being in the other House they might as well live in the planet Saturn. Lord Salisbury had said that the abolition of the House of Lords would lead to the establishment of triennial Parliaments. His reply to that was that he wished there were now triennial Parliaments, as they would be a very good thing. He thought they could not too often consult the electors. But they were also told that the House of Lords saved the country from hasty and precipitate legislation. When did they ever do that? For an instance of that they would have to go back to the last century, when the House of Lords threw out Fox's East India Bill. It was perfectly true that that was an act on their part to which the constituencies of the country agreed; but it must be remembered that the majority in the House of Commons at that time bore the reflex of the aristocracy, and the constituencies did not represent the people. Was it humanly probable that the Members of the House of Commons, elected by the country as their Representatives, would deliberately say—"We will act in such a manner that the country will not approve of us?" Members of that House were far more likely to know the will of the people, and to act according to it, than the House of Lords, who did not and could not know it, and lived far away up in the moon. When once a Bill had passed the House of Commons, it was perfectly certain to become the law of the land, no matter what the House of Lords did. The people had invariably stood by their own Representatives, and when the House of Lords had appealed against the House of Commons it had been proved by the result that the House of Lords had been in the wrong and the House of Commons in the right. It was absurd to talk about the House of Commons being precipitate. Precipitate! Why, it was the longest-winded Assembly in the world. It was very seldom, however, that the Lords threw out Bills. They were a very great deal too astute; they mutilated and marred Bills, or, rather, they did that when the Liberals were in power, but when the Tories came into power they introduced a Bill containing the very same provisions. He would give two instances of that. In 1868 a Bill was introduced in the House of Commons and passed, which did something towards doing away with the unhealthy dwellings of the artizans; but the House of Lords struck out all the clauses relating to unhealthy dwellings. Seven years later, when the right hon. Gentleman opposite was Home Secretary, he brought in a Bill replacing those very clauses which had been struck out of the Bill of 1868 when the Liberals were in power. He did not think he was exaggerating in saying that the right hon. Gentleman had frequently boasted of that Act to the country as a proof of what he and the Conservatives did for the working classes. Again, in the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1871, the House of Lords inserted clauses against picketing; and yet in 1875 they brought in a Bill doing away with those very clauses. He asked hon. Gentlemen opposite to show him one single useful act the House of Lords had done during its whole career. Their action had been one consistent war against all reform, municipal and Parliamentary, against all the sound doctrines of political economy and commerce and religious equality. Their mission had been to obstruct, and mar, and mutilate every sound Bill that had passed the House of Commons. He did not say that they were worse than other aristocracies. He did not say that they were worse, even, than other men. He had no doubt that if any other class was given such honour that class would legislate for itself. He even believed that the purest and best of men—he alluded to journalists—would do the same. They were told that it would be impossible Constitutionally to abolish the Hereditary Legislature. Lord Salisbury, speaking a day or two ago, had said that the abolition of the House of Lords could only be achieved by violent and revolutionary means; and then this defender of the Constitution went on to state that if this inevitable struggle took place the House of Lords should not have to rely upon the high sanction of Constitutional authority, but should have just a taste of physical force in the background as well. The late Secretary for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) had also said in Ireland that there would be a taste of physical force even if Lords and Commons passed a certain law. But why could not the House of Lords be ended Constitutionally? Nothing could be more simple than to create 300 Peers and swamp the present House. He really believed there was such patriotism on the Benches on which he sat that he could find 300 Gentlemen upon them who would ascend the political altar of their country and sacrifice themselves in that way. But if there was to be a struggle between the House of Lords insisting on maintaining their present position, and the vast majority of the people of this country, with their Representatives, insisting on an alteration being made, physical force would not be of any great avail, even if Lord Salisbury led it. An hon. Gentleman had put down an Amendment to his Motion, to the effect that he wished the House of Lords should be reformed in accordance with the principles already recognized in the constitution of that House. But he would point out to the House that he was not asking them to decide between the system of one Chamber and another; but he wanted to reform the House of Lords, not in accordance with the principles already recognized, but in accordance with the principles recognized by every sane and sensible man outside the House of Lords. The reform that he wished for was that the hereditary legislators should disappear. The lines of demarcation between Parties were very artificial at this time. What united the Liberal Party was a personal tie to the Prime Minister. They were faithful to the Prime Minister owing to the great services he had performed for the Liberal Party. He believed that the only men in that House who really knew their own minds were the Radicals. After the Reform Bill of last year they were landed in a Democracy, and Democrat and Radical were convertible terms. Democracy recognized no class distinctions, no hereditary legislators; and Democrats regarded a Hereditary Legislature as an insult, an absurdity, and an abomination—they regarded such an Assembly, claiming to overrule the decision of the Representatives of the people, as a baneful and pernicious institution. In the great tribunal of the country the case had been heard and judgment had been given; and the country called upon the House to give effect to that judgment.

Mr. DILLWYN seconded the Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is inconsistent with the principles of Representative Government, that any Member of either House of the Legislature should derive his title to legislate by virtue of hereditary descent,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. BRODRICK said, he thought that the hon. Member for Northampton, in the interesting exhibition which he had just afforded them, had hardly treated the subject with the seriousness that it demanded. The hon. Gentleman's description of the composition of the House of Lords was an extraordinary caricature and a ridiculous exaggeration which would not be received with much respect in the country. There was no class of men which was more violent in their vituperation of the House of Lords than the Radicals when on the war path, and yet whenever they found themselves with a Peer who adopted their own views, there was no body of men more ready to idolize him and throw themselves at his feet. The President of the Local Government Board had, as everybody knew, spoken very strongly against the Upper House, and he had pointed out Lord Salisbury as one of those who "toiled not neither did they spin," urging that his opinions in regard to artizans' dwellings and social reform should be accepted with some reservation because of his aristocratic feelings. That was an indictment against every Member of the other House; but a few weeks afterwards the right hon. Gentleman went down to a political meeting in the country, and having succeeded in getting a young Peer of no great experience or services—the Earl of Durham—to take the chair for him, he pronounced an elaborate eulogium upon him, as being one of those who, having come forward to assist the Radical Party, could never be accused of neither toiling nor spinning. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose opinions on this subject had peculiar force, because unless he was grossly maligned he would not be averse to take his seat in the House of Lords, and on the formation of the present Government had been willing to face the dismay of the Legal Profession by accepting the Woolsack. That right hon. Gentleman went some time ago to speak in Dorsetshire, and he invited to take the chair a Peer who had since been rewarded with the Office of Postmaster General; and the right hon. Gentleman said that if every Peer was like Lord Wolverton no one would take objection to the House of Lords. All that showed that it was the politics and not the composition of the other House that they were asked to deal with on the present occasion. The hon. Member for Northampton did not deny that there was a useful minority in the other Chamber. The fact was, that this minority was really a majority. Now the present House of Lords consisted of 521 Members. Of that number 182 had previously sat in the House of Commons, and had therefore experience of legislative work from having contested and being chosen to represent constituencies. Surely those who were fit for the work of legislation in one House could not lose their qualifications by being transferred to the other. Then there was the class of Peers who had held, not mere ornamental posts, but high administrative, judicial, and other offices, the permanent civil servants, and, again, men like Lord Wolseley and Lord Alcester, who had peculiar knowledge of the Services to which they belonged. They mounted up to 50 more. Again, there were 26 Bishops who had risen by no hereditary rank, but solely by their own merits, to the positions they occupied, and who, it could not be doubted, if they had followed other than spiritual functions, would have been found well qualified by education and cultivation to legislate for the country. There were altogether between 250 and 260 men, or rather more than half the House of Lords, who belonged to these classes. It was, therefore, preposterous for the hon. Member to speak of the House of Lords as if capable men in it were as rare as albinos in Africa. Why, there were in the Upper House no less than eight Peers who had sat side by side with the present Prime Minister in different Cabinets, but who had not on this occasion found their way there. The hon. Member had been guilty of the grossest exaggeration in regard to the sums of public money paid, as he represented, in pampering hereditary legislators. He challenged the hon. Member to show the House how he arrived at his calculation that £380,000 per annum of public money was enjoyed by Members of the House of Lords. He believed that there were not at this moment more than 30 paid Members in the other House; and he felt satisfied that the hon. Member could not produce authentic documents to prove his extraordinary calculation. Again, great ignorance existed as to the proportions of Peers who attended in the other House. He admitted that a certain number of Peers did not attend to their functions, and he should be as much inclined as anyone to say that those of that Body who did not value their privileges should not be enabled to exercise them. But he had taken the statistics of attendance for a period of eight years. During that time from 330 to 400 Peers who attended the House spoke and voted, and the average amounted to 340 per Session. He did not, of course, say they were there every day; but the average for one year before Easter, although there were no divisions and few debates of importance, was 120. The hon. Member said that the House of Lords, as at present constituted, was a body of partizans. But whose fault was that? Since the Reform Act of 1832, of nearly 200 Peers added to the House of Lords more than two-thirds had been added by Radical Administrations. These, then, were the "spawn of corruption, and blunders, and wars of the dark ages of history," of whom the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright) had spoken. Why did Peers who were sent up from that House become Tories? It was, he believed, because they had no occasion to be afraid of constituents as to the course they pursued with regard to legislative measures; but then it had to be remembered that they voted according to their principles. It had often been said that Radicalism was a good faith to begin life in, but it got stale in middle age, and it was a bad faith to die in. That was evidently the view shared by those who went to the House of Lords. What the hon. Member and his Friends really wanted was a House of Lords consisting of Radicals, hall-marked by the Caucus. If they looked at the work of the House of Lords fairly, he did not think they had much reason to complain; but he would like to see a body of life Peers added—men of legislative instincts and experience, who might replace those who could be deprived of their legislative functions through non-attendance on their duties, as that would strengthen the House. He asked the House to note the circumstance that the hon. Member did not say that he wished the offices attached to the Court to be abolished, or the salaries connected with the appointments done away with. It seemed to him that he would evidently be satisfied if his Colleague the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), and perhaps Mr. Schnadhorst became Master of the Horse and Master of the Buckhounds in succession to the present holders of these offices. As to the action of the House of Lords with regard to the Bills sent up from the Commons, that action, he thought, must, on the whole, be regarded as beneficial. It had been said the House of Lords never did anything to the advantage of the country; but he utterly denied the accuracy of that statement. He thought the hon. Member was unfortunate in his comparison in taking as an illustration the last Reform Bill. Could any hon. Member doubt that the hands of the Prime Minister were strengthened for carrying out the Redistribution Bill by the action of the House of Lords? The result of their action in that instance was that a more complete measure of Reform was produced than they could have expected in the fifth year of an expiring Parliament. Much exception had been taken to the action of the House of Lords in throwing out the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. It was quite true; but the House of Lords thought that the series of measures which the Prime Minister had brought forward would not result in the pacification of Ireland. Would any hon. Member say that those measures had had this result, or even that the present attempt of the right hon. Gentleman was one which justified those measures and the strain which he had put on Parliament during all those years? The strongest position of the House of Lords was in reference to measures which had not received due consideration from the country. The hon. Member had said that the issue of the Home Rule scheme of the Prime Minister was in the hands of Lord Salisbury. He need hardly remind the House that no hint of the scheme of the Prime Minister was given to the country until a fortnight after the General Election.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): I broadly contradict that statement. The declaration was made on the 13th September, and nothing whatever was ever added to it.

MR. BRODRICK: Did the right hon. Gentleman in November ever make any declaration with respect to large schemes dealing with land in Ireland?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I spoke of the Government of Ireland. No declaration was made as to land.

MR. BRODRICK: I said scheme.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: No scheme was hinted at.

MR. BRODRICK said, the fact of a radical and complete change with respect to Ireland was first brought before the country broadly in the month of December, at the very moment when the constituencies, having given their verdict, could not be consulted on it. The House of Lords could ensure a due attention by the Government of the day to the wishes of the people. The House of Lords had shown its usefulness in many ways, and they had a right to ask that their House should be fairly judged on the measures they had promoted. He was surprised to see how many of the questions on which the minds of labourers and artizans were excited had been first brought forward and debated in the House of Lords. The questions of the transfer of land and the freedom of entail were subjects which, but for the initiative of Lord Cairns, would certainly have not been treated in the last Parliament. Reference had been made to the subject of artizans' dwellings. Would the hon. Member deny that the question of artizans' dwellings coming so prominently to the front were due entirely to the action of Lord Salisbury in writing an article in a magazine, afterwards bringing the matter before the House of Lords, and moving for a Royal Commission? Take, again, the question of intemperance. The House of Lords appointed a Committee to inquire into the matter, and a Report had been presented to Parliament. He hoped that in the Local Government Bill of this Session some attempt would be made to grapple with this question. No hon. Member would deny that the Select Committees of the House of Lords were attended with greater vigour than those of the House of Commons. He had often heard lawyers bear a tribute to the superior way in which the Private Bill Committees were conducted by the Peers in comparison with those of the House of Commons. Again, the House of Commons might imitate without any derogation of its dignity the business-like manner in which the Business of that House was transacted. With regard to the strictures of the hon. Member on the composition of the late Cabinet, and the number of Peers and relatives of Peers which it included, he denied altogether that those criticisms were either just or fair. The last Cabinet represented the people as truly as did the present Cabinet, and this could be tested by the reception half-a-dozen Members of either Cabinet would receive at popular gatherings in the country. He hoped the House would not be hurried into a decision adverse to the hereditary principle. When we had a body of Peers who had given their services to the country, as many of the Peers had done, with all the knowledge they had of Quarter Sessions business and of local government, with the experience many of them had gained in the House of Commons, and the advantages others possessed in having filled high governing offices, we ought to halt before we condemned the hereditary principle. If it were necessary to modify the working of that principle, he did not think there would be any difficulty about doing that. It was said that this House had already emancipated itself from the influence of the other House, and the day might yet come when the impulses of this House after an election might be advantageously restrained by the more settled habits of thought which were favoured by the independence of the other House.

BARON F. DE ROTHSCHILD said, he should not have spoken but for a sentence in the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton. He understood the hon. Member to say that one reason for sweeping away the hereditary system was that the unsatisfactory character of our Land Laws was due to the abominable and disgraceful conduct of the landlords. Although he was as staunch a supporter of the Liberal Government as the hon. Member himself, he could not assent to the charges which he understood the hon. Member to make, and, therefore, he must be allowed to protest against them.

MR. LABOUCHERE corrected the hon. Gentleman with a remark which was inaudible in the Gallery.

BARON F. DE ROTHSCHILD said, he had understood the hon. Member had spoken of the disgraceful conduct of the landlords. This country had achieved historic greatness long before the democratic principle had asserted itself in the composition of the House of Commons; and, therefore, if landlords had exercised the influence with which they were charged or credited in the past, it must be admitted that they had done something to promote the historic greatness of the country.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE said, that the hon. Member for Northampton could scarcely have intended to do irreverence to the memory of his uncle, who was a Peer, so that the hon. Member was himself a relative of a Peer and one of the class of whom he had affected to speak so contemptuously. The real intention of the hon. Member must be something different from that which was suggested by the guise he assumed; and for the meaning of his speech, as for that of a manifesto of the Prime Minister, you must read between the lines. The hon. Member would not favour a retrograde measure; it would be one to deny the value of the hereditary principle; and, therefore, the House must in this case look deeper than the surface for the springs of human action. The doctrine of evolution was announced and established by Darwin. His investigations were carried further by Mr. F. Galton, who studied not merely the transmissibility of physical qualities in the lower animals and man, but also the transmissibility of intellectual qualities and the heredity of genius. It was some 10 or 15 years since he read Mr. Galton's book, the scope of which was that genius was hereditary. Mr. Galton took certain classes of persons who were more noted than others, who were eminent above their fellows, and he looked into their parentage and relationships. The body of men he singled out in order to prove his case was the House of Lords. Although there were varieties of degree in genius and ability in that House, yet it was found that elevation to that House did mark some degree of eminence over the ordinary run of men. Consequently, a philosopher, a man of science, studying the question said that a body of men which did include men of more or less eminence afforded him the illustration he required in order to prove the hereditary quality of genius. The author said that not only was genius transmissible from father to son, but it was curious to find traces of it in the ancestors and collateral relatives of distinguished men, in brothers, in uncles and nephews, and even in female relatives. If Mr. Galton's investigations were worth anything, they proved that the possession of particular qualities had something to do with the accession of men to the Peerage; and, therefore, the abolition of the House of Lords would be a retrograde measure which it was inherently improbable that the hon. Member for Northampton, as an advanced reformer, would desire to support. Looking to the terms of the Resolution, it was not desirable to discuss the merits of the existing Assembly; it would be time to do that when such a Resolution was moved by a responsible Minister. It was said that long ago many persons were promoted to the House of Lords because they were relatives of persons of unruly wills and affections. The hon. Member might make the best or the worst of the amours of Charles II.; and, indeed, he would give the hon. Member all the 17th century. The House was probably familiar with a publication which was named on the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*. That publication brought the hon. Member in, as he had stated himself, £5,000 a-year. Judging from analogy, the hon. Member did not wish the House to support this Resolution. The publication to which he referred was hardly anything else than a *Court Circular*. It was nothing but a record of all the sayings and doings and tittle-tattle of the Court, and nobility, and gentry of the Realm. If the House of Lords were abolished, that paper would no longer bring in £5,000 a-year. It was absolutely improbable that anyone would wish to lose £5,000 a-year. Moreover, the hon. Gentleman, in conducting his publication, was most pronounced and particular as to the minuteness and accuracy of his information about any Royal Family; and if he could find out that the Princess of some obscure German Principality took three lumps of sugar in her tea, and could convict a contemporary, not so well-informed, of the glaring inaccuracy of saying that she took two, he chuckled for a month over the transaction. After that, he turned round and, by the assistance of his staff of gossip gatherers, vilified the very people whom he had been describing. The outside public would naturally think that anyone who should act in that way was a very mean and contemptible person. But the true conclusion was that the hon. Gentleman so acted in order to win sympathy for the persons he attacked, and in proposing this Resolution he was actuated by the same motives. There were one or two other matters in which he had acted in the same way. In what he advocated he wished to be defeated. On a former occasion, the hon. Member propounded a scheme of Home Rule, and it was so ridiculous and impracticable that it settled the question for a century. No doubt, the hon. Gentleman brought forward the scheme because he was desirous of maintaining the unity and integrity of the Empire. Again, in the *clôture* debate, when hon. Members feared that freedom of debate would be curtailed, the hon. Gentleman said that if a Radical Government were in Office and proposed a measure, he would give the Conservatives half-an-hour to pass it. That was the *reductio ad absurdum*, and it was clear that the hon. Gentleman, by acting in that way, wanted to defend the rights of minorities. He hoped he had proved, by the analogy of these cases, that the hon. Gentleman did not want the House to pass this Resolution, that he brought it forward with a deep meaning, and that he did not mind being thought con- contemptible and mean. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Name!"]

Mr. SPEAKER said, he hoped the hon. Member would not pursue that line of observation; he was not entitled to apply such language to another Member of the House.

Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE said, he would at once withdraw the expression. What he intended to show was that the hon. Gentleman did not mind having his motives misconstrued, and that he could in a new and unsuspected way promote a good object. He would therefore vote, as he was sure the hon. Member wished him to vote, against his Resolution. For his own part, he did not ask for any reward for having discovered the real nature of the hon. Gentleman. If the hon. Gentleman would send his gossip gatherers down to his neighbourhood, he might find something that would suit him; but he should consider himself fully remunerated for being vilified in *Truth*.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. E. Gladstone): I shall have the honour of voting this evening in the same Lobby as the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, though I shall not be able to justify my vote on precisely the same principles, so far as I am able to understand them, as those which characterized the latter part particularly of his speech. The early part of it, with respect to heredity, I thought to be extremely interesting, particularly had we been a metaphysical society, and, no doubt, there was a considerable degree of truth in it; but I do not think we can found ourselves broadly upon the propositions he advanced. I thought it right to leave the debate to proceed for a certain time without intervention, because I was not able to join issue with the Mover of this Motion in terms as broad and as unqualified as I thought probably hon. Gentlemen opposite might be disposed to adopt. I am very glad that the question has been stated on both sides, by the Mover as by the hon. Member who replied to him, with so much precision; because mixed with all the sarcasms of the Mover of the Motion there was, I thought, in the speech he delivered much of a substance of a very grave and serious nature. I will make the admission also that I thought the hon. Member opposite defended the House of Lords with great ingenuity and talent. But, Sir, my position is not that of either the one or the other. I am not able to adopt the defence of the legislative action of the House of Lords that was given by the hon. Gentleman opposite. He said, very naturally I think, that this House has very little reason to complain of the House of Lords. But I want to know who in this House have very little reason to complain? As for the hon. Member himself, I admit that he and his Friends have had very little reason to complain of the House of Lords. But I am bound to say, without entering into details which would be fitter for some other occasion and for a more searching debate, I cannot deny that I think the nation has much to complain of in regard to the legislative action of the House of Lords. And the hon. Member himself distinctly indicated that such must, at any rate, be our belief, because he said that the indictment against the House of Lords, which in terms purported to be that the House of Lords was made up of partizans, really meant that they were Conservatives. That might be perfectly true; but if the House of Lords are from year to year, from Parliament to Parliament, from generation to generation, deliberately and consistently Conservative, and if at the same time the country, as tested by General Elections and at the very least 11 out of 13 Parliaments, has been Liberal, it is assuredly no very great error to say that a case may have happened which may incline a Liberal Parliament to make some complaint of the action of the Conservative House of Lords. Sir, I cannot agree with the hon. Member that we are very much indebted to the House of Lords for its conduct with respect to the Franchise Bill. He said that by means of the conduct of the House of Lords we were enabled to carry the Redistribution Bill, as to which he thought even I should have admitted that it was in the power of the minority of this House, with the use of its Forms, and without recurring to the extreme use of its Forms, to check, and effectually to render futile, the action of the majority. But, although it may be perfectly true that after once rejecting the Franchise Bill, after causing the country to be agitated through an autumn, and after having presented to it the second issue of a most formidable conflict, the House of Lords did then give way, I cannot help saying, why was that course not adopted on the first occasion? It was not owing to any change on our part. There was nothing done by us on the second occasion which we did not from the first make known our readiness and desire to do. [" Oh, oh!"] Nothing whatever. And when I am told that the House of Lords gave way upon the second occasion, it reminds me of an observation which is almost always made on the occasion of public festivities, when the speaker—particularly if he is a Liberal speaker, I am bound to say—is charged with the business of returning thanks for the House of Lords, and that stock observation is as a capital panegyric on that illustrious Assembly, that the House of Lords never pushes its resistance to measures sent from the other House of Parliament to the point of causing revolution. Well, that is perfectly true; but is that a reason why we ought to be contented and pleased with the action of the House of Lords? My reasons for opposing the Motion of my hon. Friend are in brief these two. In the first place, I never, I believe, have voted upon a question of importance for a declaration of an abstract opinion in regard to a matter involving deeply the public interests unless I was able to follow up that Resolution by action. I do not press that hard upon my hon. Friend. I cannot wonder that hon. Members in this House frequently find it a necessity for themselves in the difficulties in which they are placed, in order to give effect to their opinions, to resort to the proposal of abstract Resolutions. But there is some difference in this respect between the position of independent Members and the position of those who hold Office. As regards those who have for the time or the hour the honour of being Ministers of the Crown, the adoption of a Resolution of this kind is a virtual promise to give it effect. In my opinion there is nothing which would so much excite the suspicions of the House, nothing which would throw it into such a mood of vigilant jealousy, as the detection of any tendency on the part of the Ministry to deal in promises in lieu of dealing in performances. [*Ironical cheers.*] I understand the meaning of that cheer, but I do not think it is a very sharp one. I think that the promises of which I speak are promises embodied in the Resolutions of this House. I apprehend that with regard to the action of a Minister, unless the Gentlemen who cheer may think it is perfectly possible—and, perhaps, such is their opinion—for him to do everything at once, and without a moment's consideration—I apprehend in regard to his future conduct, what he may do next week or next month, when he speaks of anything in the future he may be said to deal in a promise. That

Gibson, J. G.
Gladstone, rt.hn. W.E.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Gower, G. G. L.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Green, H.
Gregory, G. B.
Grenfell, W. H.
Grimston, Viscount
Gunter, Colonel R.
Hall, A. W.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hanbury, R. W.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, E.
Harker, W.
Haslett, J. H.
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hickman, A.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Jackson, W. L.
Johnston, W.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenny, C. S.
Kilcoursie, right hon. Viscount
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
M‘Calmont, Captain J.
M‘Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
M‘Lagan, P.
March, Earl of
More, R. J.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, hon. F.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Murdoch, C. T.
Norton, R.
Paget, Sir H. H.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A. E.
Pelly, Sir L.
Pitt-Lewis, G.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E
Pugh, D.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Richardson, T.
Ritchie, C. T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
Russell, Sir G.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Saunderson, Maj. E. J.
Selwin-Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sitwell, Sir G. R.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smith, D.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hn. Col. Sir F.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M.
Sturgis, H. P.
Sturrock, P.
Talbot, J. G.
Temple, Sir R.
Thomas, A.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G.O.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Verney, Captain E. H.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Watson, J.
West, Colonel W. C.
West, H. W.
Whitbread, S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart
Wroughton, P.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Allison, R. A.
Armitage, B.
Ashton, T. G.
Baker, L. J.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Beamont, H. F.
Blades, J. H.
Blaine, A.
Blake, T.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. H.
Boyd-Kinnear, J.
Bradlaugh, C.
Brocklehurst, W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Cobb, H. P.
Cobbold, F. T.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Colman, J. J.
Compton, Lord W. G.
Condon, T. J.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cook, E. R.
Cook, W.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cowen, J.
Cox, J. R.
Craven, J.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crompton, C.
Crossley, E.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Davies, W.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Ellis, J. E.
Esslemont, P.
Fenwick, C.
Finucane, J.
Fletcher, B.
Flynn, J. C.
Foster, Dr. B.
Fuller, G. P.
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, H. J.
Gill, T. P.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gray, E. D.
Grey, Sir E.
Harrington, E.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, M.
Hingley, B.
Holden, A.
Holden, I.
Howell, G.
Illingworth, A.
Ingram, W. J.
Jacks, W.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
Jenkins, D. J.
Johns, J. W.
Johnson-Ferguson, J. E.
Jordan, J.
Kelly, B.
Kenny, J. E.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leatham, E. A.
Lockwood, F.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Culloch, J.
M‘Donald, P.
Marum, E. M.
Mather, W.
Morgan, O. V.
Murphy, W. M.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
O'Mara, S.
O'Shea, W. H.
Peacock, R.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Pilkington, G. A.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestly, B.
Pulley, J.
Pyne, J. D.
Reid, H. G.
Richard, H.
Rigby, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Roberts, J.
Roe, T.
Russell, E. R.
Rylands, P.
Salis-Schwabe, Col. G.
Saunders, W.
Shaw, T.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheehy, D.
Sheil, E.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shirley, W. S.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Small, J. F.
Spensley, H.
Spicer, H.
Stack, J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Sullivan, D.
Tanner, C. K.
Tuite J.
Vanderbyl, P.

Vivian, Sir H. H.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Wason, E.
Watson, T.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Westlake, J.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. C.
Williams, P.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Wilson, J. (Ednbgh.)
Wolmer, Viscount
Wright, C.

TELLERS.
Labouchere, H.
Stuart, J.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

THE FISHING INDUSTRIES (ENGLAND AND WALES) — INSTITUTION OF A FISHERY BOARD.—OBSERVATIONS.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK, on rising to call the attention of the House to the great want of a Central Department for all matters connected with the Fishing Industries; and to move—

> "That, in consideration of the growing importance of the Fishing Industries, the capital at stake, and the lives dependent on them, in the opinion of this House it is desirable that a Fishery Board be appointed for England, with power to deal with all questions relative to Sea and Inland Fisheries,"

said, it was necessary, in order that the objects which he had in view should be properly carried out, that they should have the support of the Government of the day, and he had no hesitation in asking for such support, because he looked upon it as the duty of a great maritime and fishing country like England to give adequate support and encouragement to its fishing industry. He could not better show the importance of the fishing industries of this country than by stating to the House a few statistics in reference to those industries. In the first place, then, he was able to inform the House that the number of fishing vessels employed at the present time in the United Kingdom was no less than 37,000, and probably as nearly as could be ascertained about 17,000 belonged to Scotland and Ireland, and the remainder to England; but it should be added that the English fishing-vessels were a far larger, more valuable, and more important class of vessels than those belonging to Scotland and Ireland. The number of men employed in these vessels might be taken to be from 118,000 to 120,000, and there were, speaking well within the mark, at least as many more people on land connected with the fisheries and dependent upon their success for the means of livelihood. With regard to the capital employed in the industry, it was impossible to arrive at any definite conclusion. Probably, however, a fair estimate would be from £15,000,000 to £20,000,000 sterling. At all events, there could be no doubt that the capital had of late years increased to a very large extent. As regarded the annual income derived from the fisheries, quoting from Mr. Spencer Walpole, a late Inspector of Fisheries, who read a paper in 1883 at the Fisheries Exhibition, he estimated the annual income at no less than £10,000,000 sterling. Well, he thought these statistics would satisfy the House that the fisheries of the United Kingdom was a most important industry, and that he was justified in asking that the State should encourage and protect it. But hon. Members might ask what Central Department we had which could take up this work? Well, at the present time they had a small Department called the Fisheries Inspector's Department, which was a very small affair, located at the Home Office, and which figured in the Estimates for only £1,048 for this year; but the principal duties allotted to the Inspector of Fisheries were in connection with the salmon fisheries of England, and, as a rule, no duty was undertaken with regard to the larger and important sea fisheries. Inquiries were held from time to time by the Inspectors of Fisheries, and everybody was ready to acknowledge the valuable services rendered to the nation —no one more readily than himself— by such men as the late Mr. Frank Buckland, Mr. Spencer Walpole, and Professor Huxley. The nation was, no doubt, much indebted to them for what they had done. Then, in addition to the Inspector of Fisheries' Office, there were other Departments which were more or less connected with the fishing industries of the country. There was the Board of Trade, with the Harbour Department and Marine Department. There was the Admiralty, to which fishermen looked for protection and assistance on the sea. There was the Foreign Office, which was expected to protect the fishing interest with other countries. There was the Naval Reserves Office, which was also connected with the protection of the fisheries; and there was Mr. Giffen's Office, which had to do with fishery statistics. Altogether there were seven Offices, more or less, connected with the fisheries in one way or other, and what he proposed was that these scattered Offices should be concentrated into one Central Office and all their powers combined, so that a really effective and influential Fishery Department might be formed. He asked hon. Members to say frankly if they did not believe that such a Central Department would not only be much more effectual, but also much more convenient, than the present inadequate and absurd way of representing the fishing interest in a multiplicity of scattered Offices. As things now were, if a smackowner or a fisherman came to London for the purpose of transacting business, he might wander up and down Whitehall all day long and yet never find the Office which had control of the particular branch of the fishing interest with which he was concerned. Now, such a state of things was absurd in a practical country like England. It was, moreover, highly injurious to the interests of the fishing industry. What was wanted by way of remedy was a Central Fishery Department, which should take under its care all matters which affected the interests of fishermen and the industry which they followed. There was also the lives of fishermen, which ought to be considered in this matter and protected. A few years ago some regulations with reference to the fishing vessels lights were proposed to be put in force, and were drawn up by men who admitted that they knew of the subject practically nothing, and were sprung upon the fishermen without notice, and upon his (Sir Edward Birkbeck's) representation Mr. Evelyn Ashley was sent to the North Sea to observe for himself. But, unfortunately, on the occasion of that Gentleman's visit there was a heavy ground swell on—and Mr. Evelyn Ashley was confined to his cabin all the time, and had to return without being able to report to the Board of Trade what dangerous regulations they had proposed. He only cited this circumstance to show how necessary it was that the Department should be advised by practical men. In Scotland and Ireland they had well-organized Fishery Boards, which furnished statistics and details of the greatest importance, and these Boards were enabled to make bye-laws for the regulation of the fisheries. In Canada, the United States, Sweden, Norway, Holland, and other countries, they had Fishery Departments, which were of immense service to the fishing industries of those countries. The United States made a grant of £54,000 in 1882 for the encouragement of their fisheries. A foreign gentleman expressed to him (Sir Edward Birkbeck) in 1883, at the International Fisheries Exhibition, his astonishment that England, the greatest maritime nation in the world, with the largest fishing interest, had no Fishery Department. He (Sir Edward Birkbeck) wished to remedy that defect, and to give to the fishing interests of this country a Department or Board with power not only to protect the fisheries, but to make regulations for the proper carrying on of the industry and for the safety of the lives of the men employed. The Report of the Royal Commission on Trawling, which had come before the House last year, had referred to the question of fishery authorities. Scotland and Ireland both possessed Fishery Boards, and the Irish Board had power to regulate trawling and make bye-laws. England had no Fishery Board or any one Body with analogous powers. He contended that the fishing interest should be under the control of one Department, that there should be a Board with a strong element of practical men upon it, and with a permanent secretary and staff. Certain powers should be conferred upon the Board and certain duties laid down for them. They should collect statistics in the same way as the Scotch and Irish Boards, and should lay a Report on the Table of the House annually. The statistics should state the quantity of fish caught, its value, the number of vessels engaged in the industry, the number of hands employed, and other useful information. The Board should be responsible for the registration of fishing vessels, and be able to recommend such legislation as was required for the advance of the fishing industry, taking care always to have first a thorough public inquiry, and that there should be no danger, as heretofore, of legislating first and asking the advice of practical men afterwards. He was also of opinion that in this matter the Coastguard Service could give great assistance. The most practical paper that had ever been written on our fisheries was brought before the Fishery Commissioners of the

International Fisheries Exhibition, and was written by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. The fisheries should, in his (Sir Edward Birkbeck's) opinion, be divided into fishing districts, and those districts should have fishery officers of their own. He would have officers for such districts as Hull, Grimsby, Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Plymouth, &c., and those officers would report to the Board on all matters in connection with the fisheries, so that if there was any grievance to be remedied those officers might, through the powers conferred on them, be able to remedy such grievances, or at all events communicate respecting them with the Fishery Board. Such a Board should be responsible for the salmon fisheries of England and Wales, and for all inland fisheries. It might also be thought fit in time that the Scotch and Irish Boards should have a connection with the English Central Board—that was to say, if regulations applying to the United Kingdom were proposed by the Central Board. He (Sir Edward Birkbeck) hoped the President of the Board of Trade had given consideration to this very important question. He could not ignore the recommendations of the Trawling Commission and the importance of dealing with this matter without delay. He was confident the right hon. Gentleman would be able to state to the House in speaking on the Motion now before the House that as far as its principle was concerned he would adopt that Motion. He (Sir Edward Birkbeck) could not be expected to go into the details of this question at any length; but he would ask most earnestly, for the sake of the fishing industry of the United Kingdom, that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to tell the House that the Government were disposed to give it their best consideration. If he did so, he might rely on the fishing interest being grateful for what was carried out. He (Sir Edward Birkbeck) knew that the late Government would have given the question their earnest consideration, and would have adopted the Motion. Trusting that the present Government would act in a similar spirit, the hon. Baronet concluded by asking the consideration of the House to the Resolution which stood in his name.

Mr. EDWARD CLARKE, in supporting the hon. Member, said that, as representing a large seaport, the great portion of whose population were deeply interested in fishing, he had for some years felt the serious need that existed for some such Establishment as that which his hon. Friend had just described. He had no intention of going into details; but, as to principles, he thought that those recommended by the Royal Commission last year appeared conclusive. That Commission, he would remind the House, was a strong one. It had a great many subjects to consider, and in consequence it made a great many recommendations. He hoped that they would hear from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade a sympathetic and favourable response to the appeal which had just been made. He (Mr. E. Clarke) would simply mention two matters which had occurred within the last five years, and which would illustrate the need of such a Board. One was the question of trawlers' lights. With regard to these lights, a series of orders of the most contradictory character had been issued from time to time, and one after the other had been cancelled. These orders had no doubt been what was considered best by those who had drawn them up; but the fishermen had thought that those who had discussed the rules had not had a sufficient knowledge of the subject with which they they were dealing. In 1883 there occurred a very remarkable instance of sudden legislation passed through Parliament without any discussion at all. There was the Merchant Shipping Bill, which, in that year, was read a second time in the House of Lords on the very day it was printed, and it was also read a second time in the House of Commons on the day it was presented to the Members of that House. There was no opportunity of discussing it, and when it was read a second time the Minister in charge of it said it had better be read a third time at once, and from the day the Bill was passed till 1884 the Board of Trade was diligently endeavouring to find a means of exonerating the fishermen from the provisions of the Act. It would be a very desirable thing if there was some Department appointed to consider, in concert with practical men, the provisions passed into law; nor did he think that the proposals made necessarily involved any real increase of the charge, because at present these questions undoubtedly were scattered over various Departments. A little arrangement and modification might be made, probably without any real increase of the charge, while it would prove much more satisfactory than was the case at present.

Sir SAVILE CROSSLEY said, he would express a hope that the House would extend to him that kind indulgence which a new Member invariably received at its hands. The hon. Baronet (Sir Edward Birkbeck) had put his case forcibly and clearly, while he was ably seconded by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. E. Clarke). He (Sir Savile Crossley) felt it incumbent upon him to say a few words on the Resolution, because his constituents felt very strongly on the question, and were more largely interested in the fishing trade than any other division in the country. He might mention also that, at a large meeting held last night in the division which he had the honour to represent, a Resolution was passed in favour of the subject brought forward by the hon. Baronet. That Resolution he (Sir Savile Crossley) hoped would be supported by everyone in the House. The representations that had been made to the Board of Trade had not been thoroughly satisfactory to the shipping interest. He had no desire to rake up the past; but he must say that the fisheries had suffered very much owing to the Department of the Board of Trade not having been able to devote very much time to the fishing interest. All questions connected with the fishing trade required more going into than, perhaps, the questions arising from any other trade. The hon. Member for East Norfolk went into the subject of the great development of the fishing trade during the last few years; there was no doubt that many developments had been made in boats and nets. He (Sir Savile Crossley) had great pleasure in supporting the Resolution, because it was moved by one very well disposed towards the fishing interest. It was unnecessary for him to remind the House of the services which the hon. Baronet had rendered the fishing interest. He would, however, say one word why they should have in this matter the support of hon. Members below the Gangway on the other side (the Irish Members). The English Members merely asked that England should possess the same privilege which Ireland and Scotland had enjoyed for many years, and, above all, they asked to be put on a fair footing with foreigners. In our case our fishermen had no Central Board which would give them advice; and the result of that was, as every hon. Member knew, that in all questions where the foreign fishing-boats came into contact with ours, the foreign boats had the best of it in matters of law. He referred to the Report of the Deep Trawl Fishing Commission, issued last year. In that Report it would be found, in page 37, that Scotland and Ireland both possessed a Fishery Board, and the Irish Board was allowed to regulate all kinds of fishing, and to make such bye-laws as were deemed necessary. England, unfortunately, had no such Board. Now such an Authority should be created for England at once, and be constituted as a Department of the Board of Trade or Home Office, and upon it should be conferred the same powers of making bye-laws as were now possessed by the Irish and Scotch Fishery Boards. The Commissioners recommended that such a Central Authority should be created, and also that the Scotch Board should have similar powers as the Irish Board; and, thirdly, that a similar Authority should be made for England, and that a statutory power should be conferred upon the Board to give statistics. The House of Commons, a few nights ago, had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the great value of labour statistics in the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh). The House had also shown its appreciation of those statistics, by the support which it gave to the Motion of the hon. Member. He would remind the House that, as far back as 1866, when the Commissioners reported, they investigated the mode of fishing then in use. In 1878 the Commissioners recommended the collection of statistics; and in 1886, they expressed regret that no statistics had been furnished. They pointed out that, although eight years had elapsed since the collection of the statistics was recommended, yet that they were still without them. He (Sir Savile Crossley) ventured, most humbly, to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Heneage), and above all to the Board of Trade, to carry out the recommendations of the

Commissioners. He felt sure the House would not be satisfied to wait another eight years before the recommendations so often put forward were carried out. In conclusion he begged to thank the House for the patient manner with which it had heard his remarks.

SIR HENRY TYLER said, he cordially supported the Resolution. The object which it aimed at was really a question of "justice to England," which, with larger fishing interests at stake, did not enjoy advantages that had been conceded to Scotland and Ireland years ago. It was very much to be regretted that they had no better statistics for England than those already furnished. The best statistics of which he had any knowledge were those which had been published by the Board of Trade; but they only related to fish conveyed inland by railway, and not to the total amount caught. Those statistics were brought out in February last year, and he hoped that a similar collection would shortly be presented to Parliament. Looking at the figures conveyed in those Returns, he found the number of tons of fish conveyed inland from the fishing ports had increased to 248,000 in 1884; whilst in Scotland the increase the same year had been 38,000 to 68,000 tons; and in Ireland from 5,933 tons to 7,888 tons, making a total increase for the Three Kingdoms from 240,000 tons in 1879 to 325,000 tons in 1884. Fishermen had the sympathy of all classes. Everybody knew something of, though few fully appreciated, what they had to endure. They had to carry on their labour in fogs and in storms; they had to trust to their chances, and often they had bad luck, and every circumstance connected with their lives created the liveliest sympathy. Fishing was an industry which had increased especially through the work of trawling, and he believed that, as far as experience had hitherto gone, the more fish there were brought from the sea the more there seemed to be to catch. Another consideration of the matter was this, that the fisheries of the country gave employment to 120,000 or 150,000 men. The fisheries round about our coasts were of great value in other ways; for instance, they formed a nursery for the sailors of our Navy. Thus a very great deal depended upon this great industry. The extension of railways had given a great impetus to the trade of fishing, because it enabled good markets to be found for fish all over the country. They wanted a Department very much which would look after the interests of the industry, and provide those engaged in it with a better knowledge of the habits of fish and of the ways and means of taking fish. Whilst all the other industries of the country were more or less in a state of depression, the fishing business was the only one which was comparatively flourishing. He considered that the Department recommended by his hon. Friend should be created, because it was of the first importance. He had great pleasure in supporting the Motion of his hon. Friend.

MR. JOHNSTON said, he thought the House would pardon him if he said a few words on the Resolution of the hon. Baronet the Member for East Norfolk. He had until lately been an Inspector of Irish Fisheries, from which position he had been compulsorily retired under somewhat peculiar circumstances. He certainly should like to see some of the functions of the Irish Fishery Board extended to England, and all the powers for controlling the fisheries of the country consolidated in one Office, instead of various organizations being called into play. He had listened with the greatest possible interest to the speech of the hon. Baronet who had brought forward this proposal. In Ireland the Inspectors of Fisheries were Inspectors of the salmon as well as of the sea fisheries; and he hoped that the same system would prevail in England. In Ireland the Fishery Commissioners found the greatest assistance from the Coastguard, who supplied returns of the number of men and boys employed in the Sea Fisheries. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would see their way to granting what the hon. Baronet had so ably asked for; and, that being so, he had great pleasure in supporting his Motion.

MR. SAUNDERS said, he hoped that the House would favourably consider the Resolution which had been brought forward in connection with our fisheries, which could only be effectively dealt with by such a Board as recommended. They required, for instance, to know the merits of trawling and its effect on fishing beds. This was a matter which required great investigation. Matters of this kind could not be settled by individuals, however eminent. They could only be satisfactorily dealt with by an independent Board. The members of such a Board should be men who had practical knowledge and were connected with the fishing trade. The men who were connected with the trade on the Humber were particularly anxious that the Motion before the House should be carried, and that there should be a large practical element on the Board. If the Board had on it members who went to sea themselves, and were capable of making a Report on the fisheries, so much the better. It need not be an expensive Board, for he believed that very capable service could be rendered at moderate salaries. The adoption of the Motion of the hon. Baronet would give a great deal of satisfaction to a very deserving portion of Her Majesty's subjects.

Mr. MARK STEWART said, he could speak with some little practical knowledge of the advantages which had been derived in Scotland from the adoption of a scheme on the South-West Coast of Scotland which was now proposed for England. He thought, however, that it would be more advantageous to the whole country if, instead of having three separate Boards for the Three Kingdoms, there was one Central Department. There were many interests constantly clashing, and he did not think sufficient attention was given by any one Department to the interests under their charge. Not that he wished to insinuate or make any reflection against either the Scottish or the Irish Fishery Boards. But there were so many questions affecting the fishing interests of the three adjacent coasts that it would be most advantageous to have a Central Board, so that matters might be regulated more smoothly than at present. The question of trawling was a most important one. Previous to 1883 they sustained very great damage indeed from the system of trawling then practised. No doubt great improvement had been effected, but at the same time there were improvements still to be carried out. There was the question of foreign trawlers, who cut up the oyster beds on the South-West Coast of Scotland, and utterly depopulated them. Then as to the herring industry, which was no doubt the most important element in the Scottish fishing industry, great havoc had been done in some places by the injurious modes of fishing practised. It was conjectured that the fish had been frightened off the coast; but it was the fact, whatever the cause, that in numerous places where fish were abundant a few years ago they were now greatly diminished in numbers. These matters, as affecting the food supplies of our ever-increasing population, and also the interests of the persons engaged in fishing, deserved the greatest attention which could be given to them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA) said, he was sure the House and the country were grateful to the hon. Baronet for the deep interest he had taken in this important industry; and he was grateful that he did not expect him to go into the details of the scheme for settling the question. The Government were quite prepared to accept the principle of the Motion. After reading the Report of the Trawling Commission, it was impossible to resist the evidence before them that something must be done to centralize the work of that very important industry. At present it was spread over some six or seven Departments and Sub-Departments, and there was a conflict of jurisdiction and sometimes a conflict of instructions. The industry had thus been hampered and embarrassed, and it was very desirable that that state of things should come to an end. He doubted, however, whether it would be necessary to constitute a Statutory Fishery Board. A Central Department might be constituted, which would meet all the requirements of the case. They had had at the Home Office a succession of most able men as Inspectors of Fisheries—Mr. Frank Buckland, Mr. Walpole, and Professor Huxley. Those were men of the highest scientific attainments who had not confined their attention to salmon fishings, but had rendered valuable service to the sea fishing industry. It was singular that the two kinds of fishings had ever been separated, and that there should have been an Inspector and an Assistant Inspector, an outdoor Inspector, or officer, at the Board of Trade; that the Admiralty should have rights of interference; that the Home Office should regulate all fish that migrated to the sea, and some other Department was responsible for fishing at the mouth of rivers. That was an anomalous state of things, and they were quite ready to co-operate with the hon. Baronet to bring it to an end. He found that the official statistics were now, for the first time, being thoroughly dealt with. They were now in the hands of Mr. Giffen, and he, with the aid of the officers of the Board of Trade, and the Admiralty, and the Customs, had published the first batch of statistics. The registration of fishing vessels was regulated by the Mercantile Department of the Board of Trade. There had been a good deal of controversy about lights for fishing vessels; but he hoped the matter was finally settled, and that he would not be called upon to issue any new orders. What they desired to do was to consolidate the functions of the Home Office, the Board of Trade, and the Admiralty, so far as they referred to sea fishing, and put them under the Board of Trade. He was not ambitious to take it; but it was impossible to separate it from that Department. The Department would be consolidated in that respect, and the Admiralty would place their vessels under the instructions of the Board of Trade in order to maintain the police of the sea. They would probably find it necessary to appoint another Inspector; and they then would constitute it a Department which, with a head and with the two chief Fishery Inspectors, would be responsible for the whole of the administration of the Department. They would have the advantage of having the head of the Statistical Department, the head of the Marine Department, the head of the Harbour Lights Department, and the Fishery Inspectors, so that they would combine in one Department the whole of the machinery necessary for its proper conduct. No doubt whoever was appointed chief should be a practical man. He was glad to say that an International Convention had been agreed upon between Germany, Belgium, Denmark, France, Holland, and themselves, for regulating the police for the North Sea Fisheries. He believed good results would flow from that Convention. One very important matter had been settled by Lord Rosebery with respect to the Conference which was to take place at Whitsuntide. There was nothing the fishermen suffered from more than the temptation and demoralization of the floating grog-shops. Some of the Powers had held aloof on this matter; but he was glad to say Lord Rosebery had pressed it very closely upon the Northern Powers, and they had come to an agreement that at Whitsuntide this matter should be the subject of a Conference. He knew there would be some advantage from a consolidation of the Boards of the three countries; but he very much doubted whether Scotland or Ireland would be willing to be merged with the English Fishery Board. Both the Scottish Board and the Irish Board were doing their work exceedingly well; but this might be done with advantage. After a conference of the scientific authorities, and indeed all the authorities of the three countries, there ought to be a mutual correspondence on all matters bearing on improvements decided upon. Already, he believed, both the Scottish and Irish Fishery Boards were willing to aid in this matter. He hoped what he had said would give satisfaction to the House. He was not able to say that all this machinery should be perfected at once; but the Board of Trade would set about it immediately. It should be remembered, however, that it would be necessary to pass a measure through Parliament to transfer the powers of the Home Department to the Board of Trade. He was sure the hon. Baronet would think they would derive considerable advantage from employing the staff of the Home Office and the Board of Trade, and not limiting them to fresh water fisheries. He hoped that what the Government proposed to do would show that the Government had a thorough sympathy for an important industry carried on by the bravest men. He trusted the Department would be arranged so that there would be no difficulty in anyone addressing it receiving prompt attention and an answer to any question, and that this might be done without any great increase of expenditure. It was, he believed, more a matter of organization than expenditure, and the putting an end to a divided responsibility, which had worked a good deal of hardship upon the fishermen.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

POST OFFICE, SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH CONTRACT (ST. VINCENT TO THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA).

RESOLUTION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [4th March],

"That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1886, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: I rise to oppose the Motion, and to move, as an Amendment, that the whole question should be referred to a Select Committee of the House. This, Sir, is a contract between Her Majesty's Government on the one hand and the Eastern Telegraph Company on the other. In consideration of the latter constructing a cable from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa, the British Government agrees to pay a subsidy of £19,000 a-year for 20 years to the Eastern Cable Company and its satellite, the Brazilian Company, both Companies being controlled by the same persons. Now, I want to direct the House's particular attention to the fact that this contract is dated 19th January, 1886; and it is solemnly stated therein that a cable of an approved character shall be constructed, and on condition of its construction this large subsidy of £380,000 shall be paid. Now, I am prepared to prove that on the day when the contract was signed, a rival Company, the India-rubber and Gutta Percha Company, without any subsidy or promise of subsidy, had completed a cable over this very line. Now, the object of a subsidy is to make up or make it possible for a Company to construct a cable. Where, then, was the necessity of this subsidy? It seems to me, therefore, that the Treasury Minute on this subject is entirely misleading. A reference to *The Times* newspaper of 13th October last will prove that the rival Company to that which obtained this contract had despatched a steamer with the cable on board to construct this line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa, and on to the Cape of Good Hope, and from thence to Australia. A further reference to *The Times* of 21st November following proves that, on that day, the cable had been completed all but a small section along the coast. Yet, on the 18th January of this year, the contract to construct a cable was signed by the British Government with a rival Company, which, for so doing, was to be paid this large subsidy. Now, we are informed that the Eastern Telegraph Company purchased the cable already laid, and takes the Government bonus. And who is the moving spirit in this transaction? A gentleman whose name does not appear in the contract, and yet a gentleman, I venture to say, who is greatly distrusted and looked upon with grave suspicion when matters of this kind have to be settled. The gentleman I allude to is Mr. John Pender. As an Australian, I must say we have had rather too much of this gentleman's monopolies in the Southern Hemisphere; and, in asking for a Select Committee to examine into all matters connected with this contract, I think I am making a very reasonable request of the Government. The contract which the House is now asked to sanction binds the British Government to pay £380,000 to John Pender and Company for the construction of a telegraph cable from St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa. John Pender and Company have already a line of cable on the East Coast of Africa, for which the Government pay a subsidy of £25,000 a-year. By now obtaining the contract for the West Coast of Africa, John Pender and Company will obtain a practical monopoly; and I am sure that the House will not submit to a contract of this nature being entered into without the most searching inquiry. I believe that the time has come for the Government of this country to own these cables that connect England with our great Colonies; and the effect of this contract is to throw the monopoly of the cable to Australia into the hands of John Pender and Company. While these large subsidies are being paid to one Company, there is no hope of inducing the Government to construct cables themselves. I have already given Notice of Motion, to the effect that the Government shall construct an alternative line of cable round the West Coast of Africa to the

Cape of Good Hope; but if this contract be approved my proposal cannot be adopted. As announced in *The Times* of the 13th of October, the Gutta Percha Company agreed to construct the cable from St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa, and thence to the coast of Australia without subsidy. Without warning John Pender and Company came in, and, after the cable had been laid down, purchased the rights of the Company, and now endeavours to obtain a large sum of money from the Government as a subsidy for the construction of the cable, although, as a matter of fact, it was already laid down and almost in operation. I can prove that the Treasury Minute on this matter is erroneous, and I have other information in my possession which is more suitable for a Select Committee. I am desirous of avoiding saying anything offensive, and I shall not state the source of my information except to the Select Committee; but I can readily prove that this contract is of a character which, to use a very mild term, deserves inquiry. If the Government grant an inquiry, as I maintain they are bound to do, they will be enabled to examine various Papers, to call witnesses, and obtain other evidence, which will enable them to understand the transaction which has taken place, and that evidence will show that the transaction is not an honest one. I do not say one word against the Members of the late Government; but this contract was entered into just before they left Office, during a time of Election excitement, when they were influenced by information put before them of an erroneous character. In consequence of the monopoly granted to John Pender and Company, a rival Company find that the concession granted to them is of no avail, and that they are entirely in their power. I maintain and shall prove that this contract is unnecessary; and, at a time when we are all suffering from depression at home, it is not a fitting time to throw away £20,000 a-year on the West Coast of Africa. And I maintain that the time has come for these subsidies to cease. As I said before, the time has come for the British Government to construct and own cables to all parts of Her Gracious Majesty's Dominions. I find that, if this subsidy is granted, it will make a total of £54,000 a-year given by the British Government to Pender and Company for the construction of African cables. Seven years ago a contract was made with Mr. Pender to construct a cable down the East Coast of Africa, and for that he receives, and will receive for the next 20 years, the enormous sum of £35,000 a-year from the British Government. He has already received £250,000 sterling for that work, and now we propose to give him another £250,000 for the West Coast of Africa. I ask, Sir, for a Select Committee of Inquiry, and I pledge myself to produce documents to prove that the cable was laid, or a great portion of it; that the remaining portion was on board ship and being completed; that the subsidy was neither asked nor demanded, and it is not necessary to pay it. The late Government is not to blame, because, after the excitement of the General Election, the Ministry had much to do to prepare to meet Parliament. If the present Government will not grant the Committee, I shall consider that they do not wish to have the true and full facts made public. I beg to move that the matter be referred to a Select Committee of the House.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "approved," in order to insert the words "referred to a Select Committee,"—(*Mr. Henniker Heaton,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'approved' stand part of the Question."

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, that of course he did not know what line the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would take with regard to this subject; but if he might tender his advice, it would be not to allow this contract to be referred to a Select Committee. He was somewhat surprised at the insinuations which had been thrown out by the hon. Member for Canterbury (Mr. Henniker Heaton), who had stated that these transactions, which had been entered into by the late Liberal Government and by the late and present Governments, were not honest. The hon. Member further said that the decision of the late Government was arrived at during a period of Election excitement. On the contrary, he could tell him that one of the first matters which came before him (Sir Henry Holland) as Financial Secretary to the Treasury in July, long prior to the period of Election excitement, was the question of this telegraph. He found that it had been decided by the preceding Liberal Government that it was absolutely necessary to lay down this telegraph line to the West Coast of Africa, and tenders had been actually called for and sent in. That was an opinion which had been arrived at by the then Secretary of State for War, the Admiralty, and the Colonial Office; and he ventured to think that it was hardly possible for the Treasury, under such circumstances, to refuse to consider the question of this contract, even if the opinion of the late Government had differed from that of their Predecessors. The hon. Member had averred that when this question came before the late Government a Company had started to lay down a cable. It was true that the India-rubber Company had agreed with the Portuguese Government to lay down a line from St. Vincent; but the line was a *quasi*-foreign one, with which Her Majesty's Government might not have been able to make satisfactory terms, and over which they had no control. The hon. Member said that this Eastern Company had now established a monopoly, and could charge what rate they pleased; but if he looked at the contract he would see that the rates were laid down and fixed by it, and many other useful and necessary conditions were imposed upon them. The hon. Member said that the India-rubber Company were ready to work without a subsidy. So far from this being the case, they tendered for a higher subsidy than the Eastern Company. Both Companies tendered, and they both required a subsidy. He denied that any line, or part of a line, had been laid in July and August last, when the terms of this agreement were under discussion. The arrangement with Mr. Pender's Company was, he believed, practically settled long before the India-rubber Company had laid any line. He might say, without breach of confidence, that very great care and trouble were expended in considering this question. The late Secretary of State for War, the late Colonial Secretary, and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he himself, went again and again over the question of the amount of the tenders and the amount of the subsidy; and the result was that it was reduced to £19,000, which was lower than the subsidy required by the India-rubber Company. The Treasury had no option but to take the best terms they could obtain from the Company that would lay down the line to the West Coast of Africa. The Government had to say which Company offered the best terms, and after all the attention and examination which had been given to the matter it would be idle to refer it now to a Select Committee. He therefore hoped that the Secretary to the Treasury would adhere to that contract.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) said, that the charge of the hon. Member for Canterbury was that they were entering into a contract that was not an honest one. The question had been before three different Governments for a succession of years, and it had been most carefully considered. The matter involved two points—namely, a question of policy and a question of internal administration. On the first question, he frankly conceded that the House had both the right and the duty to express its own opinion. That question was whether it was for the political and the commercial interests of this country that a telegraph cable should be laid to the West Coast of Africa. If the House referred to the Treasury Minute of February, they would find that the Treasury were of opinion that that scheme would be of advantage both to the West African Colonies and to this country, commercially and politically. The question was raised, in the first instance, under the former Administration of the present Prime Minister; and it was considered by the Cabinet of that day that it was for the interests of this country that there should be telegraphic communication with our Settlements in West Africa. Anybody who was aware of the grave public inconvenience that had been suffered from the want of that means of communication would be of opinion that that Cabinet decided rightly. That decision was confirmed by the Cabinet of Lord Salisbury, and again by the present Government. Of course the House might, if it chose, overrule the judgment of three successive Governments, and of those who, being responsible for the Military, Naval, Colonial, and commercial interests of this country, were all of opinion that it was necessary to have that telegraphic communication. The next question was as to the terms of the contract for securing this telegraph. The Treasury, in its permanent officers, possessed a staff of the highest capacity and experience, which was totally incapable of a dishonest transaction. Their fault, if it was a fault, was their desire to safeguard the public interests, and to avoid, if they could, all undue expenditure; and it was not likely that the House could enter into a contract on better terms than the permanent officials of the Treasury could do. The Treasury invited tenders, and they received three—one of £23,000, another of £29,000, and another as high as £102,000. They decided to accept the one for £23,000. There was a difficulty in the way, arising in connection with the Island of St. Vincent not being British territory; but, that difficulty having been got over, the Company was in a position to complete the contract. Negotiations were opened, and he must express his admiration of the manner in which the late Chancellor of the Exchequer was enabled to reduce the subsidy to £19,000, of which the Colonies themselves would contribute £5,000. The English Government were only to pay half-rates; they were to have priority for their messages, and to have the right to nominate a Director to protect their interests; while in time of war they were to take possession of the telegraph. The House was asked to withhold its confidence from the Treasury, and to refer the contract to a Select Committee. That was not the mode in which the Public Business either had been or ought to be conducted. The hon. Member for Canterbury, before he concluded, had rather unveiled what was behind. The hon. Member said he was very anxious that there should be another cable laid to Australia, and that the Government should own all those submarine cables. They knew what that meant. They knew that the Government paid between £10,000,000 and 11,0000 sterling for the purchase of the telegraphs, which, he supposed, were not worth above half that sum. And now probably some people would like the Government to buy up the submarine telegraphs also. He, however, hoped that the Government would do nothing of the kind. The policy now being pursued of paying the Company for the work they did was the wisest and the best that the Government could adopt. He objected to the appointment of a Select Committee, which, in fact, was a declaration on the part of the House that the Treasury was not competent to do its work. He submitted the whole matter to the House as a question of public policy, which had been decided unanimously by three successive Governments, without any element of Party conflict entering into the consideration of the subject.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he must congratulate his hon. Friend on having adopted the true and proper method pursued by Secretaries to the Treasury in answering inconvenient proposals. No one supposed that the Treasury officials were anything but honourable men; but when a contract was made and submitted to the House, surely the House had a right to consider whether it was wise, expedient, or desirable. The Secretary to the Treasury had himself explained how sharply the House ought to look after the Treasury and other Government officials. Reference had been made to the large sum of money which had been paid for taking over the telegraph system of this country. Why was this? Such a large amount of expenditure was due to the fact that the House left this matter to be settled by the Treasury and other officials; and it seemed to him that the hon. Gentleman proved that the House could not trust Government officials in matters of this kind, but that they ought to carefully overhaul every contract brought before them. The hon. Member who brought this subject forward did not complain that the contract was dishonest on the part of the Treasury, but that the contract was dishonest on the part of those with whom the Treasury dealt. The Secretary to the Treasury said there were two points to look at — one a question of policy, whether it was to the political and commercial interest of this country to have telegraphic communication with our African Colonies. He admitted that it was desirable to get this communication as cheaply as possible. What were the allegations made by the hon. Member? It was proved that three years ago the Treasury and the postal authorities thought that it was desirable that a cable should be laid between the Island of St. Vincent and the West Coast of

Africa. Tenders were submitted to the Treasury by various Companies. The lowest tender was that of the Eastern Telegraph Company; and the contract was signed on the 19th of January to construct and lay a cable from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa for the sum of £19,000 per annum during 20 years. Was this cable then constructed and already laid by another Company? The hon. Gentleman said no. Would the hon. Gentleman accept the news in the columns of *The Times* as a fair statement of the facts? In *The Times* of the 13th of October there was an account of a ship being sent out with a cable by the India-rubber Cable Company to lay this cable. There was a dinner and the usual festivities afterwards. In *The Times* of the 21st of November there was a statement that the cable had been laid. Consequently, the allegation was this—and it was a clear one—that the India-rubber Company did lay a cable from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa; and the reason was that they were obliged to lay it because they had land lines and small coast lines connecting Bathurst with the Cape of Good Hope. They were really obliged to lay the cable in order to fructify their land lines. When the contract was signed, therefore, with the Eastern Telegraph Company to construct and lay a cable for £19,000 a-year, he asserted that, unless those two statements in *The Times* should be contradicted, a cable had been constructed and laid by the India-rubber Company. The India-rubber Company had the exclusive concession of laying cables to the Island of St. Vincent. The Eastern Company, when they put in a contract below that of the India-rubber Company, knew very well that they could not carry out the contract; but when the India-rubber Company found that they could not obtain a contract the Eastern Company came and said—"Sell us your cable; then we will get a contract to construct and lay a cable from those two points, and we will obtain £19,000 per annum." The point which he wished to urge on the attention of the House was that a cable had been laid without any contract with the Government, and without any subsidy from the Treasury. This statement was in *The Times*, and he could not see the object which the Government had in entering into a contract with the Eastern Company when the work had been done by another Company without a contract two months before. It looked like reckless benevolence on the part of the Government. Because the cable had been sold by one Company to another, they had said—"Let us give you £19,000 for 20 years." That was, altogether, £380,000. The whole system of subsidy was radically bad. It was of far more importance to Australia than to us that there should be telegraphic communication between that country and England. This route was a connecting link in the telegraphic communication between the two countries. We ought to consider what our Colonists desired, and ought not, by such subsidies, to prevent them from laying cables of their own. Two principles should guide the Government in making such contracts—the desires of the Colonists, and the desirability of buying in the cheapest market. We already paid to the Eastern Company £35,000 for telegraphic communication on the Eastern Coast of Africa; and now we were called upon to pay another large sum because this Company had suddenly bought a cable laid by and belonging to another Company. In these circumstances, he thought the hon. Member was justified in denouncing this contract.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL said, that the last speaker had said that the President of the Board of Trade did not know everything; but his own speech had shown, in the most extraordinary manner, that he did not know everything. He had said that the Australian Governments had objected to this contract, and that the hon. Member for Canterbury (Mr. Henniker Heaton) was speaking on behalf of these Governments. He had yet to learn that the Australian Colonies had expressed any opinion whatever as to this cable, which only went to the West Coast of Africa.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, this was a link in one of the telegraphic routes with Australia.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL said, this cable did not connect Australia with this country, and it was not likely that it ever would.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON said, it was one of the projected lines.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL said, that he had been in conversation with the official representatives of the Australian Colonies, and none of them mentioned that they had this route in view. Something had been said about the contract having been accepted after part of the cable had been laid; but the fact was that the matter was virtually settled two months before the India-rubber Company began to lay any cable. He would like some explanation of the statement that the two hon. Members who opposed the contract had met outside and arranged what to say inside the House.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he was in the Smoking Room, and simply asked the hon. Member for Canterbury to explain his case, and he did so, telling him what he meant to say.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL said, he believed that there was something at the back of what had been said, and that it was a purely personal matter, for he knew that one hon. Member, at any rate, had had business dealings with the Syndicate which had acquired the contract.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he could assure the hon. Member that he had not the slightest idea who was in the Syndicate, and, in fact, knew nothing of the matter until he came into the House.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL said, although he was not aware of any intention to run the cable to Australia, yet he believed it was intended to carry it to South Africa; and, if so, it would give that Colony the great advantage of an alternative route. When in Bechuanaland last year with Sir Charles Warren, they experienced great inconvenience from the want of telegraphic communication with England. During the critical state of affairs in Egypt, and the threatened war with Russia, their telegraphic communication was stopped for one month. He hoped, however, that the Government would take precautions against the evils that might arise in the way of excessive rates if both those routes were in the future to fall into the hands of the same Company; and if that was done he believed the contract ought to be passed, as he believed it was wise, expedient, and valuable.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Mundella) said, the negotiations for this contract had been commenced by the last Liberal Government and concluded by the late Government on the most economical terms. It was a reasonable and a good contract; and he considered that a very good bargain had been effected by the country. He could not understand how the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) could, after a short confabulation in the Smoking Room, come down and oppose a step which had been taken after careful investigation and long consideration. The contract was put up for tender, and one tender was for £23,000 a-year, another for £29,000 a-year, and a third for over £100,000 a-year. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose ability in this transaction everybody recognized, reduced the first tender to £19,000, and at that sum the contract was concluded, special care being taken in regard to the terms and conditions, and it being arranged that £5,000 a-year should be paid by the Colony towards the £19,000. Under such circumstances, he hoped the House would not allow itself to be led away by the hon. Member for Northampton, whose criticisms, he thought, had a little animus in them, but would determine to ratify the contract.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that the responsibility of this arrangement rested entirely upon the late Government, and mainly upon himself. He had never taken more trouble with anything in his life; and he believed that in the contract, as cut down to £19,000, the country had an exceedingly good bargain. This cable might save many hundred thousand pounds by securing telegraphic communication between this country and the Governors of our Colonies in Africa, thus tending to guard us from Native wars. For commercial purposes, too, it would be of great value; and he did not believe that we could lay out £14,000 a-year—for that was the real amount—better than in the present contract.

Mr. MOLLOY asked whether it was not a fact that the India-rubber Company, a solvent Company, were prepared to lay the cable at their own expense, and that some person stepped in, purchased the contract, and then came to the House for a large subsidy? He thought that the Government was bound to give a clearer statement than they had done with regard to this contract. Unless a more satisfactory explanation was furnished he should oppose the Vote.

MR. MUNDELLA begged to state, by permission of the House, what had been already stated half a dozen times, that the India-rubber Company asked for £29,000 a-year; that they only laid a small section of the cable, and when they got the contract for the whole distance they handed it over to another Company, who undertook to do it for £19,000.

MR. ILLINGWORTH wished to know why only £5,000 out of £19,000 was to be charged to the Colonies? He thought that sum might have been divided equally between the Colonies and the Mother Country. If, instead of dealing with our kith and kin in South Africa, we had been dealing with India, in all probability a large share of the burden would have been put on the Indian Exchequer. Those who were primarily interested in this matter were the large owners of land in South Africa. They would have the main benefits. It was for the interest of that large landed aristocracy that many of our wars were carried on; but in these arrangements the heaviest share of the burden was inevitably thrown on the Mother Country.

SIR FREDERICK STANLEY said, that the hon. Gentleman was quite mistaken, and could not have looked at the Motion that was before the House. This contract related not to South Africa, but to the West African Settlements. The fervid imagination of the hon. Gentleman had run riot with regard to large landholders. He did not know that the proprietors in the West African Colonies possessed even the traditional "three acres and a cow."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Ultimately the cable is to go to the Cape of Good Hope.

SIR FREDERICK STANLEY: Yes; but the objection was made to the Vote now proposed, not to that which might be asked ultimately. The hon. Gentleman thought £5,000 was very little for the Colonies to pay; but the fact was that the matter had been very carefully looked into, and the proportion of £5,000 was allotted on a fair basis. He believed this contract would be the means of securing the prosperity of a large portion of Africa, and saving a large outlay.

In reply to Mr. BRUNNER,

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) said, that the India-rubber Company asked between £20,000 and £30,000. The Company proceeded to lay a small portion of the cable—about one-sixth of the whole—and ultimately when they got the complete contract they sold the cable they had laid, with their rights, to a Company with whom his right hon. Friend opposite arranged better terms.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 199; Noes 34: Majority 165.—(Div. List, No. 19.)

Main Question put.

Resolved, That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1886, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved.

FRESH WATER FISHERIES (EELS) BILL.—[*Lords*].—[BILL 128.]

(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was rendered necessary by a decision of the High Court that eels were included in the 11th section of the Act of 1880 relating to fresh water fisheries. That decision was against the desire of all those who were interested in the subject, and of the Fishmongers' Company. The Bill would prevent a loss of £20,000 spent on food imported from Holland. Next to Holland the largest importation was from Ireland. The close time would begin on March 15 and end on June 15, and it was important that the Bill should become law before the 15th instant. He hoped, therefore, that the Bill would be read a second time.

MR. JOHNSTON said, it was unusual to proceed with the second reading of a Bill that had not been printed, and he hoped that this would not be made a precedent; but, under the circumstances stated by the Under Secretary for the Home Department, he would not oppose the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (WATER SUPPLY, &c.) BILL.—[BILL 34.]

(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Mr. Bryce, Sir George Russell, Colonel Hughes.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [24th February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Coope.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST) said, he took occasion to state that the objection of the Government to the measure had been mainly founded on the fact that it enabled the Metropolitan Board of Works not only to oppose Bills which they might think to be against the interest of the ratepayers, but also to promote Bills relating to the water supply of the Metropolis, and to other Metropolitan purposes. Since the adjournment of the debate, however, the hon. Baronet who was in charge of the Bill had agreed that he would, in Committee, omit such portions of it as empowered the Board to take the initiative in legislation. The Bill would then only enable the Board to oppose measures which they might deem to be adverse to the interests of the Metropolis. In these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government would not further oppose the second reading.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND said, he desired to offer a few observations to the House before they assented to the second reading of a Bill against which, as a ratepayer, he strongly protested. As regarded the Water Companies, their opposition to the Bill was, of course, considerably diminished by the proposed alterations which were to be made in Committee; but he should like to be sure that he understood correctly the exact alterations. He understood that the words "make application to Parliament and may," in Clause 2, were to be omitted, and also the further words "or the acquisition of the undertakings of any such Companies" were to be struck out. In other words, that the Metropolitan Board of Works undertook not to initiate any Bill for providing a new supply of water to the Metropolis, or for purchasing the existing Water Companies. Well, the Water Companies would in the future, if the Bill so altered were to become law, find the Metropolitan Board supporting instead of opposing them. Therefore, so far as the Water Companies were concerned, they might almost desire that the Bill, as amended, should be passed. But he (Sir Henry Holland) still objected to this Bill as a ratepayer. The Bill still gave wide and vague powers to the Board to oppose applications "with respect to Companies authorized to provide a supply of water and the undertakings of such Companies," and to institute "inquiries and negotiations," and to saddle the expense, necessarily very heavy, of such opposition and inquiries upon the Metropolitan ratepayers without their having been previously consulted. Why should the Metropolitan ratepayers be placed on a different footing to the municipal ratepayers in other places? Opposition and inquiries, if this Bill passed, might be made very unnecessarily and unwisely, at the instance of a small majority of the Board, and the ratepayers would be saddled with the costs. He protested, as a ratepayer, against this Bill; and nothing, he freely admitted, had astonished him more than the apathy of the London ratepayers upon this question.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE observed, that if the Bill was to be emasculated in the way proposed, it would merely leave the Metropolitan Board in a position to oppose legislation relating to the water supply emanating from anybody but themselves. He was one of those who was not satisfied with the present water supply; and he thought that, considering all things, the House would exercise a better display of wisdom in deciding that this Bill should be placed in the background. It was far better that the water supply question should be dealt with as a whole by the Government, than in the piecemeal fashion in which this measure proposed to grapple with a great question.

MR. BOORD said, he had no knowledge of the arrangement which had been come to between the Government and his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) who had charge of this measure until he heard the statement just made; but the consideration which he had given to what had been stated appeared to him to make the measure scarcely less desirable than it was before. The Bill had been described very frankly as a measure to enable the Metropolitan Board to do legally what they had hitherto done illegally; and the Amendment it was intended to adopt in Committee still left the objectionable power in the hands of the Board, who were to decide on their own motion what was desirable and what was undesirable. As had been said, the Metropolitan Board of Works was not a directly elected Body; and they were, therefore, not in a position to properly exercise the powers they were claiming. This should not be lost sight of, nor should they forget that if the Bill was thrown out the Metropolitan Board would still be able to oppose any measure which it might be inexpedient to pass, or which might be improperly put forward. Besides that, he regarded it as the duty of the Government to protect the ratepayers, in common with the rest of Her Majesty's subjects, from the passage of undesirable Bills of the kind in question. He certainly should be inclined to move as an Amendment that the debate should be further adjourned for six months.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) observed, that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down said there was always the Government to fall back upon in these matters. He must protest against the idea that when there was a responsible Body like the Metropolitan Board of Works, specially appointed to deal with these Metropolitan questions, it should be passed by and the Government appealed to. The Metropolitan Board was a Body with a representative character, and they should not be passed over in matters affecting the Metropolis. It had been agreed to leave out that part of the Bill which related to the power to promote water schemes; and surely the Metropolitan Board were a more fit Body than the Government to oppose such schemes if necessary.

MR. MURDOCH said, he hoped the House would not pass the Bill. There was a growing feeling in the Metropolis that the Board entered too much into legislation. It was constantly bringing Bills before Parliament, and constantly spending the money of the ratepayers; and he could not help thinking the Board laid claim to a greater amount of popularity than it possessed. The general feeling of the ratepayers of the Metropolis was a hope that the Government would at no distant date deal with the water question; and it was matter of great regret that the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross), which had received the assent of the ratepayers and the Water Companies, was not proceeded with.

BARON DIMSDALE said, that, in view of the promised reform of the government of London, this Bill ought not to pass. The proper settlement of the question ought to be left either to the new Municipality or to the Government of the day.

MR. EVELYN said, he trusted the House would reject the Bill, even as amended. It was said it would be hard that the duty of protecting the Metropolitan ratepayers should devolve on the Government; and therefore the matter must be thrown upon the Metropolitan Board. But he very much doubted whether the ratepayers of the Metropolis had the confidence in the Metropolitan Board which the Home Secretary supposed. There was another body of men who might be trusted to look after the interests of their constituents in these matters, and that was the Metropolitan Members. The Metropolitan Board was a moribund Body, and was likely to pass away very soon, and therefore ought not to be entrusted with further powers.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER observed, that the hon. Member (Baron Dimsdale) was an eminent Director of Water Companies, which accounted for the knowledge he had displayed on the subject. There must be some Body charged with looking after these matters, and he contended that the proper Body was the Metropolitan Board. As long as they had that Body they must trust it. Whatever changes might be made in the government of London, there would still be wanting a Body to represent the different interests of the Metropolis in the way that Board did. He thought the work of the Metropolitan Board had, as a rule, been well done, and the Board was entitled to the gratitude of the ratepayers for what it had done.

MR. T. H. BOLTON said, if they wanted a Body to manage these things satisfactorily, it should be a Body as unlike the Metropolitan Board as they could possibly have. As a Metropolitan Member, he ventured to say that his constituents looked with very great suspicion upon the action of the Metropolitan Board, especially in connection with questions of this character.

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, when he brought the Bill in he gave his reasons for it, and entered into past legislation, and showed why the Board considered this Bill necessary. If the Metropolitan Board of Works found in any case that the Acts of Parliament which related to their work were misconstrued, they intended, notwithstanding that, to go on and do their best for the ratepayers of the Metropolis. He entirely disclaimed the idea that the Metropolitan Board of Works was a moribund Body, or that he was a moribund Chairman. The Body over which he presided would, notwithstanding the jeers and threats and gibes with which it had been assailed outside, go on doing their best for the ratepayers; but he ridiculed the idea that before introducing a Bill of this kind they should consult the ratepayers. Did they want a mass meeting in Hyde Park? The Board had been enlarged and strengthened by 13 or 14 additional members elected under the Act of last year; and evidently Parliament did not regard it as a moribund Body. They represented the interests of the ratepayers at large; and he contended that it was a very good thing for the Metropolis to have some Body which was not afraid of Gas or Water Companies, or, indeed, of any other monopolies. Unfortunately, however, the Auditor had taken a different view of the case, and it was to make clearer the 144th section of the Act that this Bill had been introduced.

MR. KIMBER said, he objected to giving the Metropolitan Board such powers. He submitted that the duty of watching the water question, which he admitted was a very serious one, lay with the Government. He begged to oppose, in the interests of the Metropolitan constituents he represented, the second reading of the Bill. The Bill would promote speculative litigious proceedings in Parliament, such as had already involved the Metropolitan Board in great cost—£17,000—which the Auditor had disallowed, and which had been paid under a special Act passed by the House on an undertaking by the Chairman not to take further action on the subject except with the consent and approval of the Government. He objected to the Board interfering in this matter. It was not a duty delegated to the Board; that contention was proved by the introduction of this Bill, by which the Board sought to obtain a power that they did not possess. He objected to the Bill as practically entrusting the Metropolitan Board of Works with a roving commission to oppose Water Bills. The proper course was for the Board to examine or watch any projects they thought fit, and not to enter on litigious Parliamentary contests at the expense of the ratepayers without their consent, but to bring to the attention of the Government anything objectionable for their interference, so that, if necessary, it might be dealt with on the responsibility of the Government of the day.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS) said, that the hon. Member seemed to have based his argument on the original Bill, and to have forgotten the objectionable passages which had been left out of it. To cast the duty of watching the water question upon the Government would surely be a piece of centralization which would not be in the interest of the ratepayers at all. He thought that this matter was plain to all those who had taken part in municipal matters in the Provinces. Whenever any Company applied for powers, whether Tramway, Railway, Water, or Gas Companies, it was the duty of the Local Authority to watch over the interests of the ratepayers in a manner that no other authority could do. The hon. Member had said that the Metropolitan Board of Works had not that power. He thought by that statement the hon. Member surrendered the whole question. This was evidently a ratepayers' question. The power of these private Companies was well known; and individual ratepayers had positively no chance single-handed in resisting their demands. He admitted that the Metropolitan Board of Works was not their idea of what a Representative Body should be, but it was the best they possessed; and if these powers were granted to the Metropolitan Board of Works they would, in any reform of the government of London, be handed over to the newly-constituted authority, whatever it might be. He did not think that anyone who admitted that ratepayers needed protection from private Companies could refrain from coming to the conclusion that some such powers as were asked for in this Bill should be conferred on the best Representative Body that existed, pending a better form of municipal government.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER said, the hon. Member had stated that in all other places the Local Authorities possessed the power of looking after the interests of the ratepayers in opposing Bills promoted by private Companies. The hon. Member, however, must not forget that this power could only be exercised under the control of the Municipal Funds Act of 1872, and that before such opposition could be undertaken by the Local Board or any other Governing Authority the consent of the ratepayers must have been obtained. The objection, as he understood it, of hon. Members who opposed this Bill was that power was given to the Metropolitan Board of Works without any control on the part of the ratepayers. If there had been in this Bill any restriction of the kind which existed in the Bill of 1872 the matter might have been different; but, as it stood, the Bill gave a simple and uncontrolled authority to the Metropolitan Board of Works. He recognized that the Metropolitan Board of Works had done much useful work, whatever faults it might have; but, on the other hand, when they saw what had happened with regard to this Bill, he thought it should not be passed without a strong case being made out in support of it. He submitted that no strong case had been made out. He understood that in 1879 the hon. Member for the Hornsey Division of Middlesex (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) said that he would never put his name to any Bill of the kind without consultation with the Government, and that the right hon. Member for Hampstead (Sir Henry Holland) withdrew his opposition to the Bill in consequence of the statement then made. If so, this Bill was undoubtedly promoted without the consent of the Government. He thought it was open to serious question whether or not the position of the Metropolitan Board was such that it ought to be trusted with what might be called a roving commission to oppose Water Bills. While it was proper that there should be an authority able to watch over the interests of the ratepayers and water consumers, he submitted that no sufficient case had been made out for allowing the Metropolitan Board of Works without control to spend the money of the ratepayers in this manner.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, he thought that the hon. and learned Member had not looked into the case. He had never said anything which could bear the construction put upon it by the hon. and learned Member. He had said that he would never bring in a Bill which would make the Metropolitan Board in any way liable for an expenditure of money, and that this Bill was simply to give to the Metropolitan Board of Works the power.

Mr. JAMES STUART said, he wished merely to state that he should oppose the Bill, because the Metropolitan Board of Works was, as he believed it ought to be, a moribund Body.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 76; Noes 130: Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 20.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 30.]

(*Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Marum, Mr. Pyne, Mr. O'Hanlon.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. GILHOOLY, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to give tenants in Ireland a property in trees planted by them which they had not registered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Gilhooly.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. Charles Russell) said, that in the absence of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant he might state that the Government would offer no objection to the second reading of the Bill. He thought the objects aimed at by the Bill were highly to be desired, and it was of great importance that every inducement should be given to tenants to plant trees upon their holdings. It might be a question whether some simpler mode than that provided in the Bill for certain purposes should not be provided; but that was a question for Committee.

Major **SAUNDERSON** said, that, speaking on behalf of the Irish landlords, he had no objection whatever to the Bill; on the contrary, he thought it would be extremely useful. The planting of trees had done good, and he only regretted it was not more universally followed in Ireland. Every encouragement ought to be given to the Irish tenants to improve the country side by planting trees. If some method could be devised of ascertaining the trees that were planted, it was well it should be. While some modifications might be introduced into the Bill in Committee, he saw no objection to the second reading being taken.

Mr. **MARUM** observed, that a measure similar to this was before the House last April, and Lord Ashbourne gave his assent to the principle of it. He was gratified to find that Her Majesty's Government had agreed to the second reading of the Bill. He might add that the Irish Members would be happy to receive any suggestions as to the details of the Bill in Committee.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

METROPOLITAN COMMONS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Broadhurst, Bill to confirm a Scheme, under "The Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866," and "The Metropolitan Commons Amendment Act, 1869," relating to Chislehurst Common, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. Secretary Childers.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 132.]

SALMON AND TROUT FISHING (IRELAND).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the operation of the existing Law regulating Salmon and Trout Fishing in Ireland, and to report whether any Amendments in the Law are desirable.—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 8th *March,* 1886.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

MINUTES.] — Public Bill — *Committee — Report*—Drill Grounds * (24).

COLONIAL POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS—PACIFIC MAIL STEAMERS—VANCOUVER AND HONG KONG.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of **HARROWBY**, on rising, in pursuance of Notice, to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government have accepted the proposals which have been recently made for the establishment of a line of first-class British mail steamers from the city of Vancouver, the Pacific terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to Japan and Hong Kong, when the Pacific Railway is opened for through traffic from Great Britain in the month of June next? said, that the reasons which had induced him to bring this matter forward were, he need scarcely say, entirely dissociated from any personal connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway or with the proposed line of mail steamers, as he had nothing whatever to do with either. He had been led to refer to this question on the present occasion, solely owing to official information received by him as a Member of the late Government. His interest in this matter was further awakened by the fact that a few years ago he served, with his noble Friend (the Earl of Iddesleigh), on the Hudson's Bay Company Committee of the House of Commons, when the question of opening up these regions was fully considered, and when that most important step was recommended by the Committee, which was subsequently acted upon—of closing the territorial Sovereignty of the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been nobly and worthily conducted for many years—and of making these vast centres a part of Her Majesty's magnificent Dominion of Canada. It had been a matter of the greatest delight to him to watch how much more rapidly than they could have hoped their Canadian fellow-subjects had been spreading Christianity and civilization over this, their great and marvellous country. Speaking of the position of the late Government on this matter, he might say that as regarded its main principles the scheme for subsidizing this line of steamers was very favourably entertained by them. The scheme was brought before them in January, and it had, of course, to be referred to the Departments of the Post Office, the Admiralty, the War Office, and the Treasury, before it could be finally approved. Whether the late Government would have arrived at a decision ultimately to support the scheme he could not, of course, positively state. He could only say that Her Majesty's late Advisers felt most favourably towards it, and that they had great hopes of being able to co-operate with the Canadian Government in the establishment of this great and most important line of mail steamers. This subject, he might observe in passing, was not in the slightest degree one of a Party or of a controversial character, and he had no intention whatever of attacking noble Lords opposite. His reason for bringing the matter forward was that he thought it possible that an expression of opinion in their Lordships' House might strengthen the hands of the Colonial Office, and might show that parsimony on the part of the Treasury was unwise, and ought to give way, in the broader interests of the Empire, to more generous views. With their Lordships' permission he would state of what this scheme consisted. It was proposed to start a great line of mail steamers from the city of Vancouver, the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, to Japan and Hong Kong. This, he would at once say, he felt would be to put the suitable "crown" upon the Canadian Pacific Railway scheme, one of the greatest and most marvellous works of our time. It was impossible to speak too highly of the energy, the indomitable zeal, and patience of our Canadian fellow-subjects in carrying the enterprize through. They ought to be proud in this country of having for their fellow-subjects men who had been able to overcome so successfully and so rapidly such great difficulties as were opposed to them; and when upon this subject how could he omit to mention the names of those two most distinguished gentlemen, Sir John Macdonald and Sir George Stephen, without whose governing capacity, determination, and foresight it was difficult to conceive that this extraordinary work could have been carried through? The railway, which would be opened in June next was 3,000 miles long, and it was hoped that by it express trains would be enabled to be run from Quebec to the city of Vancouver—from the Atlantic to the Pacific—in less than five days during the summer time. During the winter the link would be furnished by the Intercolonial Railway now completed in connection with the other great line from Halifax to Quebec. So that, unlike the United States Pacific communication, passengers and goods could be sent on our railway system from the extreme winter Atlantic port of Halifax to the Pacific Ocean. On these works the Canadian Government had spent £20,000,000 sterling, besides giving large land subsidies. To show the value of these great railways, he might say that in 1861 it took 11 to 12 days for troops to go from Halifax to the terminus of the Pacific Railway at Quebec. At the time of the Red River rebellion in 1870 it took 11 weeks to convey troops from Quebec over Lake Superior to the Red River, and 95 days to transport them from Toronto to Winnipeg. These were now but trifling portions of their great line—from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Now the whole of this vast district could be traversed in six days. This was nothing less than a revolution in the conditions of the world and in the relations of Continents, the results of which it was utterly impossible to estimate at present, but for which statesmen should prepare themselves, and hasten to utilize without loss of time for the safety and prosperity of our common Empire. It was proposed that the Imperial Government should subsidize the line of mail steamers from Vancouver to Japan and Hong Kong, and thereby be enabled to convey troops, stores for the Navy, and passengers from Liverpool to the Pacific over British territory, so far as the land journey was concerned, in 13 or 14 days. He might mention that in summer the journey across the Continent from Montreal to Vancouver would occupy four to four-and-a-half days, and in winter from Halifax to Vancouver five-and a-half to six days. The amount of the subsidy asked from this country he would not go into, but would only say that its payment was to extend over a period of 10 years. The line of steamers proposed to be started would consist of first-class vessels steaming 14 to 15 knots per hour, and making the passage from Vancouver to Japan and Hong Kong once every three weeks, so that the journey from Vancouver to Yokohama would be made in less than 12 days' time. The result would be that the journey from England to Japan would be made in 26 days, and that between England and Hong Kong and Shanghai in 34 days. At the present time the journey from England to Yokohama in Japan, *viâ* Brindisi, occupied a period of 40 to 44 days, while *viâ* Gribraltar it took 46 to 53 days. Then as to Calcutta, the journey for troops from England *viâ* Gibraltar to Calcutta could not now be done in less than 38 days, while from Halifax to Calcutta would be only 31 to 39 days, to which would have to be added seven days for the Atlantic voyage. As far as Australia and New Zealand were concerned, the line from San Francisco must, of course, be the shortest; but there was good reason to hope that if this line of mail steamers was established a good deal of trade would take place between Vancouver, Australia, and New Zealand, particularly when it was remembered the advantage this route afforded to our great railway system, with its command of a great timber trade and its coal resources as well. He believed there were many enormous advantages to be derived from the establishment of this mail route, and one among the greatest would be the encouragement of our commerce and our friendship with those two most important ancient Empires, Japan and China. Nothing was more clear as to the politics of the world in the future than that Great Britain's great policy was, and must be, to do all in her power to maintain the independence, the power, and the prosperity of these two most remarkable countries. Everything should be done to draw closer the ties of friendship between us. Our people might benefit enormously on both sides by such relations between powerful and independent States. To this great purpose a first-class Royal Mail Line of steamers would be a powerful aid. Another vast advantage was that we should have an alternative line of communications, in the event of European complications, to India, China, Japan, and Australia through British territory. In that respect—the advantage of which was so obvious and so overwhelming that he need not dilate upon it—nothing could exceed the importance of this scheme. Among its other advantages would be that supplies could be sent to the Fleet by it, and that coal could be obtained in Vancouver Island. Then, again, this new railway could not fail very shortly to open up fresh vast and fertile districts to our surplus population; and anything which called greater attention on the part of our working classes to that part of the world must be no slight advantage to this country. As an inducement to the Imperial Government to grant the subsidy, special terms were offered for the conveyance of troops and stores, while emigrants' sleeping carriages conveying 30 to 40 persons would be run. Even if there had not been these strong and urgent reasons for this new mail line, he must confess that he should consider it a matter of no slight national importance that the starting of their magnificent steamers would, in a time of unexampled depression in all our industries at home, give employment during three or four years to our leading shipbuilding yards. Whether the terms of the proposed subsidy were just or not he could not say; but, as the Canadian Government had done so much for this great and magnificent work, he trusted that the Government of this country would look upon this proposal with a favourable eye, and would help forward the grand enterprize by every means in their power.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl GRANVILLE) said, that he entirely agreed with very much, although not with all, that had fallen from the noble Earl. He concurred with the observations of the noble Earl that this was not a Party question, and with what he had said as to the energy and ability shown by Sir John Macdonald, and Sir George Stephen, the Chairman of the Company, in carrying forward their great railway so expeditiously and successfully. Individually, and as Colonial Secretary, he should be very glad if it were found practicable to carry out the scheme of subsidizing mail steamers proposed by the Dominion. But the matter did not rest entirely with the Colonial Office. It concerned the Departments of the Treasury, the War

Office, and those of his Friends the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Postmaster General. It appeared from a Minute by his Predecessor (Sir Frederick Stanley) that the late Cabinet had come to the conclusion on principle to approve of this project, and that inquiry should be made on the whole subject by Representatives of the different Departments of the Government interested. He was afraid that *primâ facie* the opinions of those Departments were not as favourable to the project as he could have wished; but they made no Report, having suspended their sittings in consequence of the change of Government. The late Government seemed in this case to have somewhat departed from the course generally pursued, not only by philosophers and men of science, but also by men of business, who were accustomed first to inquire and then to decide. In this case the opposite plan was adopted —first to decide, and then to inquire. There might, however, have been reasons why delay might have been inconvenient at that time. When he came into the Colonial Office, this was one of the first subjects which claimed his attention. Her Majesty's present Government, desirous of having full information before them, had requested the Committee to resume their sittings, which they had done, and to give a complete Report. The Report, when presented, would receive the most careful consideration on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and the Dominion would receive an answer without loss of time.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till
To-morrow, a quarter past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 8*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Leave*—Railway and Canal Traffic, *debate adjourned.*

Ordered—First Reading—Solicitors Annual Certificate Duty * [133].

Second Reading—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order * [119]; Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2) [118].

Committee—Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment * [10]—r.p.; Trees (Ireland) * [30]—r.p.

Committee—Report—Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Continuance * [107]; Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) * [128].

Earl Granville

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House, that he had received from Mr. Justice Field and Mr. Justice Day, two of the Judges selected, in pursuance of The Corrupt Practices Prevention Acts, 1854 to 1883, for the Trial of Election Petitions, a Certificate and Report relating to the Borough of Aylesbury, and the same were read as follows:—

Aylesbury Election.

The Corrupt Practices Prevention Acts,
1854 to 1883.

To the Right Honourable the Speaker of the House of Commons.

We, the Honorable Sir William Ventris Field, knight, and the Honorable Sir John Charles Day, knight, Justices of the High Court of Justice, and two of the Judges for the time being for the trial of Election Petitions in England, do hereby, in pursuance of the said Acts, certify that upon the second, third, and fourth days of March 1886 we duly held a Court at the County Hall, Aylesbury, in the County of Buckingham, for the trial of and did try the Parliamentary Election Petition for the Mid Bucks or Aylesbury Division of the County of Buckingham, wherein Frederick Charsley was the Petitioner and Ferdinand de Rothschild was the Respondent, which Petition prayed that it might be determined that the said Ferdinand de Rothschild was not duly elected or returned a Member to serve in Parliament for the said Division of the said County, and that his Election and return were and are wholly null and void.

And, in further pursuance of the said Acts, we report that at the conclusion of the said Trial we determined that the said Ferdinand de Rothschild, being the Member whose Election and return were complained of in the said Petition, was duly elected and returned, and we do hereby certify in writing such our determination to you.

And whereas charges were made in the said Petition of corrupt and illegal practices having been committed at the said Election, we, in further pursuance of the said Acts, report as follows:—

That no corrupt or illegal practice was proved to have been committed by or with the knowledge or consent of any Candidate at such Election, nor has any Candidate been proved guilty by his Agents of any illegal practice within the meaning of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883, in reference to such Election.

We further report that there is no reason to believe that either corrupt or illegal practices have extensively prevailed at the Parliamentary Election for the Mid Bucks or Aylesbury Division of the County of Buckingham, to which the said Petition relates.

Dated this 4th day of March 1886.

William V. Field.

John C. Day.

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION.

——o——

JAPAN—TREATIES WITH EUROPEAN POWERS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to give Notice that, on going into Committee of Supply upon the Civil Service Estimates, I will call the attention of the House to the effect of existing Treaties between Japan and the European Powers upon the Eastern trade of the United Kingdom and the development of Japan, and will move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived, in the interests of both countries, for the withdrawal of those Treaties either singly or in concert with other Powers."

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): May I ask, Sir, if the Motion which the hon. Member proposes to make is in Order? You have already left the Chair on the Civil Service Estimates, and I wish to know if it is competent for any hon. Member to make any further Motion?

MR. SPEAKER: The Standing Order to which the hon. Member refers, applies when the Estimates are taken on Monday or Thursday, and only on those days.

QUESTIONS.

——o——

BRITISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS ABROAD—DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVES.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What are the instructions to Her Majesty's diplomatic and consular representatives in Foreign Countries with regard to the advancement of British commercial interests, and the assistance to be afforded to British traders; and, if, in order to assist the depressed condition of commerce and manufacture, Her Majesty's Government will enjoin upon its officials abroad the necessity of increased activity in this respect, encourage their zeal by all possible means, and direct Reports to be made, at least quarterly, from all parts of the World, and published for the information of the commercial community throughout the Empire, upon the condition of general trade within their several districts, and special Reports concerning British trade, and the new markets which are likely to offer an advantageous field for British enterprise?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): Her Majesty's Diplomatic officers are instructed "to make the commercial interests of Great Britain an object of their constant attention," and the general instructions for the guidance of Her Majesty's Consular officers state that—

> "It is the duty of Consular officers to protect and to promote the lawful trade of Great Britain by every fair and proper means, and to uphold the rights and privileges of British merchants."

My hon. Friend will have learnt from the speeches made on the 24th ultimo, at the dinner of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, at which, I believe, he was himself present, that Her Majesty's Government had then already taken steps with a view to a full consideration of the manner in which the services of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular officers could be turned to the best advantage for the promotion of British trade abroad. Suggestions on the subject have been invited from the Chambers of Commerce, and my hon. Friend may be well assured that Her Majesty's Government are fully sensible of the importance of prompt action in this matter. I may add that a Notice calling attention to it has been standing on the Order Book for some weeks past, in the name of the hon. Member for Stafford, and now stands as the first Order for April 2.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE ORANGE LODGES.

MR. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will consider the advisability of disarming the Orange Lodges in Ireland in view of the speeches openly made by the Orange leaders?

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, perhaps he will be able to say whether he is aware that Lord Clarendon, then Liberal Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, took steps for the arming of the Orangemen of Dublin in the year 1848, in view of the action of certain disaffected Irishmen?

MR. O'KELLY: Might I also ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that the Orangemen generally use these arms for the shooting down of unarmed men?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I shall confine my reply to the Question on the Paper. I may say that the Government have no information rendering it necessary for them to consider at present the course suggested in the Question. If any such cases should arise, or be brought under my notice, I, of course, shall consider them.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will consider, amongst other things, a speech made on Saturday last by the Rev. Dr. Kane, Grand Master of the Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast, in which he said—

> "He defied Mr. Gladstone and all his works; and if there were as many devils in Downing Street as there were Cabinet Ministers traitors to their Sovereign they would, God helping them, maintain the authority of the Crown and the integrity of the Empire."

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Before answering that Question, it is best that I should see a more official report.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION).

Mr. INCE (Islington, E.) asked the Attorney General, Whether a Committee, consisting of certain Judges and members of the Bar, was appointed upwards of a year ago to inquire into the unsatisfactory working of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice; whether such Committee had made any Report; and, if so, when, and to whom; and, whether there is any objection to place a Copy of the Report, if made, upon the Table?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Mr. Charles Russell) (Hackney, S.), in reply, said, that it was the case that a Committee consisting of certain Judges and members of the Bar had been appointed to inquire into this matter. The Committee had made a Report, and there was no objection to lay it on the Table of the House?

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEER FORCE.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY (Glasgow, Blackfriars) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will consider the propriety of allowing service in the ranks with the Volunteer Force to count, in the case of privates who become commissioned officers, towards the fifteen years necessary for a commissioned officer to have served before he is permitted to wear the uniform of his corps and retain his rank in the event of his retiring from the service?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): Under a Regulation issued on the 1st of March, one-fifth of the service referred to will reckon towards the 15 years required to entitle a commissioned officer to a step of rank and permission to retain his uniform.

EGYPT—SUPPLIES FOR THE SOUDANESE.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been directed to the recommendations of Mr. Cameron in No. 48 and Inclosure, Egypt, No. 2, and to the Reports of Commander Jones and Admiral Lord John Hay in No. 135, Egypt, No. 2; and, whether British ships are still under orders to "prevent goods of all kinds" from reaching the tribes on the East Coast of Africa?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): Her Majesty's Government are aware of the Correspondence to which the hon. Member calls attention. Instructions were given early in October last to Her Majesty's cruisers to prevent the importation of supplies by sea for the use of the hostile tribes in the neighbourhood of Suakin, and no alteration has sence been made in these instructions.

Mr. DILLON: Will the Government take steps to cause other instructions to be issued?

Mr. BRYCE: I am afraid I must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of that Question.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) begged to give Notice to ask the hon. Gentleman, Whether protests were not made by this country against the French for establishing a rice blockade in the late Chinese War; and, whether, in view of that protest, he thought the Government ought to establish a corn blockade on the East Coast of Africa?

SECRET SOCIETIES (IRELAND)—COURTS IN ORANGE LODGES.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) (for Mr. T. M. Healy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the letter of the Orangeman, James Mulligan, in *The Derry Journal* of 26th Feburary, in which he alleges that he was placed on trial before a Court in the Lodge on a number of counts, "which filled a sheet of paper," under the following circumstances:—

> "The monthly meeting of Augher Orange Lodge was held on Thursday 11th instant, J. C. Ferrall, Worthy Master, in the Chair. The special business of the evening was to investigate a charge against me, as follows:—A. M. preferred a charge against James Mulligan of disloyalty to the Queen and Constitution at the late election by his conduct in not voting for and supporting Captain S. Maxwell, the Constitutional candidate. This charge was preferred on 10th December 1885, but, through some informalities in the Master's proceedings, it was deferred until next night;"

whether the Government propose to allow Orange Lodges to hold Courts to investigate the manner in which the Brethren exercise the franchise; whether the police are aware that such Courts in Orange Lodges after the election have been frequently held, and greatly tend to prevent the freedom of the ballot; is he aware that James Mulligan further complains of being arraigned on the additional accusation that he

> "Did not attend the Revision Court to assist complainant in securing his vote. The proof failing to inculpate me before the Committee, it must go to a higher Court, where W. E. Macartney will be president, unless his lately acquired dignity (M.P. for South Antrim) might cause him to depute the duty to those who have a relish for it;"

and, does the Government recognise the validity of the tribunal over which Mr. Macartney is alleged to preside; and, if not, what will be done to secure the freedom of members of the Orange organisation? The hon. Member would, at the same time, ask a Question of which he had given him rather short private Notice. It was, Whether his attention had been called to another letter in *The Derry Journal* from this Orangeman, giving the details of another attack upon him in the Orange Lodge. It was as follows:—

> "When the business of the meeting was over and they prepared to go, an individual said I would be better with police protection. Then all at once two others attacked me with false statements. One said I had voted for O'Brien and prevented others from voting for Maxwell, and that, therefore, I should be allowed into no decent society. I first of all told them their statements were all false, and that I gave no vote except for those in favour of the temperance movement in Parliament. At this they became enraged, and one of them ordered me out. I was then pursued by a 'booing' and shouting mob, and a stone was thrown by one of the mob, which providentially struck me on the top of a high hat, as it might otherwise have hurt me very much. I turned and pursued the Orange mob, who ran like rabbits back to the Orange lodge?"

He would also ask if the police had reported upon that outrage?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I only received the quotation the hon. Member was good enough to send me five minutes before I came down to the House. I will cause inquiry to be made into the particulars. With reference to the Question on the Paper, I am informed that such a letter did appear in *The Derry Journal*, as is stated in the Question. The police have no means of knowing what takes place at Orange Lodges. If any case should arise in which evidence of intimidation is afforded, it will be considered with a view to a prosecution. In this case, I am informed that Mulligan has intimated his intention of placing the matter in the hands of his solicitor, for the purpose of taking proceedings under the Corrupt Practices Act.

MR. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will consider the advisability of sending his secret police into the meetings of Orange Lodges?

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will not consider the advisability of sending the police to the meetings of Orange Lodges in the same way as they had been sent to open meetings of the Irish National League?

[No reply.]

DISTRESS IN THE METROPOLIS—THE EAST END—DWELLINGS FOR THE POOR.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that numbers of houses (dwellings for the poor) have been pulled down in the East End of London, whereby the remaining accommodation for the poorest classes in the East End has become still more crowded; and that no steps have yet been taken to build healthy dwellings for the poor on their site; whether he is aware that houses in the East End of London are still being sublet to the poorest classes by house-jobbers, room by room; resulting in comparatively exorbitant rents to the poorest classes, and extortionate profits to the aforesaid house-jobbers; whether, considering the present depression and want of employment in the East End of London, Her Majesty's Government can take immediate steps to remedy these evils, and to facilitate and expedite the administration of Acts of Parliament dealing with this subject; and, whether there is any means by which some of the funds subscribed for the relief of the unemployed can be utilised in employing labour in building dwellings for the poor on vacant sites?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.): As regards the first and second Questions of the hon. Member, a reference to the evidence which was taken before the Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes will show that the statements in the Questions are substantially accurate. The Acts which have been passed dealing with the housing of the poor in the Metropolis are under the administration of either the Metropolitan Board of Works or of the District Boards and Vestries; and the Local Government Board have no authority in the matter. We have done what we can to urge upon those Bodies the propriety of expediting, as far as possible, any works which they may think it well to undertake at this time. As regards the last Question, I suppose the hon. Member refers to the Mansion House Fund. That is a matter over which I have no jurisdiction whatever; and I should, therefore, suggest that any question on the subject should be addressed to the Lord Mayor.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—
THE TEMPLEDERRY POST OFFICE.

MR. J. P. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether a Memorial has been received by the Postmaster General and the Lords of the Treasury from the inhabitants of the parish of Templederry, county Tipperary, praying to be relieved from the great inconvenience they are subjected to in consequence of the removal of the post office from the village of Templederry, which is in the vicinity of the Catholic Church and schools; whether this post office was removed so recently as last July to half a mile distant, to the house of a licensed publican; whether this man when appointed as postmaster was seventy years old; whether the registered letters and stamps are kept by him on his licensed premises; whether the general access to the post office is through said licensed premises; whether this is in accordance with the rules of the Post Office; and, whether, having regard to these facts and the great public inconvenience, as set forth in Memorial referred to, steps will be taken to restore the post office to its original central position in the village?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The Memorial referred to by the hon. Member was received and carefully inquired into. The late postmaster was dismissed in March last, and his successor, George Powell, was appointed in June by the Treasury upon nomination in the usual way. Taking Templederry Cross as the central point, the house of the late postmaster is 950 yards to the west of it, while that of the new postmaster is 787 yards to the east of it. Powell holds a retail licence; he is 68 years of age, but is fully competent to perform the duties of postmaster. The registered letters are kept under lock and key in the post office. It would be irregular for a post office to be in a licensed vintner's premises; but this post office is separate from it, and has a separate entrance. There is also a window through which the business of the post office can be transacted.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.): Might I ask what the hon. Gentleman means by "nomination in the usual way?" Who made the nomination?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I am informed that the appointment was made by the Treasury in the usual way. If the hon. Member desires information on the subject I will make further inquiry.

MR. J. P. O'BRIEN: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the last paragraph of my Question.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I thought I had. The Postmaster General considers that the present postmaster is discharging his duties satisfactorily.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES) — DAN-Y-GRAIG SCHOOL, SWANSEA.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether his attention has been called to the refusal of the grant by the Education Department to the Dan-y-graig Catholic School at Swansea on the ground that it was an "unnecessary school;" whether he is aware that this school was in course of erection, with the knowledge and sanction of the Education Department, before the Swansea School Board made any application to extend their school; whether it was built and opened, and under notice for its first inspection, before the contract for the extension of the Board School was signed; whether it was built at a time when more accommodation was required; whether a deficiency existed of about 120 places, being about the number needed by the Catholic population of the district; whether, when the School Board carried out its extension, there was no deficency, as all the vacancies discovered by the Board had by that time already been supplied; whether there are at present several hundred places unoccupied in the Board School; and, whether this unnecessary extension has caused the ratepayers of Swansea upwards of £4,000?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir Lyon Playfair) (Leeds, S.): My attention has been directed to the case of the school referred to. It was in course of erection with the knowledge of the Education Department before the School Board made application to extend their school. But the Department had given Canon Wilson direct and explicit notice that before sanctioning it they must take the opinion of the Board. The school was opened on August 11, 1884, and consent was given to the loan for the Board school in January, 1885. To the fourth and fifth Questions, I have to reply that more accommodation was required, and that there was a deficiency of about 120 places. The number of places needed by the Roman Catholic population was, according to the Board's Census, about 90. The carrying out of the extension of the Board school went on from the time at which it was approved by the Education Department on ground of the deficiency stated as above and of the Board's estimate of the probable increase of population. We have no knowledge of the number of places vacant in the Board school at present; the attendance seems to be rapidly increasing; but in June last year, at the day of the inspection, there were 382 vacant places. The loan granted by the Public Works Loan Commissioners was £3,850. A statement that the School Board object to a school as unnecessary, and that the Education Department see no reason for differing from the Board, has generally been held as equivalent to "reasons of the Education Department for refusing annual grant," as required by Section 98 of the Elementary Education Act of 1870. It is so in all the other cases, five in number, in the Report quoted. Individual cases are not submitted to the whole Committee of Council. The decision in this case was made by Lord Carlingford and Mr. Mundella in December 1884, and sustained by Viscount Cranbrook and Sir Henry Holland in January, 1886. If the hon. Member will move for the Correspondence in this case it will be given. The case has been repeatedly under the consideration of the Lord President and Vice President of the Council, and is now under that of the Royal Commission.

THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND—THE DEAN OF THE CHAPEL ROYAL.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) (for Mr. T. M. Healy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the fact that the present Lord Lietenant of Ireland has to avail himself of the religious ministrations of the Dean of the Chapel Royal, who is a member of a communion to which His Excellency does not belong, the Government would, as a mark of respect to the Viceroy, and to the Presbyterian Church of which he is a member, place a sufficient Vote on the Estimates for the services of a viceregal chaplain of the Presbyterian Church during Lord Aberdeen's viceroyalty; if he can say whether there would be any obstacle, legal or otherwise, to Presbyterian worship being conducted in the Chapel Royal at Dublin Castle; in whom is that edifice vested; and, is it intended, on the appointment of a successor to the present Dean of the Chapel Royal, to have regard to the fact that all Viceroys may not in future belong to the disestablished religion in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The Chapel Royal at Dublin Castle is by law vested in the Dean. The present Dean holds his office for life. The Question which the hon. Member puts appeared to me to bear so much of a personal character, that I have thought it right to consult the Lord Lieutenant himself. His Excellency informs me that he has every reason to be satisfied with the ministrations of the present Dean, who is his *ex officio* chaplain; and that if at any time he should wish to attend any of the Irish Presbyterian churches he will have no hesitation in doing so. At the same time, His Excellency assures me that if the House of Commons should see fit to make provision in the Estimates, as suggested, he will cheerfully undertake to see that the money is properly expended. As regards the last paragraph of the Question, I fear it would tax even the hon. Member's ingenuity in a single appointment to provide for all the possible theological contingencies that might arise.

THE INDEPENDENT NATIVE STATES— THE MARTINI-HENRY RIFLE.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the engagements entered into by the Indian Government, with regard to the arming of Indian Native Troops with Martini-Henrys, will be carried out?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I do not quite understand what the "engagements" are to which the noble Lord refers, and he appears to be under some misconception of the facts of the case. I believe that it was at one time in contemplation to arm some of the Native Indian troops with the Martini-Henry rifle. This intention, however, was abandoned, the reason assigned being that if the Native Army was armed partly with the Martini-Henry and partly with the Snider, while the British Infantry used the new Martini-Enfield, there would arise great inconvenience in the case of any military operations, owing to the necessity of taking into the field three different sorts of ammunition. I am not sure whether the decision on these grounds to relinquish the idea of putting the Martini-Henry into the hands of the Native troops was taken before or during the noble Lord's tenure of the Office of Secretary of State for India; but it was certainly taken before the present Government came into Office.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL asked whether it was not the fact that already some 40,000 Martini-Henry rifles had been supplied to the Native troops; and, whether the difficulty as to the three different kinds of ammunition had been determined before the late Government came into Office?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN replied that his information was directly to the contrary of that of the noble Lord. It was quite true that 40,000 Martini-Henrys had been sent out to India as part of a previous transaction, and it was since they had been sent out that the change of decision had taken place.

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS ACT (SCOTLAND), 1882—MISS LUCY CAMPBELL'S BEQUEST.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the Secretary for Scotland, If his attention has been called to a Memorial of ratepayers of Campbeltown and others, addressed to the Commissioners under the Education Endowments Act (Scotland) of 1882, praying that a portion of the funds bequeathed by the late Miss Lucy Campbell may be applied to give free education to the children of the working classes, as provided in the bequest of the lady referred to, and that the funds may not be diverted for the promotion of higher education; and, what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): In answer to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to state that the consideration of any such Memorial as that to which he refers rests with the Educational Endowments Commissioners, and not with the Scotch Education Department; and that neither the position of the fund in question, nor any Memorial relating to it, will come before the Department until a draft scheme has been submitted to the Department by the Commissioners.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE DRAINAGE OF THE RIVER SUCK.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the works which were being carried on near the town of Ballinasloe, with the object of improving the drainage of the River Suck, are suspended; and, if so, whether the Government will urge the Suck Drainage Board to recommence the works, as there is great distress in that town and district at present, owing to the want of employment?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to answer the Question. The works in question are under the control of the Drainage Board. The works were not long ago suspended in consequence of the death of the engineer, and the necessity for the appointment of fresh officers. The work will shortly be resumed.

VACCINATION—FATAL RESULTS AT RYDE (ISLE OF WIGHT).

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether an inquiry was recently held at Ryde into a number of cases of alleged disastrous, and, in some instances, fatal results of vaccination; whether he has received the Report of that inquiry; and, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.), in reply, said, that from the Inspector's Report it appeared that in one case a child had died from erysipelas after vaccination; but there were no circumstances to lead to the conclusion that the disease had been connected with the vaccination. In another fatal case, also that of a child, there was nothing to show any relation between the vaccination and the infantile disease from which the child suffered.

SLAVERY IN BRAZIL—THE SARAIVA ACT.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government have received the text of the recent Act passed by the Legislature of Brazil in reference to slavery in that Empire, known as the Saraiva Act; and, whether it is in contravention of the terms of the Rio Branco Law of 1871 with regard to slavery?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): The text of the Act has been received from Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Rio de Janeiro, and will be laid on the Table; its provisions do not appear to be in contravention of the Law of 1871, although they are not as liberal as it was hoped they would have been.

IRELAND—"THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL" OFFICE AT RATHMINES.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that the Rathmines Post and Telegraph Office is the local *Freeman's Journal* office; and, if it is consistent with the rules of the Public Service that the telegraph clerks should be employed in the sale of Nationalist newspapers?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to answer the Question. The postal telegraph office at Rathmines is a receiving office, the keeper of which carries on a private trade, and, I believe, is agent for the sale of *The Freeman's Journal*. There are no postal or telegraph clerks employed there, the receiver being his own servant. The Post Office regulations do not prevent receivers from being newspaper agents.

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE PAROCHIAL CHARITIES OF THE CITY OF LONDON.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottingham, S.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the Charity Commissioners have completed the inquiry into the nature, tenure, and value of the parochial charities of the City of London, which they were required to make by the Act passed in 1883; and, if not, when such inquiry is likely to be completed, and the findings and determinations at which the Commissioners have arrived in relation thereto, to be made public, as required by that Act?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir Lyon Playfair) (Leeds, S.): The Charity

Commissioners have practically completed the inquiry into the whole of the Charities of the City of London included in the Schedule of the Act, 1883. The results of the inquiry have been tabulated, and will form the basis of the Schedules which they are required by the Act to publish; but some time will necessarily elapse before the publication can be completed.

PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND)—CONVICT LABOUR.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the number of convicts now employed on public works in Ireland, and on what works they are employed; what number of convicts it is proposed to employ on projected harbour works in that Country; whether he can inform the House when the various works on which convicts are now employed will be completed; and, whether it has been brought to his notice, that in the last Report of the General Prisons Board it is shown that the Board have been obliged to resort to many expedients to keep the convicts in Ireland fully employed since the breaking up of Spike Island Prison, and—

> "That when the works now in hand, which will not extend over many months, are completed, it will be quite impossible to find at Mountjoy out of doors labour for the convicts who should be employed on public works?"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The number of convicts at present employed on public works in Ireland is 480. They are engaged in the construction and reconstruction of prison buildings and in various trades. It is expected that the building works now in hand will be completed about the end of this or the beginning of next year. The number of convicts which it is proposed to employ on the projected works at Galway is about 300; though the Board tell me that after making necessary allowances for fatigues, tradesmen, servants, the sick, and light labour men, they are doubtful whether that number will be actually available for the works proper, owing to the gratifying circumstance that they are looking forward to a diminution of the number of convicts. I cannot say whether it is now possible to name a date for the commencement of the works at Galway. I am aware that the hon. Member for that city is much interested in the project, and he has written me several letters about it; but he had better put himself into communication with the Board in reference to the matter.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ACTION OF THE KILMACOW NATIONAL LEAGUE.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a resolution passed at a meeting of the Kilmacow, county Kilkenny, Branch of the National League on December 20th last, and reported in *The Munster Express* of December 26th last, to the following effect:—

> "That we condemn the action of Mr. Raymond Delapoer in allowing himself to be made the tool of the so-called Loyalist Faction, and we hereby admonish the members of this Branch that he is unworthy of any social relations in the future;"

whether a respectable farmer, named John Hunt, who had never joined the League, was one of the assenting nominators of Mr. Delapoer; whether, after the election, he was told he would be burnt in effigy, and then boycotted, if he did not apologise for his conduct and become a member of the League; and, whether, in consequence of these threats, Hunt was compelled to attend the meeting of the Kilmacow Branch above referred to, and apologise for having declared war against the National Cause in signing Mr. Delapoer's nomination paper?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Except that it is not clear whether Hunt was told he would be "Boycotted," or whether he became alarmed at the proposal to burn him in effigy, I am informed the facts are as stated.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—SUPPLY OF DRUGS FOR DISPENSARIES.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board will consider the advisability of taking measures to secure the supply of drugs of good quality to the dispensaries connected with the Poor Law Administration in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Of, course, Sir, the Local Government Board consider it a matter of much importance that Boards of Guardians should procure medicines of good quality; and by means of Reports from their Inspectors and the medical officers, and by bringing the subject under the Guardians' notice when necessary, they endeavour to secure that the supplies are good and sufficient. Beyond this, however, they have no control, as it rests with the Guardians to enter into the necessary contracts. I am informed that in 1870 an effort was made to establish a central depôt for these supplies; but obstacles were found to exist in carrying out the arrangement, and the next year the order on the subject was rescinded.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—THE PLANS FOR RE-ARRANGEMENT.

MR. STORY-MASKELYNE (Wilts, Cricklade) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will sanction the distribution to Members of the plans and proposals of the Institute of British Architects, regarding a re-arrangement of the space and the buildings to be erected on for the future offices, War and the Admiralty; and, if he will endeavour to have it issued before the discussion in this House?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I understand that the plans and proposals in question have been already sent to every Member of Parliament, so that it is unnecessary that they should be circulated again officially.

CHURCH OF IRELAND—COLLECTION OF TITHE RENT-CHARGE.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the tithe rent-charge (not in process of redemption) formerly belonging to the Church of Ireland is now collected by Commissioners nominated by the Government without deduction on account of the depression of prices?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Tithe rent-charge is collected by the Irish Land Commissioners under the Irish Church Act Amendment Act, 1881. They have no power to grant abatements.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE FORESHORE OF TEIGNMOUTH HARBOUR.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that Edward Newton, a fisherman, has been imprisoned in Exeter Gaol for an indefinite period for gathering cockles on the foreshore of Teignmouth Harbour or Tidal Estuary of the Teign, in the county of Devon, in disobedience of an injunction of a county court judge; whether the said Edward Newton is still in prison; whether the inhabitants of Teignmouth have, from time immemorial, gathered cockles on the foreshore of Teignmouth Harbour; and, whether he is aware that the industry of gathering cockles has afforded the means of support to a large number of poor families at Teignmouth?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): This is a County Court case, and the Secretary of State has no direct power of interference; but on my attention being drawn to the matter by the hon. Member I at once communicated with the County Court Judge asking for his observations. The Judge says that the part of the bed of the river in which this occurred is private property, and is laid out with much trouble and expense as an oyster preserve. Its title to be considered private property has been so clearly proved to the Judge that he has frequently granted injunctions to restrain the bed being interfered with by trespassers. With regard to Edward Newton, the Judge has ordered his immediate release, on the condition that he will obey the injunction. Of course, the injunction only applies to that part of the bed which is private property; and so I presume the industry of gathering cockles is not generally affected by it.

EXCISE—HOME-GROWN TOBACCO.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has given consideration to the question of allowing the agriculturists of the United Kingdom, under proper restrictions, to grow tobacco for sale; and, if not, whether he will cause inquiry to be made with the view of assisting the agricultural interest in this matter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): I need not say if anything could be done for the advantage of the agriculturists and cultivators of the soil of England I should be extremely happy to co-operate in such a course. This question of the growth of tobacco in this country is by no means a new one, and has been often considered. The hon. Member is probably aware that up to 1830 it was permitted in Ireland without any charge. The matter was at that time examined by a Committee; and it was found that though the Irish climate was considered peculiarly favourable to its growth, it was only employed to the extent of 500 acres. The result of the Report of that Committee was that the cultivation of tobacco could not be continued in Ireland without the same privileges being extended to England also, and that in both cases it would be necessary to impose an Excise Duty. The question has frequently been considered at the Treasury since that time; and it was calculated that the Excise Duty to protect the Revenue which it would be necessary to impose—namely, about £300 an acre, would be prohibitory, and, in fact, it could not be worked. But if the hon. Member thinks later information would throw light on the matter, and remove the difficulties, I should be most happy to communicate with him, or with any other practical agriculturist, with a view to the further consideration of the subject.

MR. PYNE (Waterford, W.) asked whether it was proposed to place a tax of £300 an acre on the growth of tobacco in Ireland?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, no; but that was the tax proposed some years ago on tobacco in the United Kingdom, and that the fact that only 500 acres were under tobacco in Ireland when it could be grown free was calculated to prove that the cultivation of it was not remunerative?

LIQUOR TRAFFIC IN THE NORTH SEA —CONFERENCE AT THE HAGUE.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the German Government has consented to take part in the proposed Conference at the Hague on the subject of the liquor traffic in the North Sea; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will take such steps as may be practicable, with the view to the early meeting of that Conference?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): I am glad to inform my hon. Friend and the House that the German Government have consented to take part in this Conference. Her Majesty's Government is now in communication with the Netherlands Government on the subject, and I have no doubt that the latter will convoke the meeting at the earliest date possible. My hon. Friend may rest assured that, as Her Majesty's Government fully appreciate the importance of the matter to which he has devoted so much care and attention, there will be no delay on their part in bringing it to a successful termination.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the approaching Poor Law Elections in Ireland, the Local Government Board will give instructions to allow the solicitors of candidates to be present at the scrutiny of votes in order to obviate the expense, delay, and inconvenience of subsequent sworn inquiries into elections, which have become so frequent of late years?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have to say, in reply to this Question, that I am in communication with the Local Government Board on the matter.

EASTERN ROUMELIA—CUSTOMS CORDON.

MR. BOURKE (Lynn Regis) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the fact that a line of Custom Houses has, within the last three weeks, been established between Eastern Roumelia and Turkey; whether this is a breach of the Organic statute; whether it will prejudicially affect the interests of British commerce; and, what steps the Government propose to take with respect to it?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): Her Majesty's Government have received information that orders have been given to the Bulgarian Authorities to establish a Customs Cordon on the South-Eastern Frontier of Eastern Roumelia, and to levy an export duty of 1½ per cent *ad valorem* on cattle and sheep. This duty would therefore not directly affect British commerce; but this measure appears to be contrary to the provisions of the Organic Statute and of the Treaty of Berlin, and is the subject of communications now passing between the Governments of the Signatory Powers and between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Bulgaria. I am glad, therefore, to be able to add that satisfactory assurances have been received from the Bulgarian Government that duties will not be levied on the frontier between Eastern Roumelia and Turkey until some arrangement has been arrived at on the subject.

SOUTH AFRICA (BECHUANALAND)—SIR CHARLES WARREN'S EXPEDITION.

Mr. PORTMAN (Dorsetshire, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the recommendations of Sir Charles Warren have been fully recognised in the distribution of rewards to the officers commanding the different branches of the late Bechuanaland Expeditionary Force, to whose share in the brilliant success of the enterprise Sir C. Warren has publicly and repeatedly testified; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will still consider the cases of the officers who were in command of the Royal Engineers, Royal Artillery, the line of communications, and of the Medical Department?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): Full weight was given to the recommendations of Sir Charles Warren when the question was considered by the War and Colonial Offices, and I cannot undertake to re-open the question.

ENGLAND AND IRELAND — A SUB-MARINE TUNNEL.

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the possibility of connecting Great Britain with Ireland by a sub-marine tunnel has ever been considered by competent engineers, now that the possibility of making a tunnel between England and France is believed to be established, if regarded solely from an engineer's point of view; if not, whether the Government is disposed to have the subject so considered, the distance between Port Patrick and Donaghadee being about equal to that between Dover and Calais, though the intervening strata are probably much more difficult between Great Britain and Ireland than between England and France?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am not aware that this project has ever been seriously and practically entertained. I do not think the Government, under any circumstances, should take the initiative in such a matter.

IRELAND (EVICTIONS)—THE HIGH SHERIFF OF DUBLIN.

Mr. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the language used by the High Sheriff of the City of Dublin, at a meeting held in that city, under the presidency of Mr. Davitt, T.C., and reported in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 3rd of March, viz.:—

> "As regards evictions, he had only to say that such a disgrace to any civilized country could no longer be permitted. The English people, and the present English Government, through their mouthpiece Mr. Morley, have already struck a death blow against the power of the landlords to evict wholesale, as they have done in the past;"

and, what steps he proposes to take, with regard to the public functionary, to repudiate, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government, the charge that they would be a party to the suspension of the Law of the land?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Sir, I do not see that the observations of the High Sheriff call for any comment from me. I am sure the hon. Member can hardly expect me to be bound by the utterances of anyone but myself in this matter.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—CASE OF WILLIAM BRIGHTWELL.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked the honourable Member for Staffordshire (North Western Division), as a Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the dismissal of William Brightwell from his appointment as a gardener at the British Museum, after nine years' exexemplary service, in consequence of his having been summoned as a witness and giving evidence at Bow Street Police Court, when Charles Pulman, the Clerk of the Works at the British Museum, was fined by the magistrate for poisoning pigeons; whether it was Charles Pulman who ordered or was responsible for the dismissal of William Brightwell; whether he approves of this dismissal; whether he is aware that the remuneration which William Brightwell now receives for the employment which has been found for him at the Houses of Parliament is nine shillings and one penny halfpenny per week less than he received at the British Museum; and, whether he will take steps to reinstate William Brightwell in his former position, or compensate him for the loss which he has sustained?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.): William Brightwell was dismissed by Mr. William Pulman from the post he held as labourer under the contractor at the British Museum, not in consequence of his having given evidence at Bow Street against Mr. Pulman, but for idleness and insubordination. The Office of Works, however, having regard to the circumstances of the case, were willing that other employment should be found for him by the contractor. That employment is less remunerative. If he had behaved properly in his former post he would not have been removed from it. The case was fully considered by the Earl of Morley's Predecessor, and he was not prepared to reverse the decision which was then arrived at.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON (Dewsbury) asked of what the insubordination had consisted?

MR. LEVESON GOWER said, he was not aware of the exact particulars, but would make inquiries on the subject.

WORKMEN ON GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked the honourable Member for Staffordshire (North Western Division), as a Lord of the Treasury, Whether the *employés* at the British Museum, the Houses of Parliament, and other Government Offices are servants of the Crown, or whether they are the servants of contractors; whether the sum allowed the contractors for skilled workmen is at the rate of 6*d*. per hour, and for unskilled workmen 5½*d*. per hour; whether the remuneration received by the *employés* is 1*d*. per hour less than the contractor receives from the Government; when the contracts expire; and, whether, on their expiration, the Government will undertake to engage the *employés* as servants of the Crown, and place them on the same footing as the higher officials, so that the *employés* may, in common with the higher officials, receive the full remuneration allowed by the Government for their services?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.): The workmen alluded to in my hon. Friend's Question are paid by the contractor, whose servants they are. The arrangements made by the men with their employers are a matter which it does not fall within the province of the Office of Works to interfere in. It must be remembered that the contractor, who has great expenses and runs considerable risk, has to make his profit on the whole contract, as other tradesmen do, and not upon materials only. If the principle advocated by my hon. Friend were pushed a step further the contractor must supply materials as well as labour at the prices charged by the sub-contractors. The present triennial contracts for the works for the London district expire two years hence. The effect of my hon. Friend's last proposal would be to convert the Office of Works into a vast builders' establishment, with this disadvantage—that it would be saddled with a large permanent staff of operatives, who would be maintained whether there were work for them or not, and entitled in the future to pensions or compassionate allowances. As regards the prices fixed in the schedule of the Office of Works, they range from 9½*d*. to 11*d*. per hour for mechanics, from 5½*d.* to 6½*d.* for mechanics' labourers, and for unskilled labourers are fixed at 5½*d.* The contract was taken, after competition, at a reduction of 15 per cent upon these prices.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) ACT — EXPENSES OF PREPARING LISTS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) (for Mr. O'DOHERTY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether claims for alleged actual expenses of Clerks of the Peace and for printing to the extent of £72,000 have been made to Grand Juries in Ireland at the present Assizes in respect of the revision of voters; whether this may involve between £50,000 and £60,000 additional local taxation to be borne exclusively by the occupiers of lands and houses in Ireland; whether the examination and taxation of these claims of county officials rests with brother officials of the Grand Jury, and if any instruction have been issued by the Local Government Board for the guidance of these taxing officers; whether almost all the £15,000 voted last year has gone in relief of the Poor Rate; whether the landlords have thereby escaped all taxation for the revision of voters; and, whether, under these circumstances, the Government will make provision in the Estimates for giving relief to the occupiers proportionate to what has been given to the owners?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, he was not aware of the amount of the claims made to the Grand Juries in respect of this work. Whatever the sum might be, it would be audited by the officers of the Local Government Board. In a great majority of cases the poor rate was paid half by the owner and half by the occupier; and the relief, therefore, afforded by the Parliamentary grant-in-aid—which, as the term implied, did not cover the whole charge on the poor rate — was shared in the like proportion.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether the expense was not paid out of the county cess, and not the poor rate?

MR. JOHN MORLEY; I am informed that it is out of the poor rate.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR gave Notice of a further Question on the subject.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)— ATTACK ON MRS. HAMILTON, LANGAN.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the windows of Mrs. Hamilton, of Langan, Ballyfarnan, were, on Sunday night last, maliciously broken with stones; whether her last remaining servant was compelled to leave her service on Saturday last; whether, in consequence of the tyranny prevailing, she is unable to get labourers for her farm; whether till recently she has lived on terms of friendship and good will with her neighbours, irrespective of class or creed; and, whether he will give this lady more efficient protection than that afforded by a mere police patrol?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): No, Sir; it is not the fact that Mrs. Hamilton's windows were maliciously broken. A crack was found in a pane of glass in an outhouse on her property about half-a-mile from her house by her son, who casually informed a constable of the circumstance, but declined to make a complaint, stating that he believed it was done through mischief by some small boy when passing. The report, which is from the officer of police, goes on to state—

> "Mrs. Hamilton's last workman left her on Saturday, the 27th ultimo, of his own accord. I am informed that she could obtain farm labourers if she requires them. To the best of my knowledge, she has never been on good terms with her neighbours owing to her eccentric manner and unfortunate tongue. I am still of opinion that the ordinary protection afforded by the police to all Her Majesty's subjects in this locality is sufficient to secure Mrs. Hamilton's safety."

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER—LEGISLATION.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government intend, this Session, to bring forward any measure for the purpose of legalising Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby) (who replied) said: My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. It is one that has been for many years in the hands of private Members, and I do not know that it would derive any particular advantage from its being taken up by the Government. My hon. Friend is aware that all the Members on this Bench, and most of those on this side of the House, have supported it. The Government are not inclined to increase and extend their engagements with regard to Bills for which they are responsible.

PRIVILEGE.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to put a Question to you, Sir, on a matter of Privilege. The hon. Member for South Kensington (Sir Algernon Borthwick) is reported, when speaking at a banquet in Kent, on Saturday, to have used these words—

> "Mr. Labouchere and his beggarly crew was swelled by the addition of 86 Irish Members."

I wish to know if it is in Order for an hon. Member to describe Members of this House as "Mr. Labouchere and his beggarly crew?"

Mr. SPEAKER: The language complained of by the hon. Member was not uttered in this House; and, therefore, I have no cognizance of it, and no jurisdiction.

DISTRESS IN IRELAND—SUPPLY OF SEED.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the following Question, of which I have given him private Notice:—If he is aware of the frightful destitution in Achill, and the other Islands on the Western Coast of Ireland; whether he will take any steps to secure that no person shall die of starvation; and, also, if he can now state, and, if not, when will he be in a position to state, what measures the Government intend to take to enable the people to seed their land and live until they have their potato crop?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): My attention was called to this subject at the first moment of my taking Office, and I lost no time in consulting the authorities in reference to it. The difficulty, as the hon. Members opposite, at all events, are aware, is twofold. In the first place, these unfortunate people are without seed for spring sowing; and, in the second place, they are, as the hon. Member alleges, in a state of acute destitution—I may say bordering on absolute starvation. The question was most pressing; and, after considering the various courses open to me, I came to the conclusion that, as regards the supply of seed, it was expedient, both to save time and for other reasons, that this work should be a work of private benevolence. I ventured, therefore, to place myself in communication with Mr. Tuke; and with that generosity which we might expect from him Mr. Tuke took the matter up, and collected what he hopes will prove an adequate amount for the seed supply. I believe he started last night, and is now well on his way to the West. The question, therefore, of the seed supply is in good hands. In reference to the other question of the immediate relief of those destitute and starving, Mr. Tuke and the gentlemen on the spot, including the clergy of the various churches, will inform me by not later than the end of this week as to the actual state of the case, and as to the measures and the amount of money they think are required for the alleviation of this misery. I have received, moreover, an important communication from the officers of the Local Government Board suggesting a course for Her Majesty's Government to take; but I have not yet had time to consider it. I only wish to assure hon. Members that the subject is receiving our most vigilant attention, and that measures are being taken to deal with it.

Mr. DILLON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered the desirability of small sums of money being distributed for the immediate relief of the destitution? He understood there were already some 50 people unable to leave their beds through hunger.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I ought to have stated that I understood from the telegram I received this morning from Dublin that a small sum of money was already on its way to be used for the purpose mentioned by the hon. Gentleman, and I hope that that sum will be speedily supplemented.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

(*Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.*)

[BILL 118.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Secretary for Scotland.*)

MR. RAMSAY (Falkirk, &c.), in rising to move, as an Amendment—

> "That it is requisite that any measure intended for the improvement of the condition of the population of the Islands on the West Coast of Scotland should make provision for assisting the voluntary emigration of families from congested districts,"

said, he wished to call attention to some of the facts regarding the condition of the country which had led to the proposal now before the House. The defects of the Bill were really so great that, even if it were rejected, he would see very little cause for regret. The measure was one which applied to a certain limited area in Scotland. A very limited proportion of the population of the Highlands would be affected by its provisions. The distress which was justly complained of in the Highlands might be very well described in terms corresponding to those in which Irish distress had been spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley)—namely, as of gradual growth, and the intense suffering of many of the people in the West of Scotland was matter of grave concern to those who took an interest in the welfare of that population. When the Bill was introduced he pointed out that it contained grave defects, for which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) might be able to provide some remedy. The limited area to which the Bill applied he did not think was warranted by the circumstances of the case. The right hon. Gentleman had shrunk from introducing a measure of this nature applicable to the whole of Scotland. It had been said by some—but he did not concur in the opinion—that the object of the right hon. Gentleman and the Cabinet was so to depreciate the value of landed estates within a limited area that it should be an easy matter hereafter to carry out the ideas of those who wished to get rid of ownership in land altogether, and distribute it equally among the people. Some periods in history had been referred to when the people had rights which they had not recently enjoyed—when land was held by the occupiers on a different tenure. He had looked into that question as narrowly as he could with all the resources at his command; but he had failed to discover any period in history when the lands in those parts of Scotland which were included in this Bill was held under a tenure different from that under which it was held in other parts of the country. It had been said there were tribal rights under the clan system which were now ignored. He was aware of a period when the land and the people were a subject of sale, and the land passed from hand to hand with the whole population upon it. There was very little regard to the rights of the people at that period. They were serfs on the soil, and nothing else. But he could not conceive that the right hon. Gentleman or the Cabinet could have in view the bringing about of a more rapid depreciation in the value of land than was now going on; but they certainly gave great ground for that opinion by the course which they had adopted. Twenty years ago land was saleable at a very high price; at the present time it was totally unsaleable. He was very much surprised that many of those hon. Gentlemen who advocated the claims of the crofters had never bought any land—many of them being wealthy men—in order to set an example to proprietors as to how people could be made happy on the small crofts which it was proposed by this Bill they should now have the right to obtain. The idea of appointing a Land Court to estimate the value of the land assumed that the occupiers of the soil in Scotland, so far as that area was concerned, were persons who were totally incapable of managing their own affairs. He had had a considerable knowledge of the people himself, and had always found them inoffensive and law-observing, and certainly had never discovered among them a want of capacity to manage their own affairs. The existing distress had been confined chiefly to the population within the Western Islands.

Some spoke of that distress as a new thing; but, so far from that being the case, it had been of periodical recurrence. He was old enough to remember when, in 1836-7, and again in 1846-7, the total failure of the potato crop caused much distress among these populations, and reduced them to a state which he hoped might never recur. In the year 1850 half of the population of Skye and the Long Island were dependent upon charity for their support. There was, no doubt, at the present time much distress; but it had been aggravated by the fact that the minds of the people had been unsettled by the emissaries of certain organizations which had been established apparently with no other end in view than to promote discontent with the landlords and disaffection towards the State. The people has been misled by the promises that were held out to them. His political tenets might not be so advanced as those of some of his hon. Friends around him; but he felt that no good could be done to any man or set of men unless they were prepared to exert themselves for the purpose of securing that good. He believed this agitation had been the means of producing great demoralization among these people, and their self-reliance had been destroyed. On that ground he felt that any interference from without would be worse than useless unless it was in the direction of procuring benefit to those who might still remain. He had no wish to countenance the removal of the people by enforced emigration; but he believed one great barrier to the progress of the population and the development of the resources of these Islands was due, not to anything done by the owners of the soil, but to the fact that the people were ignorant of the English language, and were placed by their insular position in circumstances of great difficulty in migrating from their own homes for the purpose of seeking employment elsewhere. The depopulation of the Highlands and Islands was spoken of when the question of the crofters was before the House as the grand reason why a Commission should be appointed to investigate the causes of the prevailing distress; but he had been unable to obtain anything like satisfaction on that point from a perusal of the Report of the Commission. Much of the evidence that came before the Commission was not the recital of facts, but a statement of hearsay opinions as to sufferings that were endured at some remote period. All that hearsay evidence had been taken up and adopted by the Commissioners as if the statements had had reference to the state of the present population. The fact was that the distress chiefly prevailed in the Islands. The group of Islands known as the Long Island had been, and were now, the subject of consideration. He saw only last week in some of the London papers the notice of a Memorial that had been addressed to the Lord Mayor of London complaining that the inhabitants were now in destitution, and that they had no seed corn—the same cry which had come from Ireland, and which should be responded to if possible. The owners of the soil were not responsible; the fault of which they had been guilty was failing to prevent people doing that which was detrimental to their own interests — namely, sub-dividing their small holdings. On the estate of Lewis there were 2,800 families with crofts of each less than £4 of annual value. It was said that these rents were far too high, and it was proposed to appoint a Land Court to determine the rent that should be paid. In short, if this Bill were justified, it would be equally justifiable to take the land from the owners and give them no consideration, but to allow them to hold any croft which they might themselves occupy at the present time. He had, for his own part, to say sincerely that, rather than have his lands taken away from him step by step, year by year, under various measures, which precluded the possibility of his making an agreement which was binding on the occupiers of the soil—rather than see land held on those terms, he should be prepared to relinquish it altogether, and accept simply such compensation as would enable him to earn his bread, and not throw him and those similarly situated into the workhouse for relief. The Bill provided that the occupier, after obtaining from the Court a lease for 15 years, had the right within any one year to renounce possession, and to compel the owner to pay him for any buildings and improvements made on the soil, although he might have made these improvements and erected those buildings on the understanding that he had no claim to compensation for anything of the kind. A large section of the population consisted, not of occupiers who paid rent to the landlord, but of squatters or cottars, settled around the dwelling of the occupier, and who were really there without any recognition or knowledge of their existence on the part of the landlord, and who paid no rent to him. If a person under the law of Scotland erected a house in any part of the country, without the knowledge of the owner of the soil, unless he could show some title, he had no right to compensation for that house. The miserable hovels that the squatters erected were of no possible value to the proprietor; but such was the wisdom of Her Majesty's Ministers, that they changed the law in this respect without any reference to the will of the owner, and gave compensation for the miserable hut of the squatter if he was removed by the owner of the soil. Nothing more contrary to justice or common sense could possibly be imagined. He should be prepared to show that no such provisions would benefit either the occupier or any other person; but it would be injurious to their interests, because it impaired the interest that the owner had in the land, and would cause him to cease from making many of those improvements which had been carried out at great cost without any adequate return. It might shortly be the lot of his right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) to introduce a Land Purchase Bill for Scotland. He had already shown that if insular proprietors had been guilty of any fault, it was simply the fault of allowing the people to subdivide their holdings to an extent that was injurious to the people themselves. It was sometimes said that the people were indolent; but people who were suffering and in want could not be expected to be very industrious or active, especially when there was no employment within their reach by which they could earn their bread. He believed that no such Bill as this could ever have been framed by men who were in any way acquainted with the condition of the Highlands. It might suit many who desired the downfall of the owners of land; but he asked if it was well to have the downfall of the owners brought about when they found that so many good works had been executed by men who had no other inducements to execute these works but that of promoting the welfare of the population. No such Bill as this would have been thought of if the Government had known the real state of the case. If there was any good reason why the Bill was applicable to the counties named in the Bill, there were the same, and even stronger, reasons for applying it to the whole of Scotland. He could not see on what ground this could be refused. There was not a county in Scotland in which during the last 80 years the small occupiers held grazing land in common. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan), in introducing the Bill, said that the people depended, not on the land only, but also largely on the fisheries. That was, to some extent, true; but he (Mr. Ramsay) did not know of a single instance in which the fisheries had created an independent population, except in Argyllshire. When the Crofters Commission met at Tarbert, they were told by the men that they wanted no land—that the prosecution of the fishing and the cultivation of land were not compatible with the interests of the fishermen. In the time of Cromwell that illustrious statesman did what he could to improve the position of the fishermen; and in 1706 an Act was passed to encourage the fishings, and along the West Coast stations were established, where it was expected the people would take to fishing as a calling; but, unfortunately, they were also given small crofts of land—he thought about three acres, but he did not know about the cow. Now, there was a passage in a Report issued during the last century which said—

> "No two occupations could be more incompatible than farming and fishing, as the seasons which require undivided exertion in fishing are precisely those in which the greatest attention should be devoted to agriculture. Grazing, which is less incompatible with fishing than agriculture, is even found to distract attention and prevent success in either occupation. This is demonstrated by the very different success of those who unite both occupations, from those who devote themselves exclusively to fishing."

He wished the right hon. Gentleman would give due consideration to that opinion, confirmed, as it had been, by the express refusal of the Tarbert men to have more land; and yet the whole county of Argyll was included in the Bill. In the Western Islands there were probably 60,000 souls dependent for subsistence upon the cultivation of the soil; and what opportunity was there for that in congested districts? That those districts were in that position might be illustrated by the case of Lewis. Lewis contained about 400,000 acres, and he believed in that district 30 acres would not graze one snipe. There was no vegetation on the surface, and there was nothing from which a snipe could get grazing. [*Laughter.*] His right hon. Friend the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) was amused at that idea; but if there was no vegetation on the surface —and there was none—how could a snipe get grazing? It was not the acreage which was the real test of congestion. The annual agricultural value of the estate was only equal to about 6*d*. per acre, an 30 or 60 or 80 acres would be insufficient for the subsistence of a family if they restricted them to that area. If the whole area of Lewis were divided equally among the population, it would give each man about 80 acres, or £2 annual value. In 10 years, he believed, matters would be worse than they were now, if they were even to eject the proprietrix, and tell her that she had no right to the land, and say the people had a tribal right to the land — and Parliament could say that; although why not also divide capital as well as land, and give the people an equal share of the National Debt? The poor of London were worthy of consideration as well as the poor of the Highlands, although he was really speaking in the interest of the people in the Highlands. If a few benevolent gentlemen, who imagined they knew something of the relations of owner and occupier, would visit the districts dealt with by this Bill, they would change their opinions, and would feel the justice of the proposals he had made. The depopulation of the Highlands was one of the reasons urged for the appointment of the Royal Commission, and the Commissioners required that there should be means provided for the voluntary emigration of families from these congested districts; but there was no mention of this in the Bill. He should like to know why emigration was excluded from this Bill? It might be alleged that it was right for benevolent persons to provide funds for this purpose. Well, he agreed with that, and much had been done, and much might be done, in that direction. He had long taken an interest in the cause of education in these districts. Some might imagine that his aid in that respect should have induced those so crowded to remove. Well, he believed that the exclusive knowledge of Gaelic on the part of the people was really one of the greatest barriers to their removal to other districts. There was no doubt about that, and no man who knew the feelings of the Gaelic people would say otherwise. He did not know what their Representatives who might follow him would say on that point. He had been a member of of the Gaelic School Society for upwards of 40 years, and had never heard of one of the Gentlemen who were now pleading the cause of the crofters in the House of Commons spending a sixpence of his own money to do anything for the amelioration of the people. He had heard, however, of large subscriptions being raised and spent to promote agitation in these districts, and to create discontent. He had heard of a gentleman who had been sent down for a fortnight, during the last General Election, to discover some case of hardship, of which he himself had been guilty to one of his occupiers. Well, he failed. There were few gentlemen who had been in business or connected with the land for 30 years and upwards, as he had been an owner of land, could say with him that they had never had a tenant in Court or a legal process raised against one of their occupiers. Many of these tenants were poor people, and the small occupiers were as well satisfied with their condition as the occupants of farms. In Lewis the only proper harbour was Stornoway, where there was a trading community, who provided the people with all the necessaries of life. The proprietrix of Lewis had land worth £10,000 a-year, and had expended large sums of money in making roads and other improvements there. But he was sorry to say that she made nothing out of the land; therefore, as an investment, it had been a most unfortunate one for the owner, as most proprietors had found, where the purchases had been made within the last 30 years. There were in Lewis 2,800 families, or some 14,000 persons, dependent upon patches of land of less than £4 annual value, and his right hon. Friend would require; he considered, to do something for the migration—which he would prefer—or the voluntary emigration of families from that area, where they were condemned to ever-impending destitution. He might also refer to Skye. Who that had been there would say that an equal division of the land among its population would do? He wondered what the man would do who was placed on the top of the Cuchullin Hills there? With regard to the population of Harris, North Uist, South Uist, and Barra, some of them were better off than the people of Lewis, because the land was of more value, the rental being equal to about £1 per head of the population. But such being the general state of matters, he could not understand how any Bill to alleviate the dissatisfaction of these people could be introduced without containing some provision of funds, come from where they might, which should have been ascertained before a responsible Government introduced a measure which would tend to deceive the people, and create an illusion in their minds that Parliament was providing for them, when, in reality, they gained nothing at all. The hon. Member concluded by moving his Amendment.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigton), in rising to second the Amendment, said, that the reason which induced him to take that course was principally the fear that by the omission from this Bill of more than one of the subjects recommended by the Royal Commission its benefits would be lost to the population in whose interests it had been framed. He was not, at the same time, prepared to go quite so far as the Mover had done in his speech, because, in proposing the Amendment, he had entered upon grounds and dealt with matters in such a way that if they were to be convinced by all he had said they would be obliged to reject the Bill in its entirety. He was very far from advocating that course, for he believed that the Bill, so far as it went—it did not go very far—might be capable of being amended in Committee so as to be of advantage to the people of the Highlands and Islands. If it, however, passed in its present stage, and contained no more than it had within its four corners at the present time, the benefits which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) spoke of as about to result from it, would prove to be absolutely and completely illusory. It was very strange that when a Bill was based avowedly upon the recommendations of a Royal Commission, after an inquiry than which none was ever more conscientious or arduous, the proposals in the measure should only touch upon one or two of the points recommended by the Commission, and leave the others altogether *sub silentio*. The Report of the Royal Commission dealt with no fewer than six subjects, containing recommendations as to each—namely, upon the land, upon the fisheries and communications, upon education, upon justice, upon the deer forests, and upon emigration as affecting the population of the Highlands and Islands. Was it not hard to believe that, of all these six subjects, only one was dealt with by the Bill of the Government — namely, the land? They had the opinion of the Royal Commissioners that the land was of less importance to the people of the Highlands and Islands than was the sea, for the very obvious reason that the land in these regions was unfertile, and the sea was fertile. The Government had left out altogether the important and pressing recommendations of the Royal Commission in regard to all the points, with the exception of land. On the question of emigration he asked the House, before consenting to the second reading of the Bill, to at all events endeavour to elicit from the Secretary for Scotland some assurance that the recommendations of the Commissioners would be taken into consideration in Committee. They were so pressing, so urgent, and so clear. They were based upon the redundancy of the population. As his hon. Friend (Mr. Ramsay) remarked, the original cry for the inquiry which came from the Highlands and Islands was based upon the alleged depopulation of certain districts to create deer forests; and he knew that it was the general idea entertained by a large section of the public that the Highlands and Islands of Scotland were lying waste now, and much less populous than they were at any former period. If hon. Gentlemen who held that opinion turned to the Report of the Royal Commissioners, they would find that whereas the total population in the year 1791 of Skye, Lewis, Harris, the Western Mainlands of Ross and Sutherlandshire—forming the greater part of the area dealt with by the Bill—was only 50,000, the Census of 1881 showed that it was no less than 81,000. In 1831 it was 79,000—2,000 less than at present. It never at any time was greater than 83,000, which was the population in 1841; and to speak of the Highlands and Islands as having been depopulated by the action of the landlords was utterly to mislead the House and the country. [Mr. MACFARLANE dissented.] The hon. Member shook his head, and he would, no doubt, have an opportunity later on of proving to the House how—the population of the Highlands and Islands being never much greater than it was now—the country could be said to have been depopulated. The redundancy of the population undoubtedly existed. The population was altogether beyond what there were adequate means to support. They might get along in very good seasons; but when bad times came, such as they had passed through lately, and when economic conditions were altered by the action of Free Trade and free imports, then came the pinch, and then the people found that they had to come to Parliament for assistance. What he would impress on the House was that, admitting that this assistance must be given, let it be given in the best and most promising manner. The Royal Commission were not content with a general recommendation in favour of emigration. On page 106 of their Report they gave details; and he was surprised that, with this most elaborate and conscientious Report before them for two years, the right hon. Gentleman in introducing the measure should have dismissed this part of the Report without any comment. That was a very poor compliment to the abilities of the Commissioners, that no reason should be given for setting their recommendations aside. The Commissioners showed that they thought this was an indispensable part of the remedy to be applied. They said—

> "Believing as we do that emigration, properly conducted, is an indispensable remedy for the condition of some parts of the Highlands and Islands, we strongly recommend that in connection with any measures which may be framed for dealing with the condition of the crofters and cottars, such provisions should be made as we have indicated for assisting emigrants, both by State advances and State direction."

How could the right hon. Gentleman get out of that? It had been said that it was very hard to compel these people to leave their homes. There was no compulsion beyond the *res augusta* to which all must yield. From the earliest times it had been necessary for portions of the population to leave overcrowded districts and seek their living in other parts of the earth where there was room and occupation and the means of subsistence for them. As showing that the people who did emigrate did not regret it, he would refer hon. Gentlemen to an article published in *The Celtic Magazine*, in which the writer said he had taken considerable pains to find out the feeling in Canada among those who had migrated thither; and he could not find a single instance in which any of them who had settled down there on their own land would wish to go back to live in the Highlands. They had an hon. Gentleman sitting below the Gangway, on the night of the introduction of the measure, stating his own case as an instance of the hardships which pressed on the crofter population. The hon. Member for Aston Manor (Mr. Reid) had told them that he was descended from a crofter family; and he seemed to think it very hard that he should not now be in possession of one of those holdings in the Highlands and Islands. Well, he would offer the hon. Gentleman, if he would permit him, all the sympathy in his power; and he was not disposed to question him when he alleged that he had made a very great descent in order to occupy the seat below the Gangway behind a Liberal Government. It was a moral descent, he agreed; but he would put it to the House whether it had not been to the hon. Gentleman's advantage to quit his original holding; and he would ask him whether he quitted it under compulsion, or in obedience to the dictates of his common sense? He believed, if he had described correctly the hon. Gentleman's case, it was the case of many thousands of Highlanders. They quitted their homes, and looked back to them with fondness and longing; but they quitted them to their own advantage, and to the advantage of the place to which they went, and to the people among whom they now lived. There was one more point on which this Bill was silent, and that was as to the aid which the Commissioners recommended should be given to the fishing industry. The Commissioners expressed the opinion that by far the greater number of crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands were wholly or largely dependent for their subsistence on their earnings as fishermen, and that, taken as a whole, they derived a larger income from the sea than from the land. Not only had that been the case in the past, but the nature of the two occupations caused them to believe that any aid the Government was prepared to give might be given by them with greater profit to the fishing industry than to the agricultural industry. The experiment had been already tried, and although it was, perhaps, invidious to mention individual cases, yet as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland did mention individual instances in introducing the measure in which wealthy persons had departed from the obligations incumbent upon them, perhaps he might be allowed to adduce another individual instance in which a large landed proprietor had certainly not been insensible to the duties incumbent upon her as an owner of the soil. He alluded to the well-known efforts made by Lady Gordon Cathcart for the improvement of the population of the island. Lady Gordon Cathcart had tried the extension of the holdings, and the result, he regretted to say, had been unsatisfactory. Large farms had been broken up into small holdings of from £12 to £14 rent, and the result had been that after the crofters had held these holdings for two, three, and four years, there was an almost absolute cessation of the payment of the moderate rents fixed. But how very different had been the result of that lady's efforts in the direction of improving the fishing accommodation and the fishing gear of that population. The Paper he held in his hand gave the results of four cases in which money was advanced to fishermen to provide larger craft and gear, and in all these the money was earned and repaid in a short time—in one instance within little more than six weeks. The results were striking. The boat *Grace* cost £130, gear £150, and in six weeks six men earned with it £170. The *Agnes Brown*, valued (with gear) at £430, with six men and a boy, earned £391 in the same period. The *Sea King* cost £250, gear £180, earned £268. He thought no single Member of the House would be disposed to contradict the conclusion to which one was forced by a consideration of such facts—namely, that money might be advanced with an almost absolute certainty of return in aid of the fishing industry. This was a matter which, no doubt, was somewhat foreign to the Amendment which had been introduced; but he could not help turning aside for a moment to express his regret and surprise that in this respect also the Report of the Commissioners had been completely ignored. He was afraid his right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan), in framing this Bill, had been actuated by the fear of approaching the Treasury. They all knew how difficult it was to obtain anything like an advance of public funds from the Treasury; but this advance, he felt sure, might be made with perfect safety. It had been done by private individuals already, and in asking the Government to do it now they were only asking the Government to follow an example which had been set by many landlords in the North of Scotland. He supported the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. Ramsay) in the confidence of the firm belief that in a well-regulated scheme of State-directed and State-aided emigration might be found one of the best means of assisting the population. They could not extend to the Highlands and Islands that illusory state which in the minds of many people they occupied at a former period. People who thought that in these terrible winters agricultural life could be conducted on anything approaching the conditions of agriculture in the South were greatly mistaken. Agriculture there never could be anything more than a hand-to-mouth industry at the best. Therefore, let them do all they could to ameliorate the condition of these people; but do not let them throw any obstacle in the way, by holding out illusory promises, of their trying their fortunes in more favourable climates and more fertile fields, and let them remember the conclusion upon the subject to which the Royal Commissioners were driven at the end of their long inquiry.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is requisite that any measure intended for the improvement of the condition of the population of the Islands on the West Coast of Scotland should make provision for assisting

the voluntary emigration of families from congested districts,"—(*Mr. Ramsay,*)
—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, he thought hon. Members would agree with him that at an early stage in this debate it would be desirable that those who had the responsibility of considering this matter when in Office, but who were now out of Office, should endeavour to give their best aid to the House in the discussion. He hoped hon. Members would forgive him if they found what he had to say, and the mode in which he said it, rather dry and rather unlike what he hoped his usual style of addressing them was; but he sincerely trusted that he should take such care in expressing what he had to say that nothing should be misunderstood by any hon. Member of the House, and still more by his fellow-countrymen in the Highlands and Islands of the West of Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan), in moving the first reading of this Bill, used at the opening of his speech very distinct and remarkable words. He said—

> "Hon. Members must make up their minds that there is no use making any proposals which will not effectually deal with the question."

What did the right hon. Gentleman mean when he said "which will not effectually deal with the question?" Was he referring to dealing with alleged grievances in regard to land only, or was he speaking of the larger and more important question of the necessities of the whole case—necessities not merely as regards the present moment or the next half-dozen or 10 years, but as regards the future? The right hon. Gentleman said there were two ways in which the question might be dealt with. One of these was that the Government and the House might make up their minds that it was too difficult to deal with, and not deal with it at all; and the other was to endeavour to deal with it. As regards the first, he said, that was one way of dealing with the matter—that it was too difficult—but that there would be a still worse way if Parliament were to pass a Bill which would profess to do a great deal for the crofters, which Parliament itself knew well when the Bill was brought in would not deal effectually with the case. He joined issue at once with the right hon. Gentleman there. He applied these words, and said that this Bill would not effectually deal with the case. It was a Bill that could have no other result than to produce—if it did produce, which he greatly doubted—a temporary alleviation of the difficulties of the present situation, but which would not in the near future bring about any results which should meet those difficulties. Why would it not do so? He said because it ignored altogether the Report of the Royal Commission upon which it professed to be based—and it also ignored the distinct and clear facts which had been ascertained since that Royal Commission sat. It ignored what had been recommended; it recommended what had already been proved to have failed to effect the ends desired; and it refused to recommend what had already succeeded. His hon. Friend the Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) spoke about the Treasury. He could hardly help thinking that allusion was a just one, only he was not quite sure whether the Secretary for Scotland had failed in courage to go to the Treasury. His experience led him to think that the right hon. Gentleman had courageously gone to the Treasury, but had been sent away without any good result. It seemed as if in Council the points had been picked out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission which would bring any draft on the public funds, or create any difficulty with regard to the Budget, and that these had been one by one cast aside; and this for the reason that, at the end of last Session, the enormous accumulation of debt against the country could not be met by taxation, and the National Debt, instead of being reduced, as it ought to have been, had been considerably increased. Now, the difficulty, therefore, was plainly a difficulty of money. Last year the then Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) spoke, with tears almost in his eyes, of the crofter population of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland as a charming and gentle population; and he attributed the charm and gentleness of their character to the softness and geniality of the climate in which they lived. From what he read of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, and the poetry with which he accompanied it, he came to the conclusion that the right hon. Gentleman's visits to the Highlands and Islands had been made at times of the year when there were some hopes of experiencing that delightful climate of which he spoke; but one might be quite sure that in dealing with this question to-night they would find a quotation apt from a favourite performance now going in London, that "a candidate was a very different thing from a Chancellor of the Exchequer." The result of it all was that this Bill was limited to four things, none of which would bring any burden upon Her Majesty's Exchequer. These four things were fixity of tenure, fair rents, compensation for improvements, and the granting of additional grazing lands. Now, he said at once, so far as he was aware, that as regarded fixity of tenure, fair rents, and compensation for reasonable improvements, he did not fancy there was any sort of feeling on the part of the main body of the proprietors against either fixity of tenure, fair rents, or reasonable improvements. Why should they have any objection to these things? The Crofters' Commission spoke distinctly of the evictions in the Highlands and Islands as being things of the past—of course, not speaking of all evictions, because they knew perfectly well that for the good of the people themselves—[*Laughter*]—the power of eviction was absolutely necessary for the good of the community in occasional cases of bad character and discreditable conduct. Hon. Members who laughed just now were quite mistaken in supposing he was alluding to deportation of the people. It was quite clear to reasonable minds that where people were living in small townships it would be a positive calamity if a person who was a nuisance to his neighbours and a disgrace to the place could not be evicted. The Crofters' Commission Report said—

> "We have not found during the course of our inquiry one clearly established case of the removal of crofters."

That disposed of any difficulty about the question of fixity of tenure. Then, as regarded fair rents, the Commission reported that they had not found in the conduct of proprietors grounds for proposing a general revision of rents by judicial authority. Therefore, he said the proprietors had no interest whatever in objecting to an examination and fixing of rents, although here, again, those who had framed the Bill had put in a thing not recommended, and which had been declared to be unnecessary. The judicial fixing of rents could have only one of two results—either the rents which were at present fixed by agreement would be found to be reasonable rents, or too high. If it was the former, there could be comparatively little need for legislation on the subject. If, on the contrary, it turned out to be true that the rents were too high, then the result was contrary to the Commissioners' Report; but if that were the result there was an economic corollary that followed from it, and that was that it was fatal to the idea of this Bill being a real settlement of the question; because if it proved that the rents, even as at present—on which all the calculations hitherto had been made as to the capabilities of the land for supporting the population—were too high, that would bring about this result—that it would become more certain than ever that the population could not be supported from the profits of the produce of the soil alone. This had been very clearly demonstrated by figures. Taking the actual rents as fixed, and taking three times as much as representing the actual producing powers of the soil in value, the total productive power of the soil for each person in the Highlands and Islands amounted to not more than £3 12*s*. or £3 15*s*. a-year. Taking into consideration that the entire sum could not be spread equally over all, but some were sure to have a little more and some a little less, they had this result—that the actual productive value was not sufficient to produce so much for each individual as the amount which was paid for the support of paupers in that country. The tendency of sub-division necessarily aggravated every evil in these places. If they sub-divided down to the size of the small croft, it was impossible for the family to obtain subsistence. That did not increase the evil by double merely, but by fourfold. That state of things had gone on for many years, and had been going on to the great misfortune and loss of the people, in spite of all efforts of the proprietors, and in many cases solely from the proprietors' good nature. What was the result? The result was, according to the Report of the Commission, that the actual value of the vast majority of the holdings now existing was a value below £6. These facts spoke for themselves. They made it perfectly conclusive that no giving of more land could possibly reduce this economic difficulty and bring the people of these Islands to a state of prosperity. It might please them and tickle their fancy with the idea of giving them more land; but was it not obvious that, with an increasing population, and nothing being done to encourage the removal of the population to other places, nothing but desolation and ruin could follow the scheme now before the House. As to the mode in which it was proposed to give increased land, the proposal was not to give land which each should hold and cultivate. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) must know that it was hopeless to propose anything of that kind. The proposal was to take certain hill land suitable for pasture, and to give it to each township or group of crofters to hold in common. That, to a certain extent, must be a bold experiment, and one would fain hope that it might be successful; but he doubted very much whether in the present condition of the crofters it would be found to work. Whether it would or not, here, again, the owners of the land would not object, provided the thing was done, not by handing over a quantity of land and saying, "There it is, and the rent for it is so much, fixed by a Judicial Court," but by placing the people in such a position that if they took the land they could have some reasonable hope of making something out of it themselves, by being able to stock it; and then the person to whom it belonged would not be subjected to loss. The owners knew perfectly well that the rent could never come to them, because the people had no capital to stock the ground. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) had referred, the other night, to the case of the Swiss peasantry as an illustration of what was hoped for from his Bill by giving this new pasture to the Highland crofters. He took the liberty of saying that he thought his right hon. Friend had taken rather a tourist's view and a rather rosy view of the condition of the Swiss peasants. As regarded the Swiss peasantry, he (Mr. Macdonald) could only state what happened to himself on one occasion. After climbing up a steep hill for some hours he came to a very charming chalet, and if he had walked on probably he should have been under the same impression as his right hon. Friend with regard to this matter; but, unfortunately, he stopped and spoke to one of the men, and expressed to him the feeling of how pleasant it must be to have so charming a place. The man shook his head, and said—"No, Sir; if you had to go down that hill you have just come up every morning, with a load of milk on your back, and trudge back again, and that on every day of the week, Sunday included, you would not see many of the charms of the place." That illustration showed him how difficult it was to judge of anything without really knowing all the circumstances. Anyone going to Switzerland in the holidays, and judging it then, would imagine it was a paradise. From what he had seen of the Swiss peasantry, he had no doubt there were many of them who would be very glad to change places with many of the Highland crofters, although they were proprietors of the land on which they lived. This Bill suggested nothing whatever to make it sure that when they had given this additional pasture land those who took it would be able to make a beneficial use of it, and give a reasonable return to the person to whom it belonged. In short, it made landlords take land from tenants with capital to give it to tenants who had no capital—land which was absolutely worthless to any man who did not possess capital. That was to say, it was proposed by an Act of the Legislature to force upon the landlords of the Highlands an experiment which, unless capital were forthcoming for the working of it, must be an absolute failure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was unable to give his right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) any help whatever towards carrying out the objects of the Bill. The landlords had been willing to try the thing that was now proposed on the consideration that the land should be stocked, or that there should be the means of stocking it. This was the difficulty which had led to failure wherever the experiment had been tried. The Commissioners' Report in regard to Lady Gordon Cathcart's property brought out the fact that large farms, consisting of thousands of acres of land, in the best parts of the Highlands and Islands had been given over to crofters—in some cases to agricultural crofters, and in others to fishing crofters—and the result, from beginning to end, had been a total and absolute failure. There had been inadequate stocking, the arrears of rent were very great—in some cases no rent had been paid at all; and, in spite of all stipulations, the old system of destructive sub-division had gone on. One of the Members of the Royal Commission had stated very distinctly these two things—first, that these common grazings formed the real obstacle to improvement; and, second, that capital was indispensable in pastoral farming, if a profit was to be made out of it at all. Although everything had been done that this Bill contemplated, the result was that arrears, which in 1883 amounted to £1,000, in 1884 were £2,000, and in 1885 had increased to £2,800; and during that period Lady Gordon Cathcart had given £1,128 for seed, of which not one-half had been repaid. This was a distinct and clear question which must be dealt with if they would come to a rational conclusion upon it. Either these people were withholding rents which they were able to pay, or, if they were not doing so, this Bill could do no possible good. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) was on the horns of that dilemma. Take another instance in the Island of Skye. Two or three years ago, a hill grazing, which was let for £125 to a tenant, was handed over to a group of crofters at £75. Since that time the crofters themselves had not paid a single penny of rent for it. A benevolent gentleman paid the first year's rent; but since then not one farthing had been paid for the grazing. They had paid no rates or taxes, nor had they paid the rents of any of the crofts which they held. Either these people were withholding rents which they were able to pay, and therefore were a demoralized people, or else their position was such that this Bill could not by any possibility do them the slightest good. The experiment proposed by the Bill had here been fairly made and given a fair trial, and it had been an absolute and complete failure. He would give them another instance. A large tract of country belonging to MacLeod of MacLeod was advertised to be let; but the people, having sense and having had more careful instruction in their interests and duties than in many other parts, saw the folly of attempting to take it, because they had no capital to provide stock; and the land remained unstocked and unused. Let them look into the real difficulties of the case. He took these real difficulties to be—first, the population and its natural increase; second, the deficiency of outflow for energy towards acquirement of means otherwise than by agriculture; third, the defective nature of communications; and, fourth, the difficulty of education. Let them take the population first. There had been a large increase of population in the Islands in the last century, and the result of that was that the acreage per head was only 19 acres; whereas everyone who understood the country and knew the value of land declared distinctly that no less than 57 acres was sufficient for the support of an individual. For the information of English Members, he might say that as regarded the grazing land of the Highlands it took over three of these acres to feed one sheep, and he believed the fair average would be something over four acres. Now, that showed the over-growth of the population, and the necessity for other industry than agriculture. The question was not one merely of land and of rent, and if it was so considered by Parliament a great mistake would be made, and the people would be placed in a worse position than they were now. The true character of the crofter, to begin with, would be destroyed by taking the view that he was one who made his living out of the land alone. Sir John MacNeil, in the year 1844, made this declaration in regard to the matter—the crofters were labourers, living chiefly by their labour, holding crofts for which they were able to pay rent, not from the produce of their land, but from their labour. The tendency of this Bill was entirely to reverse that. From beginning to end the Bill had not a single syllable in it about industry. Its whole scope and intention was to fix the people down as agriculturists, and to endeavour to give them some land to cultivate. Another complaint he had to make against the Bill was that it dealt in no way with one point which was laid down by the Commissioners very distinctly—namely, that the measures which were proposed for the purpose of increasing the holding of land should not apply to those who at present held very small plots of land. The Commissioners, as a body, fixed the rental at £6 per annum; but the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh), in his separate Report, put it down at £4. Why? Because it was very clearly brought out in the Report that to do otherwise would be fatal to the hope of introducing a prosperous population. No notice, however, was taken of that in the Bill of the Government; nor was any notice taken of the cottar question, which was a cognate question. The Commissioners unanimously reported that people in that position ought to be "firmly though gently withdrawn" from the places which they now occupied, and they contemplated nothing but the most evil and ruinous results from any legislation which would fail to take that step. Why had the suggestion of the Commissioners been ignored? Here, again, came in the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The position of his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland and of the Chancellor of the Exchequer reminded him of the case of a gallant officer, now dead, who was known to be rather a Tartar, and who was taken prisoner in an expedition to China. The news came home that he was chained to another man, and that they were being marched up the country. When his mother heard what had happened, the only thing she said was—"Lord help the man who is chained to our Davie." All these Gentlemen on the Treasury Benches were chained to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was essential that these unfortunate people should be withdrawn from the position in which they now were. The land had been sub-divided, so that it was impossible in many cases for the holdings to be enlarged. How were the people to be withdrawn? There were only two ways of doing it. One was that industry should be developed upon the spot. The other was that industry should be found for them elsewhere, to which they could be removed. The object of the Commissioners was to induce the people to shake off the torpor which possessed them; and the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do that by giving people who held crofts of £4, £5, and £6 rental fixity of tenure under circumstances in which it was impossible that any energy could be developed. In this Bill every recommendation that the Commission had made had been more or less set aside. There was no industry in the Highlands, except to a very small extent, unless it were the industry of fishing; but in regard to this industry—which was capable of vast extension for the benefit of the population of the Western Highlands—it was absolutely taken no notice of in the Bill. The Chancellor of the Exchequer again came in to prevent its development on the lines recommended by the Commissioners. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) did not absolutely put this matter aside. What he said was that the Government would be very glad to see their way to put some money into the hands of the Fishery Board for the improvement of the fishings in the Highlands. For the purpose of pressing on the House the importance of proceeding with this Bill, the right hon. Gentleman quoted a Resolution of the House passed 15 months ago; but, as regarded the fishing industry in the Highlands, the right hon. Gentleman would require some additional facts to enable him to leap over this mountain of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The development of the fishing would not be enough. The Commissioners declared—and here came a point which to many was most unpalatable—the Commissioners declared that emigration was unavoidable, and they strongly recommended that it might be taken up in connection with any measure for improving the condition of the crofters. Why had that recommendation not been given effect to? Emigration was unavoidable in the case of many others than the crofters. It was impossible to find employment for everyone in this country, and many of our sons had to go to all parts of the world in search of situations. The feeling against emigration was really a sentimental one, and would be removed if those people only knew the altered conditions now as compared with what existed 30 or 40 years ago. The means of communication were much easier, and education enabled relatives at a distance to be in constant communication, so that the abhorrence to separation need not be what it was in former times. The Commissioners said emigration, properly conducted, was an indispensable remedy, and unavoidable. If indispensable, their immediate consideration of it was an absolute duty, and those who dealt with this question without considering it committed a breach of duty. Any scheme which hid from the people the necessity of relieving the present congestion in several parts of the Highlands was really an ignorant and an ill-judged scheme; still more, if it hid from them that a further increase of the population on the land in the Highlands meant ruin to them. He was glad the other evening to hear the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) impress upon the people the advantages to be gained by emigration, and encouraging them to seek their fortunes elsewhere. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman's words would reach the inhabitants of the Highlands, and would convince them that, in spite of their love of country, they must meet necessities as they arose, and accept them as the dispensation of Providence which could not be fought against. It was perfectly certain that by merely giving additional land, without making provision for the prospective increase of the population, would be absolute ruin. They had proof that the experiment had been tried, producing a satisfactory result to those who had gone out, and that the news sent home had led others to emigrate. Lady Gordon Cathcart only succeeded in getting 10 families to emigrate in 1883, but 43 families emigrated in the following year, and yet the Lord Advocate said there were no materials for dealing with the question of emigration. Why not? Why had the Government not seen its necessity? The right hon. Gentleman said it was a separate question. He (Mr. Macdonald) said it was not a separate question. It was a question of the purse and nothing else. There were two kinds of emigration—first, of the whole family; and then of individual members of families. The Commissioners said it was only by the removal of entire families that any appreciable benefit would be derived. That led him to say a word on the question of education. He sincerely trusted that in any measure for the purpose of promoting education it would never be the aim to try to stamp out the Gaelic language. It would, he thought, be a monstrous cruelty, particularly as the use of Gaelic was the only way by which religious intercourse could be kept up between the older and the younger members of a family, that they should both be able to use the same Bible. While saying that, he equally held that any Government or any hon. Member who went upon the footing that English was not to be taught would make a grievous and cruel mistake. The great difficulty of those Highland people in going out into the world to make a living for themselves was their inability to cope with those familiar with the English language. Every possible effort should be made to promote the reasonable teaching of English, which would enable the people to converse and to carry on their work in other places. Popular education, the Commissioners said, when better appreciated, would lay open the whole world, with all its resources, to the most secluded inhabitants of the glens. Finally, he said, shutting their eyes to the difficulties of this problem was of no use. That was what Her Majesty's Government had done for reasons solely connected with the question of money. Nor were Utopian schemes of any use. The poor they would always have. Neither would anything which only encouraged mere sentiment do the slightest good. The best spirit in which they could proceed was to help the poor in a double way, by giving them every assistance which would not destroy their industry and self-reliance, and by devoting attention to every means of improving the lot of those who might remain in the Highlands and Islands. The poor themselves, he hoped, would be led by those who went amongst them not to go in for things which could never be realized, but to cultivate a spirit of manly pluck and energy like other people. If successful in their struggle to rise above their position, like other people they would have the satisfaction of having worked out their own improvement; and if not successful they would have the satisfaction of a good conscience in having done their duty.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyllshire) said, that if suffering in this world would bring any reward in the next, the lot of the crofter population would be ultimately happier than that of any other class. He had not brought the Commissioners' Report, and he had not come with those statistics of the Highlands; because he thought the question had been proved absolutely to demonstrate that a large depopulation had taken place in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. He would only quote one instance from memory—that of Argyllshire (the county he represented). In 1831 the population was over 100,000; in 1881 it was only 76,000; showing a diminution of nearly one-fourth; but that did not in the least fairly represent the diminished population in the rural parts of the country, because of that 76,000 which remained a large part were in towns which did not exist 50 years ago. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate mentioned a few cases in which the population had increased. He mentioned the Island of Skye, the Island of Lewis, and some others; but he did not mention one single place where the population had decreased—as, for instance, Mull, where the population had decreased from 10,000 to 6,000, or various other Islands. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment (Mr. Ramsay), when he made his tour that evening in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, wandered all round the Islands, but did not refer to the fertile Island of Islay. Why was that? There was no island with which the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs was so thoroughly familiar as Islay. The hon. Member dwelt, as he always did, on the congested population in the Island of Lewis; but he never said a word about the places where the people disappeared. It was always the Island of Lewis that was thrust down the throat of that House. The figures as to the population of Islay were in 1831 eight short of 15,000 persons; in 1871, 8,144; in 1881, 7,559—a decrease in the last 10 years of 584, and in the last 50 years of 7,433 persons. It would be more candid, and show a fairer spirit, if, in dealing with the statistics, the hon. Member gave both sides of the question. Where were those people who still remained in the Island of Islay? They were not upon the land. He had seen the land. It was a fertile and a splendid land. Where were the people? They were almost entirely in four towns. The land itself was desolate, so far as the people were concerned. Why were these things not referred to? It was a one-sided case presented to the House. He had shown that Argyll had lost a quarter of its population; while the rest of the country was doubling its population, so that the loss was infinitely greater than appeared. By the natural increase of the population it would have been 150,000.

Mr. RAMSAY said, he wished to explain that he did not refer to the decrease in the population of Islay, because it had reference to matters affecting himself, and which he had to some extent effected, having property there—effected, whether the hon. Gentleman knew it or not, almost entirely by the education of the people, which alone induced them to go away, and get work elsewhere. If the people in the other parts of the Highlands were in the same way taught the use of the English language the result would be the same.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, that while willing and glad to receive any explanation he objected to the interjection of another speech by the hon. Member. The reason for his silence as to Islay was very natural. He knew the hon. Member had property there, and he (Mr. Macfarlane) had visited the island and the hon. Member's property, and he was sorry to say had seen the desolate homes that were standing upon it—places where there were roofless houses, where people were once wont to be happy. The hon. Member said that the people were educated out of them. They were no better educated there than were the people in other parts of the Highlands. [Mr. Ramsay: They were.] He held they were not; but they were driven out. He hoped on the next occasion when the hon. Member quoted Scotch statistics, and did not refer to the Island of Islay, he would not say a single word about the Island of Lewis. The hon. Member had referred to the congested populations. There was congestion where there were no people on the land, for they were huddled into corners. It was as if all the people in a large house were huddled into the garrets. The people were in the garrets, and the deer were on the first and the sheep were on the second floors. The remedy for that congestion was to replace the people on this land; to re-people the whole house, to re-people properties like that of the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs. If the hon. Member would strike out the letter "e" in the word emigration in his Amendment, and make it migration, he would vote for it. He should be glad to see the redundant population of the Island of Lewis transferred to the Island of Islay. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate was very severe upon the Bill, and in many places justly so. He (Mr. Macfarlane) was disappointed with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland in moving the first reading of the Bill, considering his remarks very thin for the object they had in view; but the Bill was worse than the speech. In his opinion, there was little value in it; but he would not challenge the second reading, because he hoped they might improve the measure in Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland referred, in a very pointed manner, to the Resolution which he (Mr. Macfarlane) had the honour to move upon the 14th of November, 1884, and which was accepted by a unanimous House. The right hon. Gentleman had said of it that the Resolution was one of the strongest and most remarkable ever passed in the House of Commons; but while he accepted it as a mandate to deal effectually with the question, he had apparently forgotten one-half of the mandate, for it referred to the recommendations of the Royal Commission upon the condition of the "Crofters and Cottars." But the right hon. Gentleman had almost left the cottars out in the Bill; and the benefits, if benefits, which he did propose to confer upon them, were not such as he (Mr. Macfarlane) had in his mind when he proposed his Resolution. The fact was that the cottars were to be removed from their holdings, and the arrangement in Clause 9 was that when they were so removed the landlord was to pay their funeral expenses. There was no question of giving this people any land to enable them to live; but they were to get compensation for their improvements upon the terms that they were suitable to the subjects, were executed or paid for by the cottar or his predecessor in the same family within 30 years, and that the improvements had not been executed in virtue of the specifications of the lease, or in virtue of any agreement or of estate regulations. He would be very much surprised if any cottar received any compensation on those terms. Who were these cottars? They were not people who emigrated from other parts of the country to the Highlands of Scotland; but either they, or their predecessors, had been evicted to make way for the sheep, the forerunners of the deer. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland quoted a statement from the Report of the Royal Commissioners, that "no single instance had been brought of eviction of a crofter;" but he should have added these words, "for the purpose of making a deer forest." That might be true, because there was no necessity of evicting the crofters to make deer forests. They were evicted to make way for the sheep walks, which were turned into deer forests. He (Mr. Macfarlane) claimed for the crofters that they had absolutely as good hereditary rights to the land as the people who were now in possession of it. In some cases they had been evicted without much consultation with the landlord; but in some instances he was willing to credit the landlord with the humanity of allowing them to build a house on the sea shore, rather than turn them away altogether. When hon. Gentlemen talked of there not being land enough for the people, they spoke as if the people of the Highlands were in possession of all the land in the Highlands, and that it was not enough for them. When they had possession of it all, and it was proved insufficient for them, then he would vote for such an Amendment as that before the House; but not till then. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate made a calculation of the value of the land; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman knew that all the good land was in the possession of the big farmers, and all the land not worth anything was in the possession of the crofters. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had also calculated that the Bill would only affect 25,000 people. But the population of the counties to patches of which the Bill referred amounted to 369,000; so that the Bill referred to only one in 15,000.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: I did not refer to individuals.

MR. MACFARLANE said, that perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman estimated the heads of families.

The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland made a stipulation which barred all good effect arising out of the Bill, and that was that it should only confer upon certain patches of certain counties all over the country, apparently on the example of the county of Cromarty, a Land Act, giving certain rights and titles which were denied to the other parts. He saw no reason for that absurd proposition. He also objected to the provision that no arable land was to be granted to the tenants in addition to what they now possessed. The right hon. Gentleman would agree that that was an illogical position to take up. If they were entitled to a restoration of hill pasture, why not to a restoration of arable land, assuming that they had been deprived of it? Assuming they had not, he would say they were entitled to as much land in their own native country as would enable them to live. If the land was available, and they were willing to pay a fair and judicial rent for it, they were entitled to have as much land as would enable them to live, without reference to whether they had had it before or not. He did not suppose the hill pasture which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to restore would be given back to those from whom it was taken. It was being given back as a concession to the Highland people, and why should not a portion of the arable land be given in the same way? The Royal Commission had told them that the principal matter of dissatisfaction in connection with the occupancy of land was restriction of the area of holdings, not of pasturage only, but of agricultural land as well. If he (Mr. Macfarlane) believed the Bill would pass through Committee and through that House precisely as it now stood, he would be much disposed to challenge the House to a division on the second reading against the Bill; but he had strong hopes that by to-night's speeches and the strong feeling of the House it would be improved. He felt that the Government lagged far behind the feeling of the House on this question. The right hon. Gentleman, when he introduced the Bill, said he relied upon voluntary effort when there was compulsion behind it. He (Mr. Macfarlane) relied to some extent on the voluntary effort of the Government, when the Government knew that in Committee there would be compulsion behind them, for he would take the opinion of the House on every one of those points; and he believed that on many of them Her Majesty's Government would be found in a minority. The next restriction he would refer to was a most objectionable one, having the effect of exonerating from all punishment the man who had effected the total extermination of the people. He referred to the clause which said that the crofters should have the land restored to them if any of them were left; but if the laird had been so cruel as not to have left one, then there should be no restoration, and no interference with him. It was only when a landlord had been humane enough to leave some dregs of the population behind that the lash of the Bill was to be applied to him. He (Mr. Macfarlane) held that the land should be given to these people, no matter whether they were on the spot or not; let them be taken thither. An hon. Member had referred to men who had left the country and succeeded. What would be thought of the father who boasted that the son whom he had kicked out-of-doors had gone abroad and made a fortune? That was the sort of thing that had been done in the Highlands; but it was not a thing for the persons who drove these people away to boast of. The right hon. Gentleman had said he would not give land, except where there was a remnant of the people left. Here was a statement by the Free Church minister at Raasay, as to recent clearances—

> "I am told that, from the year 1854, 12 townships were completely desolated. The number of families removed from these townships was stated to have been about 97. By far the greater number were sent away against their will, while a few left of their own accord. A few families—about nine or ten of that number—were allowed to remain on the estate, and were settled among the other townships, whose land was not thought sufficiently good to be added to the big farm."

He would also ask hon. Members to look at the case of Hugh M'Intosh, from Sutherlandshire, as set forth in the evidence before the Royal Commission, in whose township, where in 1826 there were four tenants, the lots were divided into seven. Now, they heard a great deal about the iniquity of poor people who, under strong temptation, divided their lots among members of their own families; but they heard nothing of those landlords who went on dividing and sub-dividing to suit their own purposes. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Macdonald) justly referred to the question of improving the fishing in the Western Highlands and all round the Coasts of Scotland. He (Mr. Macfarlane) agreed with him, and would be glad to see a large sum expended in endeavouring to secure what would be an immense boon not only to the Highland people themselves, but to the whole nation, in an increased supply of fish; but there were some aspects of the fishing question not quite so pleasant. Here were extracts from evidence given by a man in Sutherlandshire upon the question of bait—

> "They could not buy cockle bait. It was too dear—2*s.* 6*d.* a basket. The Duke of Sutherland had men to gather the bait and sell it to the fishermen. The Duke pays a man so much a-year to gather the mussels and sell them to us. The price goes to the Duke."

That was the way the fishing was promoted in some parts of the Scottish Coasts at the present time, and even improvements on the crofts were promoted in the same fashion. With reference to the seaweed, which was not touched in the Bill, who had given the landlords on the Coasts of Scotland the right to seaweed which God Almighty had thrown up for use in the improvement of the soil, and the right to sell it to the poor people, and, in some instances, to refuse to sell it? Yet the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of the laws of nature. Why, an Italian might preach to Englishmen about the contemptible climate they had in comparison with his own; but would the Englishman abandon his own country on such an argument? Yet that was the argument the right hon. Gentleman applied to the Highland people; and his suggestion was that the people were too sensible to stay in their own country. But he was told that the climate of Manitoba, to which they were advised to go, was not a better climate than their own, for they enjoyed a winter of eight months. He objected to the restrictions in, and also to the omissions from, the Bill. He would remind the House, moreover, that the crofters were not the only people who were in want of hill pasture. He had had experience of the towns during an election tour round the coast, and he found the towns—small towns—were as eager in their demand for a little hill pasture at the back of the villages as the crofters were—such towns as Ardrishaig, Lochgilphead, and Tarbert. In these and similar places on the coasts the fishermen were certainly allowed to dry their nets; but they had not as much green grass as would make a croquet-ground or lawn-tennis court, and yet they were perfectly willing to pay for the hills, but could not get them. He remembered an incident at an open-air meeting he held at East Loch, Tarbert. A large number of boys had got round the carriage, and he would not forget the cheer they raised, when he suggested the possibility of their getting milk for their porridge in the mornings. The poor little things! Such a thing was altogether beyond their reach, and for no reason whatever. There was no argument that could be brought in favour of the present system, for the people were as willing to pay for such pasture as the farmer for his farm. When the Bill got into Committee he would do his best to clothe the miserable skeleton with flesh and blood. It seemed to be a sort of framework stuck up in that House for hon. Members to hang Amendments upon. Some things in it would be of some use, therefore he would not vote against the second reading if there was a division; but he did not believe, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite had said, that if it passed in its integrity it would be practically an advantage, or benefit, or good. Instead of that, he believed that if it were passed in its present shape it would practically be of no advantage to the Highland people; while as to being a settlement of the question, it was such a settlement as the old woman met with when she tried to sweep back the sea with a broom. The wave of agitation was advancing, and would advance in spite of it. Therefore, let Her Majesty's Government take warning in time. He knew it was the custom to say that the pilot who called out there were rocks ahead had made the rocks, and that whoever said there was danger ahead had made the danger; but he assured the House that there was a real danger in the Highlands. They were people who were slow to wrath; but they were hot and strong upon this question, and they were roused—the hon. Member for Falkirk charitably suggested for no other purpose than to make him uncomfortable—but, whatever the motive the hon. Member attributed to him and others, the fact was that the people were roused. Let the Government recognize that fact, and legislate in a thorough manner. He would rather see a good Bill lost than a bad Bill passed; because the time would come, and very shortly, when the question must be dealt with thoroughly. He could not offer a more remarkable example of the public opinion of the Highlands of Scotland upon this subject than he could in himself, in the position he now occupied; because he fought the great county of Argyllshire, handicapped down to the ground in every possible way, with the power of heaven and earth against him. The landlords were the earth, and the ministers were the heavens. But taking all things together, although he was denounced by everybody, from the highest laird down to the smallest laird, by nearly all the ministers in every pulpit every day they were in it, the people showed their determination, and their public spirit, and their absence of bigotry, by returning him to Parliament to plead their cause, and he would plead their cause as long as the House would listen. He wished they had an abler advocate; but they could have no one who more earnestly desired the welfare of the Highland people.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) (Clackmannan, &c.): It is probably right that I should now, on the part of the Government, offer some reply to the criticisms and observations which have been passed upon this Bill. I shall do so at no great length, because my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland, in introducing the Bill, expounded so fully and so clearly its object and main provisions that to go over these again would be to repeat the details he then gave. But there have been certain criticisms made upon the measure, and it is right that we should say what occurs to us upon these. My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) began his speech by saying that, upon the introduction of the Bill, my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland had said it was not right to make proposals which would not effectually deal with the question, and then he proceeded to remark that the Bill did not come up to that standard or satisfy that criterion; but, on the contrary, in his judgment, fell very far short of it. Of course, my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland, in using that language, necessarily had in view such methods as would be consistent with the recognized principles of legislation, and which would not only have regard to the benefit of the localities which it is our desire to aid, but also to the just interests of the people of the rest of these Islands. It seemed to me that when my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Universities came to criticize the Bill, what he had to say against it almost entirely resolved itself into this—that it did not provide any means for spending the money of the British taxpayer in a variety—I should say a multitude—of ways upon that particular part of the country to which the Bill relates. Now, I am quite sure that if it were the case, as some people seem to believe, that there was an unlimited fund which could be drawn upon for every philanthropic object, we should be exceedingly glad to have recourse to that fund for the benefit of the crofters of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. But as that does not happen to be the case—as the only fund which can be drawn upon is really a contribution from the taxpayers of this country, and in many cases a contribution from persons who, as regards worldly circumstances, are very little, if at all, better off than the crofters themselves, the Government has necessarily endeavoured, in the measure which it has submitted to the judgment of the House, to keep in view that it is only by dealing justly with the rest of the community — while endeavouring to place upon a right basis the relation of the landlords and the crofters—that they can by legislation accomplish or approach the accomplishment of the object which we all have in view. That seemed to me to be the general scope of my right hon. and learned Friend's criticisms. He said, in one passage of his speech, that the Bill consisted of points picked out of the Report of the Royal Commission, which could bring no charge on the Public Exchequer. Well, I could hardly imagine greater words of praise of any measure than those of my right hon.

and learned Friend. I think it is the highest praise you could give to a Government that the remedial proposals they make do not involve any charge on the Public Exchequer. It was certainly very satisfactory, when my right hon. and learned Friend came to deal with the four particular proposals that we are making, that he did not seem to object seriously to any of them. The first three he accepted, and I am very glad of it; for that involves the admission of principles as applied to that part of the country of very great importance—of an importance to which I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman did not do full justice. He referred to the provisions for fixity of tenure, for fair rents, and for compensation for improvements as being, if not laudable, at least innocuous. But I rather understood that his want of objection to them was not due so much to his approving of them, as because he thought they were unnecessary. He said fixity of tenure is not needed, because there are no evictions now. I believe it is the case that there are very few evictions now; but there have been times when there have been a great many evictions; and if the conscience of the country has been stirred to take care that these evictions cannot, in the old manner, be repeated, it is surely better to provide, subject to safeguards against which no one has had anything to say, that security of possession should be given to persons with the historical *status* of the crofters as a right, rather than that it should be left to stand merely on the goodwill and pleasure of individuals. If those who know the feelings of the crofters best are to be relied upon, they tell us that a sense of insecurity has a very bad effect on them. Liability to be evicted, even although it might not become a reality, operates to prevent the crofter from exercising his energy, and putting forth his full powers in the cultivation of his holding. It is, therefore, important that there should be given to this class of persons, a feeling of security which has so great a tendency to stimulate exertion, with results which, I should hope, would be of the greatest advantage. Another remark I should like to make is this—that if the fixity of tenure is given, which is not objected to by my right hon. and learned Friend, it will make it impossible in the future ever to use eviction notices merely as an instrument of estate administration. That has sometimes been done, with results that are most unfortunate. But I need say no more on this point, because my right hon. and learned Friend said it was unnecessary, and therefore harmless. If there are no evictions, there can be no objection to our proposal to give security of tenure. To fair rents my right hon. and learned Friend did not object either; but there, again, that was not quite for the same reason for which I should have preferred to advocate the proposal. He says he does not object to fair rents, because the rents are fair already. I believe they are generally fair already; but if or in so far as they are not fair, then they will be made fair. There are, however, cases — I hope not many—where, if a great deal of testimony is to be believed, the rents are excessive; and if they are excessive, then they will be put upon a proper basis. At all events, there will be this—which is a most important consideration in bringing peace to this part of the country—there will be the feeling that the rents, if they turn out to be fair, by having been ascertained to be so by a neutral and independent body charged to examine into the matter, any feeling to the contrary would naturally disappear. If the rent is really excessive it will be reduced, and the crofter, with security of tenure—indeed, practical permanency of tenure provided he fulfils certain obligations—will be placed in a position in which no other tenant cultivator in this country at present stands. As regards compensation for improvements, nothing has been said against it by my right hon. and learned Friend; and, consequently, I need not say much in support of it. I think, however, the importance of the provisions which we propose upon the matter have been somewhat undervalued. We do propose to give a very liberal scale of compensation—that is to say, we propose to allow compensation for buildings and other works, which, if suitable to the holding, may be erected without antecedent notice, such as is required by the Agricultural Holdings Act, 1883. The right hon. and learned Gentleman then proceeded to deal with matters of omission in the Bill, and, as I understood, he indicated an opinion that not upon one, but upon many matters, the public money should be expended. Of course, it was all very right and all very well for a Commission, inquiring and reporting, to indicate for the judgment of a responsible Government, and then for the judgment of Parliament, the various means by which they thought that an amelioration in the condition of the crofter could be brought about; and it was probably quite right, also, to indicate that expenditure upon harbours, upon fisheries, and, it might also be, upon emigration, were matters deserving of consideration. But the position of a responsible Government is very different in that respect; because a responsible Government is the trustee for the entire nation. It holds the money of the nation in trust; and it would not be warranted upon mere considerations of an eleemosynary character in making proposals for the benefit of one class of the community which would involve an indefinite drain upon the pockets of the rest of the community, without showing that there was, at all events, some unanswerable and essential reason for it. Let the House see what we propose, and what we do not propose, in the matter. My right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland, in introducing the Bill, intimated that we did propose to introduce a clause providing for advances for boats and fishing-gear, very much after the character of the Irish Reproductive Loan Act. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Why is it not printed in the Bill?] The reason that the clause is not printed is that it is not always possible, at a moment's notice, to settle a matter with the Treasury; and we could not put financial proposals into a Bill without, in the first instance, dealing with the Treasury. Therefore, if what has been said by my right hon. and learned Friend will strengthen our hands in the matter, we will not object. The Bill was introduced very early in the Session, and that matter has not been dealt with in the Bill as printed; but I can assure him it will be dealt with. The success of Lady Gordon Cathcart's efforts in that direction has been referred to as an illustration of how much probably may be done, and done with security to the taxpayer; but I desire the House to note that we should not propose to give grants that would not be recovered, but to give advances which we believe would be recovered. We are, therefore, at one on that head. We desire to aid the fishing industry as far as we can, and we entirely concur in the view that one of the most important elements in the regeneration of the people in that part of the country is to be found in the diligent and successful prosecution of that industry. I would only remind such hon. Members as are not aware of it that when the Ministry of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian was last in Office, a very great deal was done in that direction by opening up telegraphic communication with the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and with Barra and other places, thus giving facilities for the prosecution of the fishing industry, which have been productive of results that are simply marvellous. By that means the fishing industry in Shetland has been developed very largely, by making it possible to communicate with steamers and curers, and so to get up barrels, salt, and other needful appliances, when herrings appear off the Coast. There is another matter dealt with, and that is the means of communication. One of the great difficulties experienced has been to get the fish caught in these localities to market, and a good deal was done with a view to remedy this last summer. Amongst the topics bearing upon this point which are now engaging the anxious attention of my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland, that of providing additional facilities by means of postal and steamboat communication is being fully kept in view. I do not think, therefore, it will be said, in the face of these statements, that we have overlooked those elements of amelioration which are to be derived from the energetic prosecution of the fishing industry. We should have been very glad if, consistently with the principles generally recognized, and with the Reports that have been made by Committees of this House, it could have been possible for us to suggest something more in the way of providing harbours for those Islands. But the effect of the recent Reports of the Committees that have sat on this matter is this—that the national money should not, unless in very exceptional circumstances, be expended upon harbours which are merely and purely for local advantage. It must be harbours of large size for general concernment, affecting the carrying and shipping trade of the nation generally, which will alone warrant the spending of public money. At the same time, the matter of these local harbours was not overlooked by the Government when in Office last; because the surplus of the "brand" fees was appropriated for harbour works, and the first fruits of that has been the making of Ness Harbour in the Island of Lewis, which is expected to be of very great advantage. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, I hope it will. Here was an available fund, not extracted from the pockets of the British taxpayer, but the profit upon one item of the fishing industry, taken and applied to promote that industry in another direction. I do not know that I need follow what has been said by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Edinburgh University in regard to the comparison of the Highlands and Switzerland, because I think he rather dealt with that as running into the domain of sentiment. My right hon. and learned Friend knows the Highlands and Islands well enough to be aware that the very thing of which he spoke somewhat lightly was practised and familiar in the Highlands down to the memory of persons still living. At all events, I have been told by aged persons now living, or but recently dead, that within their recollection it was the custom for some of the women and girls of the townships to go up to shielings in the higher grazing lands in the summer, and there tend their cattle in a manner which seemed to bring them health and reasonable comfort at the time, though whether the grazings allocated under the present Bill will be so extensive as to admit of that I cannot tell. I dare say, perhaps, the practice referred to might be more appropriate to simpler habits than now exist; but, at all events, proper grazings are provided for in the Bill, and it will be open to the crofters to use them in the way that seems most compatible with their position and advantage at the present time. Something has been said by various hon. Members, in regard to what they view as a defect in the Bill—namely, that it makes provision for the enlargement of existing holdings only, by providing additional pasture, instead of also providing additional arable land. I need not say that the point has been very carefully and very fully considered by the Government; and it was only after such consideration that the proposals contained in the Bill were made. I may indicate very shortly why the proposal was limited as it is in the Bill. The leading complaint on the part of the crofters is that they have been, in many cases, deprived of pastures which they formerly enjoyed, and which were taken from them for the purpose, first, of being thrown into sheep grazings, and which are now thrown, in many cases, into deer forests, and that, consequently, being left with only arable land, without grazing, or without adequate grazing, they have not the means of carrying on the kind of pastoral life which is more profitable under the climatic conditions which exist in the Highlands and Islands than the cultivation of cereal crops. I believe that it is historically true that there a great deal of pasture was taken away, and probably also that many crofters were removed from places more inland to places near the sea, where, being provided only with small crofts, they did not get grazing land. If that be so, in proposing to give back such grazing land, we propose what is practically a restoration to the condition, as nearly as possible, in which they were before the things of which they complain were done. I may add that I have heard of cases of very great hardship where, in distant parts of the country, the crofters had not the means of grazing animals with which to provide the necessary milk supply for their families. If cases of the kind are familiar, we hope the moderate proposals made by the Bill, subject to safeguards, against the propriety of which nothing has yet been said, will effect a restoration of what contributed very largely to the comfort and prosperity of the crofters formerly, and which there is no reason to suppose will not contribute very largely to their comfort and prosperity again. Something has been said in regard to the small size of the areas of arable land held in crofts. I am afraid that has been largely due to sub division, and partly, also, to men being placed where they had not been before—on too small holdings. But it is common ground that sub-division has been the great fault. It is a mistake to say that we take no security against that. We take most effective security against it; because we provide in the 1st clause of the Bill that one of the statutory conditions on which a holding is to be practically permanent as regards tenure is that there shall not be sub-division except with the consent of the landlord. The result is that sub-division will not go on further; and I dare say, as crofts fall in, there may be enlargements of the remaining crofts by the addition of those which have so fallen in, and that other enlargements will be given where there is available land; because I have no doubt, having regard to what passed at the Inverness meeting, that there is an honest and sincere desire on the part of the great majority of Highland proprietors to meet the reasonable demands of the crofters with respect to the enlargement of their holdings. It is quite plain, also, that there would be a very different class of questions brought in if you proposed to take arable land. Whence is it to be taken? Is it to be taken from farms already existing under the plough? Well, there are not many such in the Highlands, where there are chiefly grazing farms. Does it mean land that is already cultivated, or that is to be reclaimed? Well, that can be done under an improving lease. I really do not see that it is a sufficient objection to the Bill that it does not provide for additions of arable land, the making of which would give rise to much greater difficulty than taking grazing or pasture from sheep runs and deer forests. But the matter will be further considered, and we shall be glad to learn the sentiments of the Scottish Members in regard to it. Another point made was this—one hon. Member said that in many cases the crofters would not be able to stock additional land. I am afraid, if that is so, like other people in the like unfortunate position, they will have to do without it, unless again Parliament is prepared to dip into the pockets of the ratepayers; because I do not know how money is to be provided for stocking land unless in that way. No one has advocated in this debate loans upon the stock; and if this were advocated, I should be ready to show insuperable objections, both practical and on principle, to the proposal. But I hope that with permanency or fixity of tenure, and with fair rent, side by side with a successfully prosecuted fishing industry, it would be by no means hopeless to expect that there might be considerable ability on the part of many crofters to take advantage of this enlargement of the holding; and, on the other hand, many persons desirous to aid the crofters might be willing to advance them money, and to run some risk. I believe many people might do that; but it does not appear to us a thing that we could reasonably ask that provision should be made for by State aid. My right hon. and learned Friend referred to emigration. I say that, too, resolves itself into a question of the public money. In so far as emigration is to depend on voluntary effort, it is left untouched by the Bill. It is perfectly open to those who want to go and can go, or can get help to go, to do so. Something was said about rooting the people to the soil. We do not propose to root anybody compulsorily to the soil. We make provision by which it will be impossible to turn them off the soil, and I suppose that will be entirely consonant with their wishes. If it is proved that the smaller holdings can be cultivated with comfort along with the fishing industry—because it is an entire mistake to suppose that we think these smaller holdings can alone support a family—they will be a home to which the fishermen can resort, where he can have a few acres for growing potatoes and an outrun for his cattle, and such comforts may make even a small holding of great advantage to the man. It is right that I should point out that, although we very fully considered last year, and again this year, the recommendations of the Commission that there should not be advantage of that kind given to those below a rent of £6, such a proposal would meet only a very infinitesimal number of the cases requiring to be dealt with, and you would do nothing whatever for the large majority. I will give an instance from the Commissioners' Report with reference to the Island of Lewis. In the case of Uig there are very few large tenants, but there are 420 crofters and cottars. Of these 420, only five pay over £10 and under £30; 22 pay between £6 and £10, and 393 under £6; so that if we did not propose to give the benefit of the conditions which are embodied in this Bill—permanency of tenure, fair rent, and compensation for improvements—to anybody who did not pay over £6, we should allow 393 out of the 520 crofters in that one parish to go without any benefit or remedy at all. Therefore, I say that is not a valid criticism, to say that the Bill will have the effect of rooting the people upon the soil. When they come to think they can better their position elsewhere they will go as freely as now. I hope I have shown, as regards the chief points raised by my right hon. and learned Friend, that his complaint simply resolves itself into this—that the Government are not prepared to spend more money. I should have been very glad if he had—speaking as one, as he says, who had considered this matter in Office—been prepared to give us any further suggestions than that of spending money; and if he will still do so we shall be very happy to consider them. If he thinks we should have gone further in any particular direction, we shall only be too glad to have his suggestions. [Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald: Not without money.] Not without money. As I said, my right hon. and learned Friend's complaint is that we are not spending the money of the British taxpayer freely enough; but he has nothing to say against the provisions of the Bill so far as they refer to the relations between landlord and tenant. The right hon. and learned Gentleman also referred to the increase of population, the means of developing further energy, the question of communication and education. I suppose that increase of population is a problem to be dealt with elsewhere, as well as in the Highlands and Islands. It is not peculiar to that part of the country, although I believe it goes on rapidly there; and does my right hon. and learned Friend mean that you are to meet and provide for the removal of all growing and surplus population out of the taxpayers' money? That, I not only admit, but assert, is the question; and I say you cannot take up this question of State-aided emigration as applicable to the Highlands and Islands unless you are prepared also to take it up and deal with it in every other part of the country. I suppose that if that principle were to be applied generally there would be 500,000 people to be emigrated out of London—perhaps more—and so on in every great town where the congestion is greater and the poverty is greater, where all those conditions that make removal to a new sphere and scene very desirable are greater than in the Highlands and Islands. Then the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of difficulties of communication; but I have already shown that we have been doing our very best to remove these difficulties, and are now prosecuting further efforts in that direction. As to education, I understood that the main point my right hon. and learned Friend impressed upon us was that we had better not do away with the Gaelic teaching; but I do not go into that. I agree, however, with my right hon. and learned Friend that there is a great deal to be looked for from education; and I believe that the effect of education, combined with improved facilities of communication, will be to lead to a very large voluntary migration to places where there is more call for energy and effort. That has been the case in the parts of Scotland that are more happily circumstanced; because the thing that does spread Scotsmen all over the globe—sometimes, I am afraid, not to the entire approbation of those with whom they compete—is their readiness to go and push their fortunes in every avenue and market open to them. Therefore, I have no doubt that when these measures, which are now in course of being carried out, receive a further development, the same thing will take place in the Highlands and Islands, to the advantage of those who go and of those who stay, as has taken place in the rest of Scotland. But it was not by spending public money in emigration that other Scotsmen scattered themselves over the world. It was by going out into the world like men, when they had the intelligence and the opportunities; and there is no reason to doubt that the same power, when it comes within the compass of those of whom we are now speaking, will be put in force by them. With the good feeling of the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman I entirely agree — nothing could exceed that. What we have done is to endeavour to make practical legislative proposals; and I did not hear that we suggested too much, or had gone too far in what we proposed, or that there was anything in which we should go no further by way of settling the relations of landlords and tenants, or, indeed, in anything except the spending of public money. I do not propose to go through the various other matters that were observed by hon. Members, for I feel that I should be hardly justified in detaining the House in dealing with them. The Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for the Falkirk Burghs (Mr. Ramsay) referred to emigration; and, of course, what I have said on that subject I need not repeat. I may just say that, while we are very desirous to encourage the fishing industry, it is not certain that that industry will always prove as lucrative in every place as it has at Tarbert, on Loch Fyne. That is a most happily situated place where they catch magnificent herrings, which are lifted by steamers and taken to Glasgow in two or three hours; and it is a fact that the fishermen there are prosecuting their industry with extraordinary success and extraordinary gain. But it may be that though they are so successful, that it is of no importance for them to have any land for their potatoes and run for their cattle, to have such conveniences will be of importance to those who are not so happily placed as to market and communication. It may be very advantageous for the men on the West Mainland or on the Islands to have this humble accommodation which we propose, and it is better to leave them to themselves, and not to say that they must immediately make a final and ultimate election either to be farmers or fishermen. There are many races who succeed in prosecuting both, and I should think that when they come to make their ultimate election at the right time they will make their election as the Tarbert fishermen have done. The history of the British Fisheries Association, referred to by my hon. Friend, was very interesting. It was not by any means successful; but the conditions of market are very different in 1886 from what they were in 1786, which was the year alluded to. The hon. Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane) seems to think there is very little value in the Bill. Of course, if he can show, as he promises to do in Committee, that there are practical Amendments for which he can get the approval of the House, it will be open to him to do so; but I hardly think he advances the matter very much by some of the propositions which he puts forward. He complained, for instance, that the Bill did not provide anything for the cottars—did not provide land for those who had no land. There is no doubt it would be a very large proposal, either in this or any other measure, to provide land for the landless. It is a very different thing where there are communities established and in possession of their ancestral holdings to give them facilities for enlarging them, and to say that every person who has no land and wants it should be provided with it. That would be a doctrine which would apply in many other parts of the country besides the Highlands. I daresay all of us would like a bit of land, if we could get it. But it introduces a much larger principle than this Bill contemplates. The hon. Member puts a question, why the number five, or why any particular number, should be taken as defining the qualification to apply for enlargement of holdings, and not one only? Anyone who has perused the Report of the Commission can answer that question for himself. The basis of the Bill is to accept the old conditions, and to endeavour to revive or perpetuate them as far as practicable. The condition of the pasture land appurtenant to the croft was that it was held in common. The township was a little group of houses, with plots of arable land, and a common pasturage adjoining. It was not the case of an individual having a large, separate, and inclosed space. That would be bringing into existence a state of matters which did not exist before, and which I do not say should or could be maintained. It would result in there being a small croft with the crofter's three or four beasts and 20 or 30 sheep, and he would have the piece of ground in severalty, and would require to fence it round, or herd his animals alone. The condition had always been that there had been possession by a township in common; and in proposing the number five, we accepted, the principle which, in a modified degree, forms the basis of the Report of the Commission. The township is the hinge upon which it works, and we make it as small a unit as would be likely to work advantageously. The Bill of the noble Marquess the Member for Sutherlandshire has also that idea. The hon. Member for Argyllshire spoke of the landlord who had removed everybody escaping without punishment, whereas the man who had kept some of his people would be liable to have a demand made upon him to surrender land for the enlargement of their holdings. It is not a question of punishment. If he did that which was wrong, he, probably, has been punished somewhere for it; for the things happened long ago, and are now beyond our ken. At all events, he is now removed far enough from all earthly punishment; and the question before us is—what is the right and reasonable mode for adjusting the relations of existing landlords and crofters? The proposal to emigrate, as the hon. Member suggests, though I am far from saying that it is unworthy of consideration, is far beyond the scope of the Bill, beyond the scope of the Report of the Commission, and far beyond any funds that we have at our command, or are ever likely to get the command. Surely half-a-loaf is better than no bread. Surely it is better to provide a reasonable security of tenure at a fair rent, compensation for improvements, and enlargement of grazing land for existing townships and existing crofters—if we can do that—than to allow this Bill to be delayed until much larger schemes, which would want resources and raise principles which are not wanted or raised by this Bill, are to be matured and considered in the public mind. In conclusion, I would only say that we shall be glad to receive from every quarter of the House any suggestions towards producing as good a measure as any hon. Member can desire.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR (Leeds, Central), said, he had listened with pleasure to the speech of his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) in introducing that measure, and also to most of the speeches during the debate of that evening; but what had struck him most throughout was the singular absence of any direct argument in favour of the Bill. The speech of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate was principally devoted, not to showing that the Bill was a good one, but to apologizing for its omissions. The Secretary for Scotland appeared to rely almost exclusively on two arguments that were not direct, but indirect. His first object was to give effect to certain recommendations of the Royal Commission—those, namely, which referred to the land; and the second was to base his Bill on what he called strictly historical and local considerations. Now, he (Mr. Gerald Balfour) admitted that it was very important that such a Bill as that should be based on local and historical considerations; but he thought they ought to have something more direct than that—namely, some real reason for the particular provisions contained in the measure. The two arguments on which his right hon. Friend relied were sometimes incongruous with each other. Let him take, for example, the question of pasture and arable land. The Commissioners recommended not merely that the crofter should be able to extend his occupation of pasture land, but of arable land also. His right hon. Friend, however, had not included that in his Bill, and his principal reason for this was, as he had told them, that the crofters in past times had had no such right at all. That was an instance in which the proposals of the Bill did not go so far as the recommendations of the Commissioners. He would take an opposite example — namely, fixity and fair rent. In that case his right hon. Friend had gone much beyond the recommendations of the Commissioners. In doing so, he appeared to think he was strictly adhering to such historical and traditional privileges as the crofters had enjoyed in past times; and he seemed to consider that if he could show that, in past times, the crofters were in possession of certain privileges, that was a sufficient reason for extending to them such privileges now. The Secretary for Scotland appeared to share the view which some entertained—that there was a kind of golden age in the Highlands in past times; but, for his own part, having himself carefully studied the Report of the Royal Commission, and also the past history of the Highlands, and having likewise a considerable acquaintance with their present state, he did not believe in that golden age, and he thought—he was only repeating the conclusion of the Commissioners in saying it—that on the whole the condition of the Highlands at the present time could not be said to be worse than their condition at any previous period. But it was not the historical question to which he most wished to call attention; it was the nature of the right hon. Gentleman's arguments. Surely the right hon. Gentleman in advising the House to accept the proposals of the Bill—proposals which would revolutionize the system of land tenure in one part of the Island—might have gone into more detail to prove that the effect of the Bill would be good. The Commission had discussed the question of fixity of tenure, and in recommending it the right hon. Gentleman had been principally influenced by the idea that the crofters had a traditional right to such fixity; but whether or not they had was a matter of comparatively small moment. The real question was—would such fixity of tenure be for the advantage of the crofters or not? He confessed that all he had heard led him to think the Commission came to a perfectly correct conclusion in decling to recommend anything like fixity of tenure. They had made a proposal for guaranteeing a certain amount of security of tenure, by suggesting that all crofters who paid more than £6 rent should be entitled, on application to the Sheriff, to receive improving leases; but to go below that limit they distinctly considered would be detrimental to the crofters themselves. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate defended the action of the Government on this point, on the ground that, if the privilege which the Commissioners proposed to confer on tenants with a rental of more than £6 a-year was confined to that class, then the benefits conferred on the crofters, as a whole, would be almost infinitesimal. But in making their recommendation applicable to crofters over £6, the Commissioners were aware that they were excluding from the benefits of this provision the majority of the crofters; but they held—and he held with them—that, notwithstanding this, the evil of fixing in their holdings crofters whose means of livelihood were so small would clearly outweigh any benefits they might receive from fixity of tenure. What benefit would any crofter obtain by getting fixity of tenure for a croft under £6 a-year? Even the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh), who was not likely to take a view very favourable to the landlords, and who thought £6 was too high, did not consider that the Commission would have been justified in going below £4; but the Government had deliberately set aside the recommendation of the Commissioners in that respect. But he would pass from that to the question of the enlargement of holdings, as to which the Secretary for Scotland had told them that it was the most vital point, the very backbone of the recommendation of the Commissioners; but he had not told them that two out of the six Commissioners had dissented from the recommendations of the Report on the subject. Why was it that the Government took no account of the arguments put forward by those two Members of the Commission, and why had they now changed the opinion they apparently held last year? Surely the general object of any such Bill should be to reduce the poverty and indigence of the Highlands; but he did not hesitate to say that the particular proposal described by his right hon. Friend as the vital proposal of the Commissioners would not have that effect in any appreciable degree. In the first place, no crofter, or association of crofters, would be entitled to the benefit of that provision, unless they were able not only to pay rent for, but also to stock, their additional land. But if the crofters were to be called on to stock the land added to their crofts, and on that condition only were to have the benefit of the clause, in that case would it be the poorer class, and those for whom such a Bill was needed, that would be benefited? Was it not rather clear that only those who were already tolerably well off would be able to enjoy the advantage of that provision? Again, the Bill provided that if the land to be added to a township formed part of any farm, whether subject to any lease or not, unless the Land Commission were satisfied that the part proposed to be assigned for the enlargement of the crofters' holdings could be so assigned without material damage to the letting value of the remainder, it should not be competent for the Land Commission to assign land for such enlargement. Now he said, without hesitation, that it seemed to him to be impossible, or, at all events, possible only in a very few instances, to take away land from a farm in the manner proposed without reducing the letting value of the farm; and, if so, under no circumstances, or but very rarely, could land be taken from existing farms to be added to the crofters' holdings.

Therefore, he took it, the only land practically available for the purpose in question was that at present included in deer forests. The Secretary for Scotland, in introducing the Bill, made one or two remarks which he could not help thinking were mere *ad captandum* arguments, and were simply designed to evoke cheers from below the Gangway. Two Commissions, one of which was the Crofter Commission, had examined carefully into the question of deer forests; and though, in both cases, they had been appointed with a hope that they would curse the deer forests, they had been obliged to bless them altogether. These Commissions had laid down that, in comparison with a sheep farm, a deer forest employed more labour, and would probably have the effect of reducing the rates to a greater extent, owing to the attraction afforded to wealthy people who would spend large sums of money in the glens where they enjoyed sport. It appeared to him, therefore, that, so far from it being desirable to discourage deer forests as against sheep farms, they should be encouraged. ["No, no!"] At any rate, he did not think that a clause should be put into the Bill which would make it impossible to take land from large sheep farms; and, at the same time, no difficulty should be put in the way of it being taken from deer forests. He said nothing in regard to compensation for improvements. So far as he could make out, the proposal was a just one; but the main principles of the Bill were, first, the fixity of tenure and fair rent, and, second, the enlargement of holdings. With regard to the first, it seemed to him to be clear from the Report of the Royal Commission that this proposal was a dangerous one, and that it would really tend to fix in their holdings crofters who had much better become labourers or fishermen, or who should migrate or emigrate. The second proposal in favour of the enlargement of holdings was useless for the purpose of the Bill. Coming to the measures recommended by the Royal Commission, but which had been omitted from the Bill, first of all was the question of emigration. The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate had defended the Government from the charge of omitting the question, by saying that emigration, if it was to be dealt with at all, must be dealt with as a large question, affecting not merely one particular part of the country, but all parts, and perhaps the Metropolis more than any other part. No one disputed that the question of emigration was of enormous importance not only to the Highlands, but to the whole country; and though it was not dealt with in the Bill, he considered the Secretary for Scotland might have said something about it in his speech in moving the first reading; but he was absolutely silent on the subject. In the Report of the Commission there was not one single point which was made out more clearly and absolutely than the necessity of emigration. The Commissioners had shown conclusively that in many districts, if the land was taken away from the present proprietor and divided among the crofters without any rents being charged, the crofters would not have sufficient subsistance from such lands to enable them to live in anything like comfort. In these circumstances, he was surprised that the Secretary for Scotland should not even have mentioned the question in his speech. He was also rather astonished to hear that his right hon. Friend seemed to think—and, in fact, laid down the principle—that under no circumstances ought the public money to be spent or advanced on behalf of any special section of the community. He believed, however, his right hon. Friend, when he was Chief Secretary for Ireland, brought forward the Purchase of Land Bill, the purpose of which was to advance public money in that way. It seemed to him that the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman was an extraordinary one, and, if it were to be carried out with strictness, would stand in the way of some measures designed by the Government, and in the way of many right hon. Gentlemen who now sat on the Treasury Bench. He did not believe that this question could be properly dealt with unless the Government were prepared—he would not say to spend—but, at all events, to advance money. After the criticisms he had passed on the Bill, the logical course for him to take might be to oppose the second reading; but though he thought such a course would not be unreasonable, he hoped that the Bill might be amended in such a way as to prove a really valuable one. In order to be a valuable measure it must be not only largely amended, but also largely added to. He quite agreed that, at the present time, considering the state of feeling in the Highlands in regard to this question, it would not be wise, when they could possibly amend the Bill so as to make it satisfactory, to reject it altogether. They had reached a state of things in the Highlands when, perhaps, the ordinary and legitimate remedies would not be altogether adequate, and when it might be necessary to provide remedies which, even if in themselves not calculated to meet the needs of the people, would at least satisfy their imagination. He regretted that it should be necessary to deal with this question in this way; but who was to blame for that? Perhaps, to some extent, a certain number of the landlords, because in every class they would find black sheep; but the Report of the Commission bore him out in saying that the landlords of the Highlands, on the whole, had done their duty in this matter. ["No, no!"] He attributed the principal blame for their having to resort to exceptional legislation, which everybody must consider in itself unsatisfactory, to the agitators who had embittered the relations between the landlord and tenant. It was the agitators who had added fuel to the fire by their reckless statements and their unscrupulous promises. It was the agitators who had rubbed poison into a natural wound until it had become a festering sore. The agitators had reduced the Highlands to such a condition that the ordinary remedies were not altogether available; and, therefore, he hoped that the Bill would be so amended and added to that if it did not do some good, it would, at all events, do no positive harm. He sincerely trusted, when they came to discuss the Bill in Committee, that the Secretary for Scotland would not introduce any such provisions as were likely to have the effect of discouraging the landlords in their efforts for the improvement of the people. Though the landlords had been treated with scant generosity in the Bill, he hoped they would not, on that account, be deterred from devoting, as he believed they had, on the whole, hitherto consistently devoted their best energies to promote the prosperity, the welfare, and the contentment of the people.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) said, there was one disfigurement in the able speech of the hon. Member for Central Leeds which he was sure the hon. Gentleman would regret—that was, his observations about agitators. That charge was sufficiently answered by the fact that in the whole of the Highland counties, from Caithness down to Argyll, at the recent General Election, when the crofters had for the first time the benefit of the franchise, four of the Crofter candidates were returned, in spite of all the opposition that could possibly be raised against them. In the county of Sutherland the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Stafford) retained his seat only because he made promises of a very advanced character; and he thought the noble Marquess himself would not object to be termed one of the Crofter Representatives, while the hon. Member for the Wick Burghs (Mr. Macdonald Cameron), if not one of them, was at heart with them, and so also was the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Lyell). Although they were a small body compared with hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Opposition side, when they heard that a great deal was to be obtained by unity, they were determined not to be left out in the cold. He had no desire to say anything to hamper the Government. He was quite aware that there were difficulties now around and dangers before them; and he hoped that what he had said would be accepted as his honest and conscientious opinion. With regard to the Bill before the House, the first great matter was giving fixity of tenure. He should have much preferred that the fixity of tenure had been given without the numerous restrictions that were inserted in the Bill. The debate had not been at all satisfactory, so far as the Government were concerned; but he was aware of the difficulties which they had to encounter, and had no wish to hamper them unnecessarily. It was to be borne in mind, however, that the people with whom they had to deal were not very well educated, and that many of them did not know English. The Bill, instead of being one that they could easily understand, was essentially a lawyer's Bill. At first it seemed to promise a great deal; but when they read on they found that it was full of pitfalls, and was certain to give rise to a great deal of litigation. Then, again, there were no lawyers in many of the localities, while the people were quite unable to pay the expense of bringing lawyers from a distance to plead before the Land Commissioners. If ever there was a case in which a Bill ought to be clear, concise, and brief, it was one in which the poor people of the Highlands were concerned; but he was led to the conclusion that, although the framer of the Bill might be very clever, he was not one who really had the interests of the Highland people at heart when he put in so many restrictions. With regard to fair rent, that was a matter with which he was satisfied; but as to compensation for improvements, there was a most unjust clause as to no compensation being given for improvements executed under agreement or understanding; for many stipulations in leases were confiscating. The most important improvement of the Bill upon that of last year was the enlargement of the holdings. That was the main good in the Bill. But he could not for a moment agree that the extension should be limited to grazing lands. The Bill would not restore crofters to the position they occupied 80 years ago, as the Secretary for Scotland had said it was intended to do, unless they gave them arable land as well. In some of the smaller islands the people were on the verge of starvation from congestion of holdings, and they must be migrated. He would instance a case in which the people of a small island in the Hebrides caught a few lobsters in a week, and the soil was so bad that if two or three bushels of corn were sown only one bushel would be reaped. The island was once uninhabited; it was no place for human beings to live in; and the people must be removed to some place where they could have arable land as well as pasture. This question must be left open if deer forests were not dealt with; and the people would not cease agitating until they obtained their just rights. In a word, the Bill would not be complete without some provision for the case of the cottars, and in regard to deer forests. He hoped the Secretary for Scotland would take these matters into consideration.

MR. BAIRD (Lanark, N.W.) said, he lived the greater part of each year in the very centre of the district affected by the Bill. Although he did not agree with all the details of the measure, he thought they had all been strongly impressed by the feeling which had prompted the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland in introducing it, and that they recognized the right hon. Gentleman's object to be to benefit the crofter. He agreed with the object of the Bill, and was thoroughly in accord with the spirit in which it had been introduced; and, as a Conservative landlord, he said that the members of his class would yield to no section of the House in their earnestness in that desire. It was surely difficult to conceive that this desire should not be shared by those who depended upon the crofters for at all events a part of their income, even if landlords were not to be credited with the ordinary feelings of humanity. Landlords were friends of the crofters. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen seemed to doubt that; but he was happy to say that, as a Conservative landlord, he had received most gratifying proof of the fact in the way in which he had been met after the election by his crofters. He had obtained an enthusiastic reception, which he should never forget. He had listened with great interest, and some annoyance, to the speeches which had been delivered on that side of the House during this debate, his annoyance arising from the fact that he got up under the disadvantage of being compelled to repeat what had already been said, or to sit down again without making observations which he had upon his notes. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking of sheep farms, said there seemed to be difficulties arising partly from the complication in the valuation of flocks, which rendered every successive tenant less and less able to take over the stock of his predecessor. That that was true in the sense that valuers did favour the outgoing tenant, those who had had the misfortune of being obliged to take over sheep farms during the last 10 years knew better than anybody else. It was gratifying to find from the terms in which the Bill had been introduced that the Government did not share the opinions of, at all events, some Members who sat upon the other side of the House, one of whom had openly stated at the Portree Conference in September last that the interests of crofters and landlords were flatly antagonistic, and that war had been declared between those classes. Were they to understand that the Government had introduced this Bill, and were anxious to pass it, in consequence of the fact that a war against landlords had been declared? Taking the Irish analogy, there would be under the Bill some 6,000 fair rents fixed by the aid of valuers called in by the Commissioners. If they extended the crofters' holdings on the only class of land which could be of use to them they would reduce a large part of the uplands lying at a distance from the crofters' homesteads to a condition of absolute desert; because it was a fact that a crofter would not find it within his power to make use of those distant pastures in the same way as a man who occupied a large enough piece of land to justify him in adopting that system of farming which had proved to be most economical. He urged the Government to do everything in their power to develop the fisheries of the Highlands, for the best friends of the Highlander knew that that was a matter of the utmost importance. He was sorry to see that the question of harbours had not been dealt with. There were many lochs on the West Coast which afforded good lying for fishing vessels; but there were rocks on the way to them, and boats had to run the gauntlet before they were safe. The Government might very well give some assistance to make those lochs accessible, by providing beacons, buoys, or lights where necessary. He strongly impressed upon the Government also the necessity of giving every encouragement to emigration, and he did not see why the suggestions of the Canadian Government with reference to a scheme of Irish emigration should not apply to the case of the Highlands of Scotland. They ought to go before the emigrant and enable him to make a profitable use in a new country of the industry, ingenuity, and powers which were undoubtedly inherent in the Western Highlanders. He would also impress upon them that the question of telegraphs and postal communication was a most important one as affecting fishing stations, and he hoped that the Bill would give greater facilities than now existed to the people who were engaged at such stations.

THE MARQUESS OF STAFFORD (Sutherland): This Bill has been subjected to a considerable amount of criticism with regard to its details; but, upon the whole, it seems to me to be a very fair Bill. At the same time, I should like to see it made a still better Bill when we get into Committee, because it is certainly capable of much improvement. The Government have admitted that the case of the crofters is an exceptional one; and I should like to call the attention of the Government to the grievances under which they suffer. Only a year ago a large sum of money was voted by Parliament for the good of the Irish people—as much as £5,000,000, I believe; and I do not think that Her Majesty's Government should expect Members who represent the Highlands of Scotlands to come here and say nothing about the distress of their constituents. As the House has stepped in to the help of the Irish people, I think it is only reasonable that similar help should be extended to the Highlands of Scotland. I do not propose to enter into the details of the Bill, except to notice one point which has not been referred to, and that is the necessity of protecting the crofters from game. Then, again, there is the case of the small leaseholders. There are many small leaseholders whose rent does not exceed £20, and I think that the Bill ought not to be confined to crofters proper, but might fairly be extended to this class. I trust that something will be done by the Government to enable these people to live in a really comfortable manner; and it is highly important also that the development of the fisheries on the Coast should be assisted, especially on the North-West Coast. I know that in Sutherlandshire, the county which I have the honour to represent, there is an immense supply of fish on the North-West Coast. I do not see that anything is done by this Bill to remove any of the obstructions to the navigation, or to erect piers, or to provide any other accommodation for fishermen. I think something ought to be done to give the advantages which will be derived from the construction of fishing stations, and I am sure that the proprietors will be willing to submit to taxation if the help of the Government could be afforded to this desirable object. In the case of any works that could be shown to be of value to the estates of the proprietors, the land of the proprietors could be charged proportionately with the expenses. It seems to me that that would be a very fair system to go upon; and I am sure the proprietors would be glad to pay a fair share of the taxation if they could be assured that the fisheries would be properly developed under the regular supervision of the Government. Then, again, in Sutherlandshire, and other parts of the Coast, there are hundreds of fishermen unable to pursue their calling from the want of harbours on the North Coast, and they are further cut off from all access to good markets; if they catch the fish they have no means of sending them to market. If steps were taken properly to provide fishing stations on the North and North-West Coast, and on the Islands around, instead of the few harbours which now exist, and which are most inconveniently crowded, the fishermen would not only be fully employed, but much good would be done to the families of these industrious men, and to the large centres of population, to whom a supply of wholesome and cheap food will be most welcome. I therefore think that some assistance from the Government would be of great advantage to the fishermen. The Government have done much for the good of these people in the way of education, and I would put it to the Government whether assistance in the particular direction which I have indicated would not be of similar benefit? I sincerely hope that it will be forthcoming.

MR. J. M. CAMERON (Wick, &c.): I rise with great diffidence as a new Member to ask for the indulgence of the House while I address it for the first time; but, as I know that indulgence has been extended to other hon. Members, I trust I may venture to hope that it will be extended to me. The hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh) referred to me as not being a Crofter's Representative; but although I am not a Crofter's Representative I am a Highlander, and any assistance I can give to the crofters in furthering the objects which are sought to be obtained by this Bill, either in the House or outside of it, I shall be willing and ready to give. I look upon the Bill as being one of an ameliorative character, although it does not go nearly so far as I would wish. In the 29th clause of the Bill there is a definition of the term "crofter." It is to mean a tenant of a holding from year to year who habitually resides on his holding, the annual rent of which does not exceed £30 in money, and which is situated in a crofting parish. Now, if that is to be the definition of "crofter" the operation of the Bill will be of a very restricted character, because I know that there are hundreds of families in Eastern Ross who will not come under its provisions, because they do not reside upon their allotments. Many of them live in the towns of Dingwall, Tain, Dornoch, Wick, Kirkwall, and others in towns and villages by the seashore in that neighbourhood. I think it would be well if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland would take this fact into consideration when the Bill gets into Committee. I think it is also fair that the House should know what is the opinion entertained with regard to this Bill outside the House. I have received letters from several of my own constituents, as well as from other constituencies, in which the writers express much dissatisfaction with the measure. One letter which I received this morning states that no Bill will be at all acceptable to the population of the Highlands which does not provide more arable land, and make some provision for settling the children of crofters on new holdings. Only this evening I have received a communication of a similar nature, in which the writer complains of the refusal of the Government to accept the recommendation of the Royal Commission to give more arable land. I must say it appears to me that this Bill is more of a landlord's Bill than it is a crofter's Bill. Moreover, the Bill will do positive injustice, because in the case of the numerous classes of holdings untouched by it, it will tend to establish the title of the landlords to land originally seized by violence. I have been much amused this evening in listening to the expression of opinion by hon. Gentlemen opposite and the suggestions they have made in regard to Highland land grievances. Hon. Members seem to desire that the Bill should do nothing more than put the crofters in the position they were in as regards the land, say, 80 years ago. They ask the Government to encourage fisheries, to put up telegraph lines, to establish steamers on the West Coast of Scotland, to assist emigration, and to do everything except what is wanted by the people themselves? Although the population of the Highlands to-day is much larger than it was 30 years ago, it must be remembered that the increased population is in the large towns and villages, where it has increased by natural causes; but in the country districts the population is much less than it was 30 years ago; and in but sadly too many places there is no population whatsoever. I do not think that any scheme of emigration will afford a remedy. I would ask how it is that Her Majesty's Government do not grant to the Highlands of Scotland an equal measure of justice to that which they have given to the tenants of Ireland? I have no doubt that if we had a band of 85 loyal and patriotic Gentlemen on this side of the House, equally determined to those who now sit below the Gangway opposite, we should get an equal measure of justice. I myself think that this Bill ought not to pass, and I have not the slightest doubt that it will not meet the requirements of the people of the Highlands, who have been taught to expect, and rightly expect, that a greater measure of justice would be dealt out to them. If that measure of justice is not dealt out to them there will doubtless be a much more extensive agrarian agitation than there has ever been yet, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer may have a second opportunity of assisting his right hon. Friend the Home Secretary to send another military expedition to Skye. Much more must be done than is likely to be done by this Bill. I was much struck by the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland in introducing the Bill last week, and especially with the sympathy he expressed for these poor people. That portion of his speech in which he dealt with deer forests was particularly noticeable; but there is not one word in the Bill of our intention to confine them to their present area, or to prevent them from being increased in the future. This is a very serious matter indeed, and one which ought to be pressed upon the Government when the Bill is in Committee. In conclusion, I should like to ask, who are these people the House is endeavouring to legislate for? The House seems to forget that they are the descendants of the men who helped this country to attain the proud position she now occupies—men who fought at Fontenoy; who followed the Duke of Wellington in all his campaigns; who helped Wolfe to win the heights of Abraham; and, in later times, formed that "thin red line" that won the battle of the Alma. If it were properly understood how much these men have done for this country I think that the Government would not hesitate to deal out to them a far greater measure of justice than is contained in this Bill. I will not detain the House any longer. I thank the House for having extended its kind indulgence to me, and I hope that when the Bill gets into Committee Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to accept a great number of Amendments which will make the measure more nearly meet the circumstances of the case.

Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON (Bute): I have carefully examined this Bill with every desire to find in it a satisfactory settlement of this question. When the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland spoke of the evils which now stand in the way of the proper administration of the law in Scotland, he alluded to them, and to the responsibility of the Government to provide a remedy, in terms which, I believe, very deeply impressed the House. The expectation which his speech gave rise to was that the Bill would be such a measure as would enable him to deal with important matters which he is unable to touch in the present state of the law; and it was naturally to be expected that he contemplated a measure which would restore the social organization of the disturbed districts in Scotland, and so amend the material condition of the people as to enable their grievances to disappear. Now, a careful consideration of the Bill does not satisfy me that that expectation was well-founded; and I am sorry to add that I greatly fear the Bill is likely to produce in the minds of those who are mainly affected by it a considerable misconception as to their own duties. The evils described by the Crofters' Commission were of a peculiar and grave kind. In one word, they were due to poverty caused by want of occupation. That is the evil, and it is because it is peculiar and local in its character that I imagine that the Legislature will be inclined to apply an exceptional remedy that might not be entirely justifiable on strictly *doctrinaire* principles. Yet I find that while the right hon. Gentleman opposite and the learned Lord Advocate have clutched at various recommendations of the Crofters' Commission in one direction, yet they have taken and are taking a very much more limited view of the situation than the Commissioners in other respects. The Commissioners represented the population of these districts as being dependent upon two industries—the cultivation of the soil and fishing—and there was one very significant statement of the Commissioners, which has been commented upon by my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), and that is that the fishing is followed with more productive results than the cultivation of the soil. Now, I find that the Bill proposed by Her Majesty's Government bears the title of a Crofters' Bill, and yet it is described within as being a Bill relating solely to land. We are now told by the Lord Advocate that, although the Bill is described as a Bill relating to land, provisions are to be inserted in it relating to the fisheries, and that the provisions in regard to the fisheries will involve pecuniary loans out of public moneys, the security for which was not disclosed in the statement made by my right hon. and learned Friend. Indeed, the statement of the Lord Advocate does not altogether fit in with the history of the country during the last 18 months with regard to this very matter. When the Lord Advocate attempts to justify the policy of the Government in abstaining from aiding tenants in stocking their farms, he justifies it purely on the principle of not making advances from the public purse. Now, the suggestions which the Commissioners put forward were for the improvement of the fisheries, the promotion of emigration, and they also had reference to the stocking of farms. I find, on looking back to the Bill proposed by the Lord Advocate last year, that, in Section 14, the right hon. and learned Gentleman actually inserted a provision for the advance of money for the stocking of land.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) (Clackmannan, &c.): These loans were to be advanced to the landlord on the security of the land.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON (Bute): No one ever suggested that any other security should be required. The statement now made is not that money should be advanced only on good security, but that no loans can be sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government involving the security of the State for purposes purely class and local. I cannot but think that the reason why this proposal has not found its way into the present Bill is that the Secretary for Scotland has not yet been able to settle his differences with the Treasury; and I am bound to say that the inadequacy of the view presented by the Government with regard to the matter is not satisfactorily excused by the explanations given. The assumption upon which the Bill proceeds is this—that these people are at present, or that they ought in future, to be made entirely cultivators of the land as farmers. That is far from being the fact at present; the fact is, they are not in the main, as far as their sources of living are concerned, farmers, but are really in the main, as far as the sources of living are concerned, engaged in another industry. I will go further. Take the main proposals contained in the Bill, and I maintain that it can be demonstrated that they do not tend in the direction of the removal of the principal evils described by the Commissioners. Take the case of the small crofters. Three things are to be done for them. In the first place, they are to have fixity of tenure and fair rent; in the second, compensation for improvements; and, in the third place, they have machinery provided for obtaining the enlargement of their crofts. They have legal machinery provided for this last object, but they have not practical opportunity. The reason why I say they have not opportunity is that they must already have a holding under £15 a-year rent before they can have the option of taking a larger piece of ground, and the condition is a mere illusion, because they have no money to provide the stock. As it is only right that a high authority should be given for such a statement, I will cite the authority of the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh), who addressed the House a short time ago, and who represents the crofting interest, as it is called, because

I find, in the Report of the Commission signed by the hon. Member, this statement—

> "It is recognized on all hands that the resources of the people are incommensurate in all conditions for stocking their crofts."

The result, therefore, if that be so, and if, by the want of money, they are precluded from taking advantage of the clauses for the extension of crofts, the benefits conferred by the Bill are only two—namely, fixity of tenure with fair rent and compensation. I do not entertain any strong objection, as a practical matter, to any of these provisions applied to the districts specified; but, at the same time, I should like to say that the conferring upon the crofters of fixity of tenure and fair rent is more of an empty compliment than anything else. It is giving them in theory what is actually enjoyed by the crofters at present. The Lord Advocate has admitted that they have fixity of tenure by custom if not by law, and that their rents at present are fair. He has told us that the Government are proceeding to establish this elaborate machinery of a Land Commission—to do what? To give the people the satisfaction of knowing, not merely that their rents are fair, but are deemed to be so by some impartial tribunal. That seems to me to be a novel and costly proceeding, and I think we should shrink from raising up this tribunal where it is unnecessary. But I go further. It is all very well to speak of fixity of tenure and fair rent; and I grant that if you have a community subject to frequent evictions, and a rack-rented community, they may receive benefit from the provisions of the Bill. But will any hon. Member, who reads the clause which describes fixity of tenure and compensation, say that they are applicable to the condition of the men who are living under the mild rule of most landlords in the Highlands? I think he will find that instead of the condition of the tenant being improved it will be made worse; and I will tell the House why. One of the statutory conditions you make under the Bill is that if a man is one term in arrear of rent he is subject to lose his holding. Can it be said, even on the other side of the House, that at present in Scotland the landlords turn out their tenants for missing one term's rent? Most certainly not. My objection to this clause being introduced into the Bill is that, in face of a system which, unexpressed in words, works very well in practice, it would be a mistake to introduce statutory regulations as to evictions, giving the landlords a broad hint that they ought to turn out their tenants who are even a term behind in their rents. I am bound to say that I think that this is not a substantial benefit conferred upon the crofters, and yet it is one of the two benefits conferred by the Bill, the other being the right to compensation for improvements. Even in regard to that, an hon. Member who is a supporter of Her Majesty's Government, speaking from below the Gangway, said that in the case of the crofters the compensation would vary so much that in some instances it might amount to sufficient to enable a dead tenant to be buried. It cannot be said that that is a very substantial addition to the advantages to be enjoyed by the tenants. At the same time, I have no jealousy of the principle of the Compensation Clauses, and I am glad that men who have expended money upon their holdings should be able to take it away with them when they leave. I think the Government will find it necessary to consider carefully the provisions which are made as to compensation, with reference particularly to the inquiry whether a low rent has not been paid in respect of the holding for which the claim for compensation is made. I come now to the benefits proposed to be conferred upon the smaller class of crofters—the cottars. As regards the cottars, I find they get nothing except the clause about improvements. The Commission, I think, on this point went further than the Government, because they are clear and emphatic in saying that one of the objects to be aimed at by the Legislature, and by the people themselves, was to do away with small holdings, because the life of a small holder was intolerable. Their recommendation was that holdings below £4 or £6 should be consolidated, in order that the cottar should not be exposed to the hard life which attends the possession of these very small patches of ground. The Commissioners say they look to fishing and emigration as affording the solution of the evils under which these people suffer; but the right hon. Gentleman, in this Bill, does not lift a finger in this direction. The Bill does worse. It gives fixity of tenure, and attempts to settle the people there on those inadequate holdings. That is directly in the teeth of the recommendations of the Commissioners, both in the spirit and in the letter. I cannot help thinking that what the Government propose is to defeat the object of the Commission, and stereotype and perpetuate one of the worst features of the evils of which we complain. I should like now to say a word in regard to the question of emigration. A Scotch county Member may be pardoned for saying, in order to prevent misunderstanding here and misrepresentation elsewhere, that he is not in favour of any compulsory scheme of emigration. The country would be all the better if as many of these Highlanders as possible stayed at home. They are a race of men imbued with principles that place them among the most valuable elements of the commonwealth; but I hope it will never go forth that a remedy like emigration is to be regarded with suspicion and hostility, and is only suggested with a view of inducing these people to leave the Highlands. The hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs (Mr. Ramsay) has in his Resolution carefully expressed that it is voluntary emigration he proposes. More than that, the hon. Member in his speech, as well as other hon. Members who followed, carefully pointed out that the facilities for emigration should be afforded, if such a scheme were instituted, quite as much for the purpose of pointing the way to the people as for actively promoting it. It is a great mistake to imagine that the Commissioners have proposed the advancing of public money upon insecure, or upon any, security for the purposes of emigration. What they did propose was that there should be a Government agency established to put the crofters in communication with those people in Canada or the States who are ready to receive them; but there were no proposals for public loans. I most thoroughly sympathize with what has been said as to the duty of the Government and the Legislature in speaking through an Act of Parliament, by way of direction as well as by way of compulsion, to the people of this country; and I do not envy the position of those who, dealing with a grave, social problem like this, either by their silence on the subject or by their language, attempt to discourage these people from availing themselves of one of the outlets for enterprize open to all British subjects. The right hon. Gentleman said that emigration was not an appointed curse for the poor. On the contrary, it should be regarded as a birthright of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects. We ought to endeavour to get rid of the idea, especially in those remote parts of the country, that when a man goes to the Colonies he expatriates himself and is dead to his country. The Commissioners have given one piece of information of which I will remind the House. They say, and I wish to call the attention of hon Gentleman below the Gangway to the passage, for it is significant—

> "The repugnance to emigration expressed by Highlanders is due chiefly to a fluctuation of opinion, and is not to be ascribed to any radical sentiment among the people. We are inclined to think that the land agitation which has prevailed has not been without influence in promoting this dislike to emigration."

There is an objection in some quarters to the removal from these poverty-stricken districts of persons who are at present on the electoral roll, and something may be due to that; but I am satisfied that if emigration did take place to any extent from the Highlands to the Colonies and the United States, the emigrants would take out with them a steady, settled feeling of loyalty to the established institutions of this country. I unfeignedly regret that this measure should be so defective, and I would have welcomed anything tending towards the removal of what is at present a grave, social danger to well-ordered society, and a scandal to the Legislature of this country. I must say that I think also that it would have been appropriate for a Government, containing the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and the present Lord Advocate, to help to do away with that state of administrative disorganization and social anarchy into which the country drifted during their last tenure of Office. I hope we may take the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland at his word that, in passing this Bill, he is prepared to relieve that state of society which is at present a reproach to the Scotch Law and the Government. I sincerely hope that such Amendments or extensions may be proposed as have been adumbrated in the speech of the Lord Advocate, and will give to the measure a completeness which it does not now possess. I hope that the law will be placed in such a position as to enable the right hon. and learned Gentleman to assume the responsibility of government in the West of Scotland, and to restore that spirit of loyal obedience to the law which is now in abeyance. It is not a characteristic of the Highland people to be lawless and disloyal. It is right that every effort should be made to remove the grievances which have led to the present state of matters; and my objections to the Bill are that I fear its provisions are less adequate than they might be to lead that noble people back to the fulfilment of their duty to their Queen and country.

Dr. R. McDONALD (Ross and Cromarty): At this late hour of the evening I will try to make my remarks as short as possible. In the first place, I am pleased to see that the Bill has been attacked on both sides of the House. Why is that? The reason is, that certain principles have been adopted, but those principles have not been carried out to their conclusion. I maintain that the Bill, unless it is greatly improved in Committee, is simply tinkering with the question; but I have no doubt, after what has taken place, that the Bill will be improved. Hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House have expressed much sorrow for the crofters and sympathy for them, and I hope that their sympathy will take a practical form when we come to debate the provisions of the Bill in Committee. It is unfortunate, however, in this case as in many others, that hon. Gentlemen think they know what is good for the crofters better than the crofters themselves. The first point—in fact, it is the kernel of the matter—on which I wish to offer any criticism is the arable land question. Without dealing with the question of arable land, the Bill is practically useless and futile, and I would do my best to throw it out to-morrow. I believe, however, we may be certain that in Committee this matter will be introduced into the Bill. If it is not, we shall have this subject coming up over and over again. As the hon. Member for Wick (Mr. J. M. Cameron) said, why should Scotland be treated in this manner? Why is it that we do not get better laws? It is because we are not banded together like the Irish Members. If we were, we should have the assistance, not only of hon. Members below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House, but of many hon. Members on this side, and we should then be able to put our case properly before the country. If, under such circumstances, we did not get what we want and what we expect, it would be our own fault. A second point which has not been attended to in the Bill is that of the increase of the crofters' lands. It is provided that when, for instance, you come to the boundary of Mr. Winan's forest, you are not to cross it. The crofters may be cleared away by wholesale off his land, but the evictor must not be touched, Suppose you have upon hill ground a large number of people. Why should not the whole of that hill ground be made available? If we can call upon one proprietor to give these people land at a reasonable rent, we have a perfect right to call upon another to do so. What is just to the one is also just to the other; and to say that when we are at the boundary of a certain property for the purpose of acting justly we are not to go beyond it, would never do at all. In many cases this would mean that while the land of the man who had crofters on his land would be available, the evictor would be left as he was before. Such a provision, I maintain, would make the Bill perfectly useless. The Bill proposes that large farms should be broken up for distribution to the crofters. But we are told that not only must the tenant give his consent, but the landlord also. I entirely demur to any stipulation of that kind. I say there is no reason why we should wait for the landlord's consent. If the tenant is willing to break up his farm, we should not ask for the landlord's consent, but should give the land to the people who require it on the same terms as neighbouring farms. I would not ask for the consent of the landlord in any case. I therefore hope that the Bill will be amended in this respect. Then there is another point. The late Lord Advocate appeared to argue that before land is given to a crofter, he should be called upon to show that he has sufficient capital to stock it. The right hon. and learned Gentleman would get very few Highlanders to agree with him on that point; and if it were to be accepted by the Government they might as well drop the Bill. They would get very few Highlanders, except landlords and their friends, to agree with them. Then as to the giving of assistance to the crofters in the way of procuring stock, as a matter of fact that was absolutely necessary. What would be the use of telling these people—"Here is a large piece of arable or pasture land for you, but we cannot give you anything to stock it with?" Why, should we not rather follow the precedent already set in the case of Ireland? Last year we allowed a sum of £5,000,000 to be borrowed in Ireland for the purpose of stocking and improving the farms of the tenants. This year the Government refuse to concede a similar boon to Scotland. They have offered Ireland £20,000,000 of money, and they have already given £5,000,000; and yet they refuse to give £500,000 to the crofters down in the North of Scotland. In the next place, the provision in the Bill in regard to the principle of valuation for improvements is altogether ridiculous. And now I come to one of the most important parts of the Bill, although hon. Members who do not know the Highlands as I do may probably not see the force of the objections I am about to raise. Clause 29 of the Bill, on page 10, gives the definitions, and this is the definition of a crofting parish—

> "Crofting parish means a parish in which there are at the commencement of this Act, or have been within 80 years prior thereto, holdings consisting of arable land, held with a right of pasturage in common with others, and in which there still are tenants of holdings from year to year, who habitually reside on their holdings, the annual rent of which respectively does not exceed thirty pounds in money, at the commencement of this Act."

Now, I say that a provision of this nature is entirely unnecessary, and in my constituency it will take from 1,000 to 2,000 crofters out of the category altogether. The Bill says—

> "In which there are at the commencement o this Act, or have been within 80 years prior thereto, holdings consisting of arable land, held with a right of pasturage in common with others, and in which there still are tenants of holdings from year to year."

Why, I would ask, is there to be a limit of 80 years in the one case and not in the other? Before I bring my remarks to a close, there are one or two observations which I would like to make upon the speeches of hon. Members who have preceded me. I am glad to see the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs (Mr. Ramsay) in his place. The hon. Member made a very remarkable speech upon the Bill; but his experience is no doubt unique. The hon. Member laid great stress on emigration, and the hon. Member has also taken great interest in the education of the Scotch people. The hon. Member appeared to be somewhat angry for being interrupted when stating that his tenants left because they were better educated than others, and he told the House that his tenants were so well educated that they left in a very few years. Now, it would be very difficult to find from 400 to 500 people so highly educated that they would be ready to emigrate in 10 days. Yet in this case they were put on steamers one week after the other from the hon. Member's estate.

MR. RAMSAY (Falkirk, &c.): Never.

DR. R. McDONALD: Will the hon. Member say that 400 people did not leave his estate within a fortnight?

MR. RAMSAY: I do say so.

DR. R. McDONALD: Well, I am wrong, and I have been misinformed. Does the hon. Member deny that when these people were educated for eviction, and when some of his people were clearing the houses fire was set to one, and an old woman who inhabited it was pulled out through the roof?

MR. RAMSAY: I never heard of such a thing.

DR. R. McDONALD: I will give the name, The old woman was the mother of Nial a Bhuachaile Mhor. There is another point which has been made a great deal of on the other side of the House, and by some hon. Gentlemen here, and that is the increase in the population of the Highlands and Islands. But we say that if the population of the Highlands and Islands has increased, and if with a smaller population 30 or 50 years ago they had all the land for their own use, what is to become of them now, when a great portion of their holdings has been taken away from them for sheep walks, deer forests, and so on? Therefore, that argument goes for nothing at all. I do not know that there are any other points involved in the Bill which it is necessary that I should allude to. There are a great many which deserve notice, but as the hour is late, I will say no more. The Lord Advocate said that this is not a Bill for the punishment of the landlords. That is no doubt the case, and certainly that is not the intention of the Bill; but, on the other hand, we know that it does punish the landlords, and I hope that before it goes through the Committee it will punish them yet more. Still, that is no reason why we should not do justice, and consider the Bill with perfect fairness.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I will not detain the House for more than a few minutes. The question has already been discussed at such great length that all its bearings are, I think, fairly before the House. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that we are entering on a new legislative career in Scotland. We have never yet had fixity of tenure, nor fair rent, nor compensation, in the way in which they are proposed to be given by this Bill; and although, like my right hon. and learned Friend below me the late Lord Advocate, I am willing to make this an exceptional case, still I think we ought not, nor can we, conceal from ourselves the fact that no movement of late years has gone forward with greater rapidity than Home Rule in Scotland, which, as regards the question of land, so closely resembles the same movement in Ireland It has made more progress in two years than the Irish Question has made in the present century; and it has made that progress in a great measure from a feeling that the agitation has been on behalf of people struggling, amid great privations, to earn an honest livelihood. I am sure that all Scotchmen heartily reciprocate the wish expressed by the Government to assist the crofters in their privations; and I had hoped that the Government would have been able to have proceeded more than they have done on the lines of the Report of the Royal Commission, and to have conceded more of the recommendations contained in that Report. We know that the Royal Commission entered upon its inquiry with a disposition on the part of every Member of it to make a full and careful investigation into the facts of the case, and that they have presented a lengthy Report which has been prepared with great care. The recommendations of the Commissioners are all in one direction, and yet the Government have devoted their attention to one point only out of the six dealt with by the Commission, and that the land. I trust that the Bill will be amended in Committee, and amended in the right direction, by giving increased facilities in the matter of fisheries and telegraphic and postal communications. These, we know, are matters of great importance to the people living almost on the outside of Scotland. There are other matters to which I should like to draw the attention of the Government. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate has stated to-night that there is no intention on the part of the Government to encourage subdivision. Now, I should like to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, with regard to the security of tenure section in reference to the sub-division of holdings, whether the land is to be considered as the personal property of the crofter, or as the fee simple? And to whom does the holding go on the death of the crofter? I am afraid that the clause, as it is now drawn, will involve a considerable amount of difficulty, which is not likely to be settled by the measure itself. I would further ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman why he has fixed the limit of the crofter holding at £30? I should have thought that £15 would have been quite ample. I hold a letter in my hand from a friend in the Highlands, who informs me that he has 359 crofters on his estate, none of whom has a holding of more than £10 value, and that out of them 132 cottars have paid their rent direct to him as landlord. Now, by the Bill, the very fact that they pay rent to the landlord would make them crofters; and if they are crofters for the purposes of this Act, they will be entitled to fixity of tenure, fair rent, and to compensation. How is this question to be considered and dealt with? If a crofter has 30 acres, it would be impossible for him to cultivate them without sub-dividing, unless he called in his friends to help him, or received assistance in some other way. No one man can cultivate that amount of land in a way that would enable him to pay wages; and if the crofter has not money enough to pay wages for cultivation, the chances are that such holdings as 30 acres would be sub-divided. Therefore, I say that £30 is too high for a holding, and the limit, in my opinion, should be £15. I would also alter the definition of the word "cottar" as contained in the Bill, so as to make it more simple and more easily understood. We cannot forget how the Highlanders have distinguished themselves in every part of the world; and those who have emigrated have always set a good example, which their countrymen at home ought to follow. As long ago as 1733 some of them established themselves in Georgia, and at a very early period a large body of Highlanders settled in Virginia. Anyone who has travelled in America will remember the Scotch Colonists in North Carolina, and also in Canada. At this late hour of the evening I will not trouble the House at greater length. I will only express a hope that, although the Bill is of an exceptional character, it will receive a fair trial.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): I earnestly hope that the House will now proceed to give the Bill a second reading. I have listened, of course, with great attention and interest to the speeches which have been made in the course of the debate, and I think that I had begun to observe a slight tendency towards repetition of argument. The Bill has been attacked from various quarters, and with that class of charges and criticisms which generally give the advocates and promoters of a Bill considerable hopes of its becoming law on account of the firm belief they have in the doctrine of resulting causes. The Bill, in the course of the discussion, has been knocked down first on one side and then knocked up again on another; and while, perhaps, it has had no thorough or hearty friend, with the exception of my right hon. and learnd Friend who sits by my side, I will venture to say that it has hardly had two consistent enemies. Upon the whole, the speech which interested me most was that of my hon. Friend the Member for the Falkirk Burghs (Mr. Ramsay), who began the debate, because my hon. Friend went at the Bill tooth and nail, and I thoroughly understood what he meant. My hon. Friend said that he wants to destroy the landlords and divide their property; but I may say that I have the strongest personal reasons for not taking that course, and I do not think that it is any way a fair description of the Bill. Then my hon. Friend referred to the alleged difference of tenure in historical days in the Highlands. I may say that I did not open the Bill on that; but what I referred to was the changed circumstances of the Highlands, as to which there is no dispute whatever. I began by referring to the fact that there are 2,000,000 acres of land not grazed on now, because they have been converted into deer forests, and, in addition, enormous tracts of country have been given up to shootings which were formerly used as grazing grounds. I am sure that my hon. Friend the Member for the Falkirk Burghs is not aware of the enormous rental of these shootings and deer forests. It is only 16 years ago that the rental of the shooting of Scotland was said to amount to £73,000 a-year. My impression is that there is some mistake in that calculation, and I would rather take a later date. In the year 1877 the rental of the shootings and deer forests in Scotland was £233,000. Within the last eight years that has increased steadily and rapidly to £363,000 a-year. That £363,000 a-year is an addition to the rent in the pockets of the landlords since the days when the population of the Highlands was enumerated in those localities, and all that rent represents, to a great extent, a dead loss to the population. It was that fact to which I referred, and not to any question of difference of tenure, when I alluded to that portion of theHighlands with which the Bill deals as exceptional.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): Does the right hon. Gentleman's calculation include the proportion of the shootings held by the proprietors?

MR. TREVELYAN: It does not; but, according to the best information I have been able to obtain, the value of the shootings in the hands of proprietors is about one-fifth of what has been let. That is what has been given to me by the Board of Supervision. Well, my hon. Friend the Member for the Falkirk Burghs talks about the extreme injustice to the landlords of our clause with regard to compensation for improvements. He says—"Can anything be more contrary to justice and common sense than giving a man compensation for a house which he has built, and which, perhaps, the owner would not care to have?" I say, what could be more contrary to justice and common sense than pulling down a house which a man has built at his own expense, and with his own labour, without his landlord having forbidden him to do so, and without giving him 1*d.* of compensation? It has been frequently the case in making clearances for deer forests, and still more frequently in making clearances for sheep walks, that a man who has built a house and cultivated the ground round him, has had to see that ground laid waste and his house pulled down without 1*d.* of compensation for his expenditure or labour. The hon. Member for Wigtonshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell) followed with a speech in which he set on foot a class of criticism that has been mainly followed from the opposite Benches. The hon. Member said the Commissioners had made five or six different recommendations with regard to the measures that ought to be taken in dealing with the crofter districts, and that of these we had taken only one—the recommendation which referred to the land. Now, Sir, in the first place, I maintain that that was the recommendation of recommendations. It was —and I fancy that the hon. Member for Wigtonshire will not deny it—in reference to the land that the agitation begun, which caused the Commission to be sent to the Highlands. What are the words of the Commissioners? They say—

> "The principal matter of dissatisfaction in connection with the occupancy of land urged on our notice in almost every district with the utmost vehemence and with the greatest consensus of authority, is the restriction in the area of holdings."

That is the main question. That is the question that the crofters have in mind. There their discontent began, and until that grievance is remedied their discontent will not cease. The hon. Member went on to read out certain other recommendations, and said that besides the land there was all that related to fisheries and communications. Well, Sir, it is very hard that after making a speech of considerable length in the House of Commons, one should then have that speech treated by an hon. Member as if one had never spoken a single syllable of it. I described to the House on the first reading of the Bill, at considerable length, what had been done by the two late Governments with regard to carrying out the recommendations of the Commission with reference to the steam communications with the Highlands; and, much as I showed had been done, I am glad to say, that, ever since that speech, I hope that a still greater advance has been made, and that the steamers which the Post Office had promised to run from Oban will now go on to the important fishing port of Loch Maddy. I described also what class of assistance should be given to fisheries, which I should be glad to hear discussed in this House. The Government would be inclined to lend towards it a favourable ear. It was discussed by the hon. Member for Wigtonshire, and he asked why I had been silent on this question. The fact is, that the question is one upon which I had spoken for 10 minutes, and upon which I had quoted the very great success which had attended this class of assistance in the two great funds connected with Ireland. But I must remind the hon. Member and other hon. Gentlemen opposite—who are for ever calling for large sums from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and who are always speaking of him in terms which would make one imagine that he was a miser keeping his own money instead of a faithful guardian of the taxes paid by the hard working, hard-living people of this country—I must remind these hon. Members that in Ireland these fisheries are assisted, not from the general taxes, but from two special funds which were raised by the friends of Ireland, both Irishmen and others, in previous periods of scarcity, and which now are used for assisting Irish fishermen. The hon. Member says that another recommendation of the Commissioners was education, and that we have done nothing for it. It is really very unfortunate that hon. Members should make speeches in this House without making the most elementary or superficial inquiry as to the facts which have been laid before the House. I do not say that what this Government have done, or, still more, what the late Government have done, meets everything that the Highlands could demand; but I say that it very fairly meets the demands of the Commissioners. Three very considerable advantages have been given to the school boards and schools of the Highlands and Western Islands since the Report of the Commission, the details of which I have already stated twice to the

House, and I will not go over them again; but I will say that one has been taken advantage of by the schools in these very districts to the extent of a good many hundreds a-year. Then the hon. Member says that we have done nothing for justice. Well, Sir, what is this recommendation about justice when you come really to read the Report? This recommendation consists of two parts. In the first place, the Commissioners recommend that Procurators Fiscal and Sheriff Clerks should not be allowed to hold agencies or clerkships in banks. I am not going to argue against that recommendation. It is not a matter with which we would be inclined to deal by legislation, because we might bring about very great inconvenience in certain districts. But my right hon. and learned Friend (the Lord Advocate) is carefully attending to it in administration, so that when a post falls vacant he tries to exact an undertaking from the new legal officer that he will not engage in any business outside his own profession. The other recommendation with regard to justice is a sort of hint that we are of opinion that there might possibly be in some cases an unconscious admission of external influence on the part of the Sheriff, and in other cases the existence of such influence might be suspected where the Sheriff has to get a house from the landlord. Therefore, the Commissioners urged that in some cases the Sheriff should have an official residence. These are the recommendations of the Commissioners with regard to justice. Can anyone pretend to say that they can be named on the same day as the recommendations of the Commission with regard to the land? As to emigration, I will make some remarks upon it further on. But what I do say is, that with regard to all the other recommendations of the Commissioners, which are small ones, we have dealt adequately with them in proportion to their size, and we have determined not to touch the question of the land unless we could deal quite adequately with that likewise. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate and the hon. and learned Gentleman the late Solicitor General have criticized our Bill in a manner which, on the whole, has, I confess, a little disappointed me. I expected to get a good bit of enlightenment from these two Gentlemen. They have had the administration and legislation of Scotland in their hands for a period, at any rate, of seven or eight months, and during that time they must have had their attention drawn to this crofter question. But I defy anyone who heard the speeches of these two Gentlemen to say what their own views are with regard to this question. They talked of the inadequacy of the Bill; but they did not give a single end of a clue as to what the provisions should be which they thought would remove the evil defects of which they complained, and fill up the vacuum in the Bill. The late Lord Advocate said the Government ignored the Report of the Royal Commission with respect to the land. There I must say I take issue most directly with the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The Government took the cardinal recommendation of the Commission. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says we hung up all the recommendations which would involve the expenditure of public money; that we rejected those, and only took the others which would cost nothing. Now, the cardinal recommendation of the Commission was the giving of grazing land to the crofter. ["No, no!" *and cries of* "Arable land!"] Well, grazing or arable land. The Government accepted that recommendation, as far as grazing land is concerned; and in Committee, if an Amendment is moved, we shall be prepared to argue the question as to arable land. Then, I would ask, is it wise, after I had carefully explained the provisions for guarding the interests both of the crofters and landlords, for the two Law Officers of the late Government—a Conservative Government—to come down to this House and speak of our Bill as totally inadequate, and ask what we have done for the cottar, and what for the small farmer? What would they have done? Would they have given him a farm? [MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD dissented.] I took down the words of the right hon. and learned Gentlemen, and he said—"What does this Bill consist of? It does nothing for the cottar." I say everything that is possible is done for the cottar that can be done, and Clause 9 gives him compensation for improvements.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I think the right hon Gentleman misunderstood what I said. I said that the provisions of the Bill would not enable the cottar and small crofter to attain any better position in life than he occupies at present. I say so still.

Mr. TREVELYAN: That is exactly what I said. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says that the provisions of the Bill do nothing for the cottar. I should like to know what the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have done for the cottar? There is only one thing you could do for the cottar on the lines of this Bill, and that is to migrate him and give him a farm on somebody else's land, where he has not a farm at present. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman means that, I have no doubt he will find some hon. Members in this House who will support him. What else he means I have not the slightest idea. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says there is nothing in the Bill about emigration. That I entirely allow. After very careful consideration, we have determined not to make any proposals about emigration, and there is one very strong reason for this. The Bill is a very special Bill, referring to a very special population, living in a very special district, under very special circumstances. But congestion and want of work are not special evils confined to a special population. They pervade in a greater or less degree almost the whole of the country, taking England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and we are certainly unwilling to adopt for this small part of the community, a remedy which, if adopted for one part, may be claimed to be spread over the whole. This is a Crofters' Bill, and it applies crofter remedies to crofter evils. Emigration is not specially a crofter remedy. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said he was glad to hear my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella), speaking so eloquently of the advantages of emigration, and that he hoped his words would reach the Western Highlands. I hope they will reach the Western Highlands. Wise and eloquent words they were. No one has ever spoken in any Legislative Assembly as frequently in favour of emigration as I have been unfortunate enough to do in this House; but I can assure the right hon. and learned Gentleman that my experience of coupling Emigration Clauses with a Land Bill is a very unhappy experience indeed. If we are to set up a public system of emigration—I am not at this moment talking of emigrating the people at the public expense—if we are to set up a public machinery of emigration, I think it is unwise to do it at a time when there is something very like an agrarian agitation going on in the districts to which you would apply this machinery. So far from my right hon. Friend and myself commending emigration under these circumstances to the Highland population, I think, from experience, that there is nothing which would tend so much to make emigration unpopular. That, at least, is my experience in dealing with circumstances which strongly resemble those of the Western Highlands. Hon. Gentlemen who have asked for public money to carry on emigration must remember that when they quote Irish precedent, they are quoting what is no precedent at all. Whence did the Irish emigration money come. It came out of a special Irish fund if ever there was one—the Irish Church Surplus, or what was called, at any rate, the Irish Church Surplus. We have no Scottish Church Surplus. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman is willing to draw upon the unexhausted teinds, well and good. I think that might be done by a Gentleman who had the interests of the Church at heart. To ask us to begin the very serious step of applying the public money for the purpose of emigration in the Highlands, is to ask us something, in the present state of the public finances, which cannot possibly be conceded. The right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke very seriously of the fact of the rents not being paid in Skye and the neighbouring Islands. I do not know whether he proposed that a remedy should be applied before we proceeded with this Bill.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The right hon. Gentleman has quite misunderstood me. What I said was that in several cases where landlords had given extensions of grazing land and crofts to their tenants rents had not been paid.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I understood my right hon. and learned Friend in that part of his speech to have given a more general application. However, I am willing to meet him there. Unfortunately, this state of things in some districts, under the general law, or want of law which exists, has not improved during the three or four weeks we have been in Office; and this Bill is to enable the Government, on the one hand, to approach this question of non-payment of rents in the Highlands with a clear conscience and with a feeling that it has Parliament behind it, and that it has done everything possible in its power to remedy the legitimate grievances of the Highlanders; and, on the other hand, to make all honest men among the crofters feel that they will be ungrateful towards the country in resisting the payment of their civil obligations. That is one of the main reasons why we wish to pass this Bill. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, in a very eloquent peroration, said he trusted the people of the Highlands would cultivate a spirit of manly pluck and energy, and face the world like other people. Now, I venture to say that the worst way of cultivating a spirit of pluck and energy is to call for public money on every occasion. We want the Highland crofters to face the world like other people; but how is it that other people in the country face the world? It is by working with their own capital and with their own right arms, and by not in any way depending on public money, except that which they and their neighbours paid out of the rates, and that is the principle which Her Majesty's Government wish to hold to under this Bill as applied to the Highlands of Scotland. The hon. Member for Bute (Mr. J. Robertson) says, that I desire to remove all the grievances of the Highlands. I do not propose any such thing. I propose to remedy those grievances which are removable by legislation. Those grievances are, before anything, want of fixity of tenure of land; and, next, the uncertainty of the rent of farms—and the hon. Gentleman must remember that the farms we are dealing with are exactly of the same character as the Irish farms about which we have already legislated—farms where the landlord does nothing, and the tenant does everything. The third grievance is that the tenant, upon leaving his holding, is not able to get compensation for his improvements; and the fourth, the want of more land. Well, Sir, on one point this debate, which has been in some respects of great length, has thrown a great deal of light. It has shown clearly to me that no one suggests anything that resembles the proposal to give more land to the crofter. There is no one who will propose to do so by means of the rates; I think the argument used about the poverty of these overburdened districts has really convinced hon. Members that this is impossible. But something has been said about lending money to the crofters out of the Exchequer. Now, Sir, a population exactly resembling that of the crofters had exactly the same offers put before it, and those offers were three or four times increased; and what was the result? It would appear a handsome proposal—that they should pay an annuity of £5 per annum for every £100 advanced for a period of 35 years for two-thirds the price of their holdings. That was offered to the tenants of Ireland, a class of men resembling the crofters in every respect; yet during the last 16 years only 870 tenants out of 500,000 accepted those terms. Then higher terms were offered—namely, three-fourths of the price, and some 430 more tenants accepted that offer; that is to say, that out of 500,000 something like 1,000 tenants have accepted these large offers in the course of 15 years. Since then I have brought in a Bill proposing to lend the whole purchase-money, which would be repayable in the comparatively short time of 35 years, and that Bill was considered so utterly inadequate to meet the wants of the small farmers that it was actually scouted from all sides, both by landlords and tenants, and although favourably received it never got beyond the second reading. Finally, last year, the late Government brought in a Bill in which was a provision that the whole of the purchase-money, on certain conditions, might be advanced at 3¼ per cent interest, the annuity extending to 45 years; and although I have not figures showing the result of the Act, I believe that very little has been taken up under it. The deduction I make from this is that these small tenants do not want to borrow money in order to buy their holdings—that it is an operation too large for them; and I can conceive that in many cases the operation is one which would be too hazardous for the State. I may describe two of the most flourishing cases in the Highlands—one crofter, with a rent of £18, manages to keep six cows and their calves, and to grow potatoes and oats; and another, with a rent of £12 7*s.* 2*d.*, thrives, and is very happy and successful, with four cows, and a horse and sheep besides. These are exactly the sort of crofts which the Highlanders had in the old days; they are the sort of crofts we wish them to have, by the only means by which it is possible to give them. We think in this respect our proposal is in harmony with the very key note of the recommendations of the Commissioners; and while admitting that there may be defects in the Bill, and that there are many hon. Gentlemen who will be able to help us in removing those defects in Committee, we sincerely commend it not only to the favour, but to the speedy sanction, of the House.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): Sir, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has criticized the conduct of my two right hon. and learned Friends (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald and Mr. Robertson) for not having, in the course of their able speeches, given him any assistance—any constructive assistance —in dealing with this very difficult matter. But I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that it is not our business at this time, on the second reading of his Bill, to frame constructive proposals. Had we remained in Office, no doubt my right hon. and learned Friend the late Lord Advocate would have laid before the House our method of dealing with this very difficult question; and when we get into Committee, I have no doubt that he will give his best assistance to convert this strange measure into a practical and useful Bill. Sir, it appears to me that every Liberal Ministry is signalized by some new and extraordinary experiment in land legislation. I do not know that the experiments that have before been made by Liberal Governments have met with such a measure of success as to induce the Liberal Party to try their hand at it again; but, undaunted by the total failure of the Land Act of 1870, by the almost total failure of the Land Act of 1881, Her Majesty's Advisers have laid upon the Table of the House a Bill which, as a legislative experiment, exceeds even its two predecessors in the novelty and eccentricity of its proposals. Now, Sir, I observe that the right hon. Gentleman has studied the history of this question since he last addressed the House upon the subject; for when he introduced this measure to the House, he held the erroneous and utterly unfounded theory that the crofter in the Highlands had some kind of prescriptive and hereditary right to fixity of tenure. I understand him to have abandoned that theory. The right hon. Gentleman — whose best work has been historical work—has doubtless given his mind to this subject, and has come to the same conclusion that every impartial investigator of the subject must come to—the conclusion of the Highland Commission, the conclusion arrived at by every man who has studied this question, without having made up his mind beforehand—that the condition of the crofter in the Highlands before the beginning of this century was one not only of greater misery but also of greater dependence than it has ever been since. That is the conclusion I have come to, and I understand that I am now supported in it by the right hon. Gentleman himself. I am aware that it is a most fashionable doctrine to support in this House—to say that the Highlands of Scotland have not benefited by the clearances that were the consequence of the introduction of sheep farming in those districts. I am far from denying that in some cases those clearances were conducted rashly and harshly. I am far from denying that in certain cases—perhaps many cases—they have not fulfilled all the expectations of those by whom they were conducted. But I assert that the landlords who carried out those clearances were influenced as much or more by the desire to benefit their tenants as by the desire of personal gain. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentleman smile at that; but let me inform them, and let them take the information to heart, that in the greatest clearances—the Duke of Sutherland's clearances—which have probably produced more comment than any others, the owner of the land was obliged to support his tenantry year after year by the importation of meal—that the tenantry had to be protected from chronic want and intermittent starvation, and that after the clearances were made on that estate, for upwards of 20 years more than the whole of the rents were expended upon improvements undertaken for the benefit of the people concerned. ["No, no!"] That is so; and I go further, and I say that if, in all cases, these clearances have not met with the success anticipated, that is not the fault of those who carried them out. Let it be remembered that these people were living in the middle of Sutherlandshire, in a condition in which under no circumstances could they become prosperous, or in which they could ever rise above that melancholy condition which I have described as one of want varied by starvation. They were removed to the coast, where it was expected they would engage in fishing, and where there was at that time the great kelp industry, which, while it lasted, afforded them an ample livelihood. I do not say this in order to revive old controversies; but let it be remembered for the sake of those who, for the benefit of the Highlands, carried out these clearances, and who are now the objects of bitter and severe criticism. They acted according to the best lights of their time; they acted in obedience to all the best political theories of their generation; and we, who are certainly not acting according to the best of our lights, can we be sure that when the next age looks back on our handiwork—upon the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman opposite—they may not pass an equally severe and much more justifiable criticism upon the new system of land tenure introduced by Liberal Governments during the last quarter of the 19th century into the Highlands of Scotland? The right hon. Gentleman, who I understand has abandoned his historical argument, now bases his legislation upon the sporting argument. He says, as I understand his speech—and he can correct me if I am wrong—that the sporting rents have increased so extravagantly in the last 30 years, and that a country so much given up to sport is so exceptionally situated, that it is not unfair to introduce into that country exceptional legislation.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): That is not exactly what I said. I am bound to say that the story is rather a long one. In that part of my speech which related to deer forests, I stated to the House, at length, that where sheep farms formerly existed deer forests were now to be found. I quite allow that the right hon. Gentleman is correct as far as he goes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman admits that the clearances were first made not in the interest of sporting, but in the interest of sheep farming; but he appears to me to think that great damage was done to the Highlands by the introduction of deer. He says that the rents have greatly increased during the last 30 years. I am not prepared to deny it; but has the right hon. Gentleman the slightest idea of the expenditure made in the Highlands on account of deer forests during the last 30 years? I believe that the House will be as startled as I was myself when I realized the extraordinary sum to which that expenditure amounts. I have not been able to get a Return as yet for the whole of the forests of Scotland, but I have for a part of them; and I believe the House will be astonished to hear that the expenditure during the last 30 years on account of 47 deer forests has amounted to very nearly £2,000,000.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): Do you mean the purchase?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Not for purchase, but expenditure on roads, houses, &c.; and the whole of that money has gone, directly or indirectly, to the benefit of the Highland population. Not only do deer forests employ a larger number of persons than sheep farms—["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen say "No!" I do not wish to detain the House at great length at this hour; but as my statement is contradicted, I must remind the right hon. Gentleman of the conclusion come to by a Committee and by a Commission of this House.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire): It was a Committee of owners and landlords of deer forests. I gave evidence on the subject of deer forests before the Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Was not the hon. Member a Member of that Commission?

MR. J. W. BARCLAY: No; I was a witness before it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no ground for believing that the Committee was in any way a partial one. They reported that the evidence submitted to them did not bear out the allegation that deer forests tended to the depopulation of the country; and the Crofter Commissioners, as I may remind the right hon. Gentleman, and as he is perfectly aware, reported that in the course of their investigations they had come across but one case of eviction for the purpose of making a deer forest. Well, Sir, I revert to the argument interrupted by the hon. Gentleman opposite. I say, not only is it true that deer forests employ a larger number of persons, better housed and better fed, than sheep farms do, but that they bring to the country a sum of money the magnitude of which can be conjectured from the figures which I have had the honour to lay before the House. Now, the two proposals which Her Majesty's Government have in view are—in the first place, fixity of tenure; and, in the second place, expansion of holdings. It may be asked, what is to be gained by granting fixity of tenure? In regard to a country rack-rented and where evictions were common, I could understand the Government coming forward and saying, for the purpose of remedying this—"Let us bring in a Bill, and if it does interfere with the rights of property, it is rendered necessary by the abuse of those rights by the proprietors." But, Sir, no such allegation has been made with reference to the Highlands of Scotland. The Commission distinctly reported that rents were not too high, that arbitrary evictions were not common, and that the relations which obtained between the landlords and tenants were not regulated merely by justice, but also by generosity. If that is so—and it is the verdict of the Commission—what benefit will you confer on these people by giving fixity of tenure and fair rents? But what will you give them by the second extraordinary proposal, according to which not only is the State to fix the rent for the landlords, but also to decide what land they shall allow to particular tenants, and on what terms? A more extraordinary proposal has never been made to this House with regard to land. In the first place, when I consider what benefits are to be given to the tenants, I am met with this—that pasture is to be given as common pasture. I believe that the system of common pasture is not only antiquated, belonging to a bygone scheme of agriculture, but that it is one which, under no circumstances, can tend to the development of the comfort of the people. Let anyone look at the note to the Report of the Commission made by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, once a Member of this House, a good landlord, and a good Liberal. If they do so, they will see that Sir Kenneth Mackenzie points out that wherever the faults of the Highland system are found at their worst, there you will find the system of common cultivation—an antiquated system, and one which has been abandoned in every European country except Russia. This system you want to re-introduce into the Highlands of Scotland, and to stereotype for all time. Now, Sir, the real question is not as to how the crofter is to be protected from eviction, from which he does not suffer, nor is it as to how his rent, which up to the present time has been moderate, is to be regulated. What we have to try to find out is, how the material well-being of the poorer crofter can be increased. It cannot by any possibility be increased by the abstract manipulation of the Land Laws so much in favour with hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. It will be admitted that by spade cultivation no crofter in the Western Highlands can live. They have to contend with an inclement sky and a thankless soil, and no arrangement of rent or tenure will make it profitable for a man to live there in comfort, perhaps not to live at all, on the produce of spade labour. The only form of cultivation which can by any possibilty succeed there is the pastoral, and you cannot succeed in that without capital. Is it pretended that the poor crofter, a description of whose miseries has so moved us to-night, can supply the capital? Why, Sir, they have not capital for their present holdings, how much less for those it is proposed to confer on them. If, then, spade labour is rendered impossible by the climate in these districts, pastoral cultivation is rendered impossible by the absence of capital. Well, Sir, the only other industries in the Highlands are fishing and day labour. On the subject of fishing I say nothing, because Her Majesty's Government have just startled us by the announcement that they mean to introduce into this Bill a clause which we have not yet seen, and one which, I understand, provides the power of borrowing public money for fishing purposes. I leave that question alone; but how about wages, which are the last remaining resource of the people? Why, Sir, the whole tenour of your legislation, the end for which all your proceedings are contrived, is to drive out from the Highlands the class who spend most in wages. I have told you what the owners of deer forests have spent on them. Deer forests represent only a small part of that vast sum of money which is brought into the Highlands by men who have drawn their wealth—not from the oppressed crofters, but from Southern sources—a small part of that wealth which has for the last 20 years poured into the Highlands. It is not one or two landlords, it is many landlords in the Highlands who, year after year, have spent on the improvement of their Highland property more than the whole of the gross rental of their property. There have been such fools in the past; but do you think that when you have passed legislation of this kind, or even after you have threatened legislation of the kind, you will find many such fools in future? I tell Her Majesty's Government, and I tell the House, that the legislation which they have initiated and which may pass into law this Session, will, whatever else it may do, undoubtedly dry up every source of prosperity derived from the security of capital. From this time forward money which has been poured out like water on these barren wastes, will be poured out no more, and the very spring from which it came will be dried up. I hope the House will excuse me for going on a few moments longer; but I feel that there is one question which may be asked, and which on the face of it is so plausible that it demands an answer. If the principles contained in this Bill are so dangerous, if the Bill itself is not founded on any accurate knowledge of the previous history of the Highlands, if it is still less founded on any accurate information as to the present necessities of the Highlands, if it does so much that ought not to be done, and leaves undone so much that it ought to do, it may be asked how it is that I or some of my hon. Friends have not felt it to be our duty to put down Amendments to the Motion for the second reading? Sir, I feel that question is so natural that it demands an answer. My answer is this. During the last five years—because, before the year 1880, nothing was known of this agitation—Highland society has been dissolving itself into its constituent elements. Five years ago, it would have been true to say that there did not exist within the British Isles a more loyal or a more law-abiding population than that of Scotland. I doubt whether in any part of Ireland at this moment you will meet with more lawlessness, although you may meet with more violence, than that which now prevails on some parts of the Western Coast of Scotland. Society, as I said, is crumbling away. Under the reign of the right hon. Gentleman, formerly Home Secretary, who now so carefully watches over the purse-strings of the country, and is so anxious that not a single 6*d*. shall go to benefit the population to which he has been the means of doing the most injury—under his reign things have come to such a pass that nothing but the most courageous exercise of the Executive forces of the country can possibly restore even the elements of social order without which permanent prosperity cannot be re-introduced into these districts. I recognize with very little satisfaction, but I do recognize, that after the Resolution passed by this House, and after the pledges given, not by one Government alone, but by successive Governments, some legislation is imperatively required before this or any other Administration will feel that they have behind them that moral force without which it is difficult for those who control the Executive power of the country to use it with full effect, and therefore, Sir, I cannot take upon myself the heavy responsibility of saying that there should be no legislation on this subject. In refraining from moving an Amendment to the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, I desire it to be understood that I only intend to give my assent to the proposition that some Bill dealing with the subject is necessary in view of the present condition of the people in the Highlands. I give that assent with grave misgivings, and I shall do my best in Committee to remove from the Bill as much as may be of that evil which I see in it, but which I fear to be ingrained in the very fabric and substance of the measure which the right hon. Gentleman has this evening introduced to the notice of the House.

Mr. RAMSAY (Falkirk, &c.): Sir, I rise for the purpose of asking the leave of the House to withdraw the Amendment which stands in my name, and, at the same time, to thank the House for the patience with which they have listened to the discusion upon it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the better regulation of Railway and Canal Traffic; and for other purposes."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Debate arising.

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

APPOINTMENT OF MAGISTRATES.

Address for—

"Return of the Names of all the County and Borough Magistrates in Ireland appointed during the tenure of office of the late Government, with the Name of the County or Borough to which each Magistrate has been appointed."—(*Mr. James O'Brien.*)

SOLICITORS' ANNUAL CERTIFICATE DUTY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. O'Hea, Bill to repeal the Solicitors' Annual Certificate Duty, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and Mr. Sexton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 133.]

HYDE PARK CORNER (NEW STREETS) BILL.

Select Committee to consist of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than three clear days before the sitting of the Committee be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions.

Ordered, That that the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum of the Committee.—(*Mr. Leveson Gower.*)

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 9th March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) (28).
Second Reading — Arbitration (17); Justices' Jurisdiction (18); Law of Evidence Amendment (19).
Third Reading — Drill Grounds* (24), and *passed.*

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*The Earl of Elgin.*)

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

The Earl of ELGIN said, that the Government proposed to reintroduce this Bill, and in substantially the same form in which it left their Lordships' House last year. Their Lordships might remember that this Bill was one of great detail, and had been referred to a Committee of the House, who had introduced many Amendments, and the Government thought it would be convenient to re-introduce it in the form to which it was brought by the Committee. The Government would put on the Paper any Amendments before the Committee stage that they might think necessary, and he would ask the House to give the Bill a second reading some day next week.

Bill for regulating the police and sanitary administration of towns and populous places; and for facilitating the union of police and municipal administration in burghs in Scotland—*Presented* (The Earl of Elgin); read 1^a. (No. 28.)

ARBITRATION BILL.—(No. 17.)

(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord BRAMWELL, in moving that the Bill be read a second time, said, that it was in substance the same Bill which had been read a second time by their Lordships last Session. It was the object of the measure, not to alter the Law of Arbitration, but to consolidate it in the same manner as the law with regard to bills of exchange had been consolidated. For his own part he did not look upon consolidation as being of much use to the public, although to lawyers there could be no doubt of its utility. The public were usually acquainted in a general way with the law upon any subject, and if any unusual case arose the more prudent would consult a solicitor rather than look to Consolidation Acts. At the same time, if a consolidated law were well expressed and correct, it certainly was for the good of all. Considerable trouble had been taken in preparing this Bill—which had its origin in the Chambers of Commerce—by Mr.

Macdonell, a gentleman well known at the Bar as the author of a book on Awards. The Bill had been also revised by the gentleman who drew up the rules of the High Court; assistance had been sought from Mr. Russell, the author of the well-known work on Awards; and he might say that he should not have presented the Bill to their Lordships unless he had taken every care to make it worthy of their acceptance. He hoped that the second reading of the Bill would be taken then; the Committee stage he did not propose to take till after Easter, by which time the Bill would have been printed and circulated.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

LORD DENMAN said, that, having for 11 years drawn up every Reference Order in the Court of Queen's Bench at Nisi Prius, he was glad to say that no complaint was ever made of a delay or failure of justice by his mistake; and he attributed that to his always having had the counsel and their briefs together, so as to settle the terms of agreement whilst fresh in their minds, and so as to add anything which might seem to be overlooked. He was glad to see in Clause 38 that even a mistake could be corrected. He found in Clause 61 that there was a power given to the arbitrator to admit certain evidence, without oath or affirmation; but no power to punish anyone giving such evidence under any circumstances. He found in Clause 80 that an arbitrator could not sue fees, though he had a lien for them, and he could attach for non-payment; but those not liable to attachment ought to be subject to be sued. In Schedule 1 a power was given to proceed *de die in diem;* but it ought to be provided that an arbitrator should proceed at once, and, if unable to do so, give up, by consent of parties, to some other arbitrator. It ought also to be provided that any person refusing to consent to arbitration should bear any extra expense thereby incurred. The arbitrator, having to state a case for the Court, would generally be of the Legal Profession.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, he should not oppose the second reading of the Bill, though he had not been able to give it such close attention as he could have wished. Of course, in a matter of this kind everything depended upon the accuracy with which the law was stated, and the Law of Arbitration must be admitted to be one of considerable difficulty. In the interval which his noble and learned Friend had suggested before the Committee stage, all persons who took an interest in the subject could examine the measure and offer criticisms upon it. It might turn out, if there were many of such criticisms, that it would be better to refer the Bill to a Select Committee to deal with those criticisms and embody them, so far as they were just, in the provisions of the Bill; but he did not wish to speak decisively at the present time.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

JUSTICES' JURISDICTION BILL.

(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

(NO. 18.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BRAMWELL, in moving that the Bill be read the second time, said, the Bill had twice passed their Lordships' House. Its object was to enable Courts of Quarter Sessions and Recorders to try persons charged with burglaries of a small and unimportant character. It was well known that besides the graver cases of burglary there were many of a very trivial character which could be disposed of much more quickly at the Quarter Sessions than by waiting for the Assizes. If a man broke a window and put his hand in and stole a piece of meat between 9 o'clock at night and 6 in the morning, it would be burglary. In the same manner, if a lodger broke out of a house before 6 o'clock in the morning, taking with him his fellow-lodger's clothes, it would be burglary. It was impossible, however, in an Act of Parliament to make distinctions between the gravity of offences, and the Bill therefore gave a jurisdiction to Quarter Sessions and Recorders in all cases of burglary. It would be well, however, to have a clause in the Bill reciting that the object was that small burglaries only should be tried at Sessions, leaving magistrates to exercise their discretion in the matter—a discretion which he felt sure would be properly exercised.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that he entirely sympathized with the object of his noble and learned Friend in introducing this Bill. There was no doubt that a certain number of burglaries were of such a trivial character that they could be as well tried at Sessions, where now much more serious cases were tried. It would be very undesirable, however, that the greater and more important cases of burglaries should be tried at Sessions, and not at Assizes. If a provision were inserted in the Bill directing magistrates to exercise their discretion as to the tribunal to which they would send the case for trial, having regard to its gravity, he thought they might depend on that discretion being properly exercised.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

(NO. 19.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BRAMWELL, in moving that the Bill be read the second time, said, that the object of the measure was not to compel, but to enable, any accused person and his wife, with his consent, to give evidence at any stage of the proceedings against him. This Bill had already once passed through their Lordships' House, and it had the approbation and strong support of the noble and learned Earl (the Earl of Selborne) who recently sat on the Woolsack, of the late Earl Cairns, and of the noble and learned Lord who sat below him (Lord Fitzgerald). Of all persons in the world, the man who knew best whether an accused person was guilty or not was the man who was charged with an offence; and yet under the present law that was precisely the man whose mouth was closely shut. It must be a most grievous thing to an accused person that, when he could prove his innocence, he was not allowed to give evidence. Already steps in the direction of allowing an accused person to give evidence on his own behalf had been taken to a certain limited extent, and this Bill merely proposed to go further upon that path. The principle of the measure had been recognized in the Explosives Act and in the Criminal Law Amendment Act which was passed in the last Session of Parliament. The part of the Law of Evidence which he proposed to repeal was the last remnant of the very unreasonable condition of that law which existed some 50 years ago. He was surprised that a measure of this kind should be opposed by the noble Lord (Lord Denman) opposite, whose father, when Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, had been the first to carry an Act which had for its object the amendment of the Law of Evidence. A similar Bill to the present had passed through the other House of Parliament some time ago. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

LORD DENMAN said, he would quote from the Bill of Pains and Penalties, 1820 remarks by his noble Relative, then Solicitor General to Queen Caroline, as to not calling an accused witness. Mr. Denman said—

> "I was about to observe that there were certain individuals whom we have not called before you, and it is simply for this reason that our case is already proved; and we do not think it decent or consistent with the principles of justice to overload these minutes of evidence already so vast and unwieldy—we do not think it consistent with the principles of justice to admit that we are bound to go one step further. We heard the challenges and defiances, and we heard that the co-respondent might be called. This is a fiction, this is one of the unparalleled circumstances of this extraordinary case. From the beginning of the world to the present moment no instance is to be found in which a party accused is called to prove the adultery. We are to be told, forsooth, because he knows the fact he ought to be called to the bar take his oath upon the subject. The answer is in a word—there is either a case against us or there is none; if there is no case there is no occasion for us to call a witness. If there is a case no man would believe the supposed adulterer. That is a circumstance upon which the nicest casuists might dispute, with some prospect of success, on either side of the question; but I think the feelings of mankind would triumph over their morals, and it would be thought more excusable even to deny on oath a circumstance so degrading as that—a circumstance of confidence so unfit to be betrayed, that perjury would be thought venial, in comparison with the exposure of the woman he might have betrayed into his toils. Will my learned Friends show a case in which such a witness has been produced? And, if not, it must be taken that the abstinence from calling such witness must be founded on too deep principles in the nature and heart of man to be repelled, even upon this occasion, to which so many principles have been made a sacrifice."—(2 *Hansard,* [3] 179-80.)

He, as a magistrate, could never believe a defendant in an affiliation case on his oath.

He found that oaths by persons charged with debt were no longer admitted, he alluded to the extension of creeping on; but was convinced that it had gone too far, and ought to be restrained rather than extended.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS (Lord ESHER) said, that it was opposed to the principles of the law of England that a man should be convicted by hostile examination out of his own mouth. He was afraid that if accused persons were to be submitted to cross-examination they would be convicted, in 99 cases out of 100, otherwise than by evidence produced by those who prosecuted them. It was quite a mistake to suppose that because an accused person could not now give evidence on oath he was thereby prevented from giving his own account of the matter. An accused person now had an opportunity of making a statement without being liable to cross-examination; and the question left to the jury then was, whether that statement, if it suggested innocence, was consistent with the evidence of guilt brought forward by the prosecution; and the jury was always directed that if it was they should acquit the prisoner; but if he were allowed to be sworn he could be cross-examined as to his character as well as in reference to the particular crime charged against him; and if he were found to be of bad character, it might, and would, be pressed upon the jury that he was a person who was extremely likely to have committed the offence of which he was accused. With every deference to his noble and learned Friend, who had had very large experience in those matters, he could not help expressing a strong dislike to the proposed innovation in our Criminal Law, the most careful of freedom yet known to the world.

LORD MONKSWELL begged to thank his noble and learned Friend for introducing that most important and beneficial alteration in the law. Many Judges had lately adopted the practice of allowing the prisoner to give his account of the transaction not on oath; but that seemed to him to be a very inconvenient compromise between shutting the prisoner's mouth and not permitting him to give evidence in the regular and proper manner, subject to cross-examination. It was to be presumed that every innocent man would like to give an account of the transaction in his own way; and why was an innocent man, wrongly accused, to be prevented from doing that simply because a guilty man might commit perjury? It might be said that if accused persons were allowed to give evidence they might at times be convicted out of their own mouths; but if a man's examination were not compulsory and he chose to give his evidence, and it convinced everybody of his guilt, why should he not be convicted? To deprive innocent men of the opportunity of explaining their conduct in order to screen a few guilty men who might at present escape was not a reasonable mode of proceeding. If the prisoner's evidence was to be given, it ought to be given subject to the usual right of cross-examination. There was no fear of that right being abused in this country; the authority of the Judge, and the feeling of the jury, the Bar, and public opinion would repress any such abuse; and they knew that prosecutions in England were conducted with great forbearance and moderation.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, they were told that the Bill would not make it compulsory on the prisoner to give evidence; but if the measure became law it would be known that the prisoner could give evidence if he chose; and, therefore, if he did not do so, would not the obvious inference be drawn by every jury that he was a guilty man? Under those circumstances, the guilty man would feel that his only chance of escape was by going into the witness-box and committing perjury. But the prisoner might be a man who was innocent of the charge brought against him, though he might be well known to the police as having committed previous offences; and if it could be shown to the jury—what was now carefully kept from them—that he was a bad character, that circumstance would prejudice the case of the prisoner. If he had been previously convicted that fact was kept from the jury, that they might come to an unbiassed conclusion; but if that Bill were passed, that fact would be immediately brought forward by the counsel for the prosecution. Again, an innocent accused person might feel a burning sense of indignation which would cause him not to give his evidence with the clearness which might otherwise characterize it; and when cross-examined by a practised counsel he might give such answers as tended to convict himself. That Bill would introduce a gigantic innovation in our Criminal Law, and he could not but look upon it with considerable suspicion.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, he felt bound to state that it was by a gradaal growth in his own mind that he had come to the conclusion that, after what had already been done in that direction, it was almost inevitable that they should go still further. The principle of that Bill had been partially introduced already in some cases. The precedent of the Explosives Act had been mentioned. It was introduced into a measure which was carried through the House last year; and if it were accepted to meet the difficulty of getting evidence in some instances they could hardly reject it in others. He dared say that if they adopted it in criminal cases a prisoner might find himself compelled to give evidence; and it would be much better that he should be put upon his oath than that he should make the kind of statement that was commonly made now. At present a prisoner often reserved his defence; and if he had an opportunity of giving evidence on oath when before the magistrate he would be under a strong inducement to do so, because if he did not he would lay himself open to the suspicion that he had no defence. Everything that had been done of recent years had been not for the sake of either one party or the other, but to bring out the truth; and he was bound to say that he thought, if the prisoner was to give evidence at all, it was much better that he should give it on oath, and subject to cross-examination. The whole case came to this—how best to determine the guilt or innocence of the man who was charged. It seemed to him that if they once introduced the system of allowing a husband or wife to give evidence, the one for or against the other, it would be a great improvement on the present state of the law to allow a prisoner to give evidence if he thought proper to do so. At the present time the Criminal Law was a sort of Game Law for giving a fair chance to a prisoner, instead of obtaining a knowledge of whether he was guilty or not.

LORD FITZGERALD said, he believed that there was no noble and learned Lord present who had a larger experience of the Criminal Law than he had. The result of his long experience had induced him to believe that the present state of the law inflicted a good deal of hardship, and not infrequently much injustice. In many cases, where the prisoner had been tried on a serious charge, the accused might have been able to dispose of the whole case against him if the state of the law had allowed him to go into the witness-box and be subjected to examination. Many convictions, indeed, were passed because the accused person was not allowed to give evidence. The Bill being intended to remedy this state of things, he would give it his support. If a prisoner was competent to be heard as a witness, they ought to get rid of all those hindrances which at present prevented him going into the witness-box, and which sometimes led to the accused being unjustly convicted.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, he agreed with the views which had been expressed by the noble Viscount. He thought there had been a remarkable change not only in public feeling, but in professional opinion, on this question during recent years. He remembered, when he first had a seat in the House of Commons, that this question was discussed; and the general feeling, not only of the House, but of professional opinion in the House, was against the proposed alteration of the law. As time went on, however, and men weighed the arguments for and against the change, an alteration—perhaps the more important because it had been gradual, and not the result of any agitation—had passed over men's minds; and during the late Parliament many Members were found to be in favour of this measure who in former years had been opponents of it. If he thought that this measure would merely tend to the greater certainty of convicting the guilty he would not be prepared to support it, if he thought that, at the same time, it would add to the dangers of the innocent. He thought it was such a terrible thing that a man innocent of a crime should be convicted of it, that he would not be disposed to alter the law even if it were shown that an increase in the conviction of the guilty would, at the same time, result in an increased danger to the innocent. He believed, on the whole, however, that it would be to the advantage of the innocent that this change would tend. He did not deny that there might be cases in which there might be an increase of danger to an innocent man on account of nervousness and other matters, but they must weigh the matter as a whole; and he was certain that the advantage to the innocent man of being able to tell his story himself, and even to have his attention directed by examination and cross-examination to the points which were telling against him—though he might not be able to see them himself—would be of the utmost advantage to the accused. He wished to add a word of practical experience in this matter. He had been professionally engaged in a trial under the Explosives Act in which this change of the law was seen in operation. It was a crucial test of the advantage or disadvantage whether prisoners should be allowed to give evidence, inasmuch as each prisoner electing to give evidence set up a different defence, and the defences were hostile to one another—that was to say, that the defence which each prisoner set up really told against his fellow-prisoner, although in favour of himself. Their Lordships would see that it was, therefore, a very trying case by which to test the advantage or disadvantage of allowing the prisoner to give evidence. He believed that every counsel who was engaged in that case—some of them prejudiced against this change of the law—confessed, at the end of the trial, that they believed distinctly it was to the advantage of the prisoners in the case cited to give evidence, and make their statement of the case. He believed the more experience was gained of this change of the law the more it would be found that the dangers which were depicted were really imaginary, while the advantages were very real.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that the opinions of the noble and learned Earl (the Earl of Selborne) and the late Earl Cairns, uttered in a former debate furnished arguments in reply to those now used by the Master of the Rolls (Lord Esher). The noble and learned Lord spoke of a practice which he said was common; but he should like to ask the noble and learned Lord whether that which he said was common had ever occurred in his own practice? It did not do full justice to the prisoner to make a statement if he were not subject to cross-examination. The accused ought to be able to give his evidence if he thought fit, and to be dealt with as every other witness was, giving evidence on oath under the responsibility which attached to the making of an untrue statement. Undoubtedly, that would give rise to perjury, for, unfortunately, the more evidence the more perjury; but they must look not merely to the disadvantages, but also to the advantages, which in this case preponderated. There might be a possibility of mischief resulting from the measure, from prisoners committing themselves on cross-examination; but he did not think this would be a serious evil. The prosecuting counsel did not now resort to bullying; if he did he would be checked by Judge and jury and public opinion. A change had occurred in the conduct of prosecutions, and the prosecuting counsel regarded himself as a public official whose duty it was to see justice done. If they wanted to give a prisoner the right of making a defence upon oath, subject to his story being impeached upon cross-examination, the only way to do it was to encounter the dangers referred to by enabling him to give his evidence as the Bill would allow him to do.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly.

NATIONAL GALLERY—HOURS OF OPENING.

ADDRESS FOR A PAPER.

VISCOUNT HARDINGE, in rising to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copy of a Memorandum drawn up and signed by the Director and Trustees of the National Gallery with reference to the risks and inconvenience attending the proposed opening of the Gallery on week days up to 10 p.m.,"

said, that he should have liked to quote extracts from the Memorandum; but as he could not quote from a Memorandum which was not before their Lordships, he would briefly state that the objections of the Trustees to opening after dusk were chiefly these. No Continental Gallery was open at night. The electric light was in its infancy, with no guarantee against occasional extinction, it having been known to have failed in that respect at the reading room of the

British Museum. Large crowds assembling at night in the Gallery would stir up an unusual amount of dust. The breath of a large number of persons congregated together generated gases which occasioned a hurtful deposit upon the pictures, and it was quite impossible to cover all pictures with glass, the reflection from the glass being adverse to a proper study of the pictures. Then, again, they apprehended that crowds of a certain class would congregate in the Gallery from the character of the neighbourhood. Lord Palmerston always thought this a vital objection to opening at night. On wet nights all the roughs and idlers in the street would congregate, to the annoyance of those who wished to study the pictures; and with respect to the advantages which would accrue to the working man, it was very doubtful whether, after a hard day's work, working men would leave their homes to visit the Gallery. It must be borne in mind, too, that the step once taken would be irrevocable. Again, instances having occurred of wanton injury to the pictures at the National Portrait Gallery, where crowds seldom congregated, such a risk would be apprehended in a Gallery where a large number of people assembled at night and gave greater facilities for such outrages. Moreover, evil-disposed persons might take advantage of such crowds to make use of explosive material, with the prospect of untold injury being effected. The Trustees made this protest as custodians of public property of priceless value, and gave this opinion quite irrespective of the merits or demerits of the general question. He had always voted against Sunday opening, and would do so again. He begged to move that the Paper be printed and circulated.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, he did not wish by his silence to be held to agree with the noble Lord's arguments, which he should be prepared to meet on Friday, when the whole question came up in the ordinary course of Business.

LORD SUDELEY said, that as the discussion was coming on on Friday, their Lordships would not expect him to follow the noble Viscount into the details of his speech; and he should, therefore, content himself with saying that the Government had no objection whatever to the production of the Memorandum.

Address for—

"Memorandum drawn up and signed by the Director and Trustees of the National Gallery with reference to the risks and inconvenience attending the proposed opening of the Gallery on week days up to 10 p.m."—(*The Viscount Hardinge.*)

RAILWAYS—ALLOTMENTS TO SERVANTS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY, in rising to ask the Lord President of the Council, If he will apply to the principal Railway Companies to furnish Returns of the number of allotments and gardens allowed to the servants in their employment on the railways; and, if they can supply such Returns, whether he will add them to those promised from the Agricultural Department? said, he had communicated with the Great Northern Company and the London and South-Western Company, and he was informed that there would be no difficulty in supplying the information. The men, he understood, were on duty 10 hours a-day, and yet found time to cultivate these allotments.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER), in reply, said, that when the noble Marquess brought this matter forward the other day he was unable to grant the Return which was then asked for, and he was afraid that he must now adopt the same course. He did not believe that the Return was at all necessary, because the Return which he had promised would include all allotments under whatever landlords the tenancies were held, not excepting those made by the Railway Companies. There would, therefore, in his opinion, be no advantage in having two special Returns. While he was speaking on this matter, he should like to announce to the House that at a conference which he had had that day with the Chairman of the Inland Revenue he found that the Government would be able to present the Return promised a short time ago before the ordinary Agricultural Returns instead of after. He thought it would, perhaps, be more than convenient to have the very long Return which he had engaged to furnish before the Agricultural Return. The Government hoped before June probably, though he could not actually bind himself to the time, to be able, to furnish, independently of the ordinary Agricultural Returns and without disturbing them, the important information which he promised the other day.

The Marquess of HUNTLY said, that as the railway allotments were not entered in the rate book, he did not see how they were to be included in the Government Return.

Earl SPENCER observed, that the noble Lord seemed to know exactly how the Return was furnished. He believed it was furnished from other sources than the rate book. The Chairman of the Inland Revenue informed him that there was no difficulty in getting the information.

House adjourned at Six o'clock,
to Thursday next, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 9th March, 1886.

MINUTES.] — Private Bills (*by Order*) — *Second Reading* — Manchester Ship Canal; Midland Railway.

Public Bills—*Committee*—Lunacy (Vacating of Seats) * [85]—r.p.

Third Reading—Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Continuance * [107]; Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) * [128], and *passed*.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Mr. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I rise to support the second reading of this Bill; and I will venture to state very shortly what its objects and provisions are. I think I may say that its principal object is, in one word, to give effect to an Act which was passed during last Session for the construction of a Ship Canal between Manchester and the sea. I may say at once that it is felt by the promoters—it has always been felt by the promoters—that the powers which are asked for in this Bill were necessary in order to carry out the construction of the works which were sanctioned by Parliament last year. The Bill itself is a very simple measure. It provides for the payment of interest during the construction of the Canal at 4 per cent per annum. It provides that such interest shall only be paid in respect of the time authorized by the Act of 1885 for the completion of the works thereby authorized, or such less time as the Directors may determine. It also provides that no such interest shall accrue in favour of any shareholders for any time during which any call on any of his shares is in arrear; that the aggregate amount to be so paid for interest shall not exceed the sum of £752,000; that the total amount of money which the Company are by the Act of 1885 authorized to borrow shall be reduced by an amount equal to one-fourth of the sum expended in the payment of such interest, and that such reduction shall be made from the last instalment of £500,000 by the said Act authorized to be borrowed; that every prospectus, advertisement, or other document of the Company inviting subscriptions for shares in the undertaking and every certificate of such shares shall contain a notice that the Company has power so to pay interest or dividend; and that the half-yearly accounts of the Company shall show the amount of capital on which and the rate at which such interest or dividend has been paid. I may say that the various provisions of the Bill which I have read to the House are all in accordance with the Standing Orders of the House in reference to this question. It may be very properly asked why the powers sought for by the Bill were not asked for in the Bill of last Session before it became an Act? My answer is that they were asked for, and they have always been asked for. Probably hon. Members are aware that the Manchester Ship Canal has been before Parliament during the last three years, and in every Bill introduced by the promoters this clause was contained. The first Bill was referred to a Select Committee of this House. On the second occasion the investigation commenced in the House of Lords, and there the Earl of Redesdale allowed the clause to go through the Committee, although, I believe, he had a personal objection to it; and it was passed by that Committee of the House of Lords on the one condition that the Earl of Redesdale should withdraw his opposition. When the Bill came before the House the Earl of Redesdale did not withdraw his opposition, and the Bill was ultimately lost. On the third occasion on which the Manchester Ship Canal Bill was introduced the Earl of Redesdale objected to the clause being put into the Bill, or if it were put into the Bill he proposed to enter such an objection to it that it would be fatal to the measure. As a matter of fact, when the Bill came before a Select Committee of the House of Commons there was no power to re-insert the clause, and the promoters were perfectly helpless in the matter. The object and intention of the promoters last year was, on the consideration of the Report in this House, to propose and ask for the power we are now asking for; but it will be apparent when I say that the Bill only came down to this House just before the close of the Session; that it only passed through the Select Committee on the 30th of July last year; and that it was impossible to ask the House, with any chance of passing the Bill, for powers which might be fatal to the entire Bill. The promoters, therefore, preferred to have half a loaf rather than no bread. That is the simple explanation why we appear this year in this form, when we should infinitely have preferred to have dealt with the matter in the clauses of the Bill of last year. We have always endeavoured to do so, and it was only owing to the peculiar circumstances of the case that we were not able to carry out our intentions. The assertion has been made that the promoters of the Bill have failed to raise the necessary capital; but I venture to say that that is not the case. It never was supposed for one moment that they would be able to raise the capital with the disability they now labour under, by the absence of the powers now asked for in the provisions of this Bill. References have been made on more than one occasion to the promises which were given when the Bill passed through Committee—to the strong assurances which are stated to have been given that the capital would be raised. Now I venture to say that there is no proof, and that no proof can be brought, that those promises were made on any other assumption than that these powers would ultimately be obtained by the promoters. I believe that the conditions under which it is expected that this capital will be raised will be the ordinary conditions—the conditions under which every Company, with few exceptions, is able to raise its capital. The fact is that there has been no large undertaking in this country ever started which, in some way or other, did not pay interest during construction, and it will be admitted that all existing Companies are able to pay interest during any extension. I do not think that will be denied. I could bring forward many instances to prove the truth of the statement I make; but I will only mention one—namely, the case of the Great Western Railway Company. It was stated at the last yearly meeting of that Company that they were paying a dividend of one and three-fourths of a million of money which the Severn Tunnel cost them, although that tunnel is not yet increasing the receipts of the Company in any way. Then there is the case of Limited Liability Companies. Limited Liability Companies are all of them able to pay interest during the construction of works, if they are so pleased. Then there is also the case of various Indian Railways. Indian Railways I believe, without exception, pay interest during the construction of works. All enterprizes abroad pay interest in a similar way, and there is no prohibition whatever. In point of fact, it is quite the reverse; for in France Companies are actually bound to provide capital for the payment of interest during the construction of works. Then we come to another instance which, I think, with Parliament ought to have a considerable amount of weight—that is the practice of getting contractors to finance works, and paying interest during construction. I would also refer to a precedent which Parliament itself established last year in the case of the Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill, which was specially introduced, and received the sanction of Parliament, for the payment of interest out of capital during the construction of the works. I think these are instances which should induce the House to permit the relaxation of the ordinary Rules. It cannot be expected for one moment that capitalists will come forward to provide capital for this great undertaking, especially when we consider the large amount which it is necessary to raise on an important undertaking like this, without they have some return for the money they advance, seeing that the Bill allows seven years to the promoters for the completion of the scheme. I do not think, when you come to consider all these exceptions which Parliament has made in one form or another, that you could expect the capitalists of Lancashire and Yorkshire to forego, in the promotion of a great work of this kind, the interest on capital which they are realizing in other directions, for a period of seven years. That is my answer to the charge that we are attempting to defeat the Rule of Parliament that interest on capital shall not be paid during construction of works. I now come to another point, and that is that it is asserted that a bargain or settlement was come to when the Bill was before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, and that we are attempting to get behind that settlement and bargain by the present Bill. That is the allegation which is made by our opponents; and it is stated that the provisions which were contained in the Bill of last year were not enforced by the Committee, but were voluntarily offered by the promoters of the Bill. The condition under which the Bill was passed is said to be that £7,000,000 should be raised before any works were undertaken or began with regard to the construction of the Canal. That is said by our opponents to have been a condition imposed upon us as a substantial test of the financial merits of the scheme. Now, I venture to deny that proposition altogether. It was not imposed as a substantial test of the financial merits of the scheme. I do not think that Parliament had anything to do with the question whether the capital could be raised for this undertaking or not. Certainly, Parliament ought to see whether the scheme was a substantial or a bogus one; and the Committee would have been very ill-informed if they had only sanctioned the scheme on the hypothesis that the works would ultimately be carried out. No doubt, there are many schemes which have received the sanction of Parliament which capitalists have not ultimately supported; but the real reason of the present opposition to the Bill is not that there is any desire to protect the capitalists, but to protect a great interest which it is thought would be interfered with by the action of the promoters of the Bill. The object of Parliament has been to prevent the public from subscribing to undertakings unless there was a fair prospect of the whole capital being subscribed. The desire was to prevent a small amount of capital being raised and works begun when, after all, the works thus commenced would never be finally carried out, and the money embarked in them would be entirely lost. It was to protect the public from embarking in undertakings of that kind that this condition was imposed. We are told by our opponents that we are breaking the guarantee which we gave when we obtained the Act of last year; but if we get the powers we are now asking for, and facilities to pay interest out of capital during the construction of works, I maintain that we shall give a greater guarantee for the success of the Canal, or, at any rate, for its completion, than we have ever been able to give before. I observe from the Notice Paper that the question of how this matter is to be dealt with in this House is to be raised by my noble Friend the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton); and it would appear that our opponents are not seriously going to discuss the question on its merits on the second reading, but are going to suggest that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. I believe that a complaint is made by them which they feel themselves debarred from raising in the ordinary way, and therefore they ask to be heard in an unusual and an unfair manner. All I can say is that, in the first place, our opponents are here to-day, and they can raise any objection to this Bill which they please. But, more than that, we have taken no step whatever to debar them from going before a Select Committee if the ordinary Rules and Regulations of the House will permit them to do so. We are perfectly prepared, if they have a right to be heard against the Bill which we now ask the House to read a second time, to meet them before a Select Committee; but we do not think that we have any right in justice to ourselves, after the large amount of money we have already spent, and the great delay which took place before we were able to obtain the sanction of Parliament to our Bill, to increase

England which will show their appreciation of this scheme by taking shares in the Canal if this Bill is passed. I have only one word more to say with regard to the proposal that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee; and I will say at once that the reason why we resist that proposal is not because we are not anxious that our opponents should have fair play, but we think that they have had fair play. The Bill does not refer to those fiery questions we have had in regard to this Ship Canal; but the only reason why we approve this proposal is, that there has already been a large amount of money spent, and a considerable delay in commencing the important work we have in hand. I do not know whether the House is aware of the fact that no less than £250,000 has been spent in the preliminary stages of prosecuting the Act of 1885, and that no less than 175 days, or six months, were spent in proceedings upstairs, where, I am sure, our opponents had every opportunity of stating all the arguments they could bring to bear against the scheme. I do think, under these circumstances, that the time has now arrived when full effect should be given to the Act of Parliament passed last Session. If our opponents have a *locus standi*, they will have a right to be heard in opposition to the Bill; but I cannot consent to a new departure being opened to them, which will only result in materially adding to the cost and delay which will attend the carrying out of this scheme.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby): I rise with some regret to move the rejection of this Bill. I do so not only in the interest of those whom I represent, but also in support of the independence of Private Bill Committees in this House, and also in support of their decisions. My hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) stated that the Bill was introduced for the purpose of giving effect to the Act of last Session; but, as far as I can read the Bill, it was introduced not for the purpose of giving effect to the Act of last Session, but for the purpose of upsetting and reversing the provisions which that Act contains. Now, my constituents, the people of Liverpool, have opposed this scheme since its first introduction on one ground only. They are not afraid of competition in trade. They do not think that if the Canal were made it would have any considerable effect on the great trade of Liverpool; but what they fear is that if the Canal were made it would so interfere with the navigation of the estuary of the Mersey as to destroy the commerce of the port, and so cause ruin to hundreds and thousands who gain a livelihood by that commerce. I do not, on this occasion, propose to go into the engineering or the commercial merits of the undertaking. They were fully dealt with by the Committee, and it would not be right or proper to take up the time of the House in dealing with them now. What I wish to address myself to mainly is, the point of agreement arrived at by the Committee of last year at the instance of the promoters of the Bill, and the alteration in the capital powers now contemplated by the provisions of the present Bill. My hon. Friend says that the Bill of 1883 was introduced into the House of Commons and passed by this House without the clauses relating to the payment of interest out of capital being expunged. That is perfectly true; but when the Preamble was passed by the Committee upstairs, the opponents of the Bill withdrew their opposition for the purpose of carrying it to "another place." The Bill went to the House of Lords with the clauses which it contained untouched, and that House rejected the measure on its merits. In 1884 a fresh Bill was introduced in the House of Lords; and, as those who were in Parliament at the time are aware, the provisions providing for the payment of interest out of capital were struck out in that House, and the Bill was ultimately lost before a Committee of the House of Commons. In 1885 the Bill was introduced again in the House of Lords, and it contained a clause asking for permission to pay interest out of capital. That clause was struck out before the Bill went into Committee, and the Bill, after it received the sanction of the House of Lords, came down to the House of Commons and was discussed here; but no question was raised on the subject of the payment of interest out of capital. During the whole consideration of the Bill that question was never raised by the promoters, nor was it, directly or indirectly, alluded to by them. The investigations of both Committees of last Session were of a most painstaking character. The Bill occupied a large amount of attention, and what mainly struck the Committees of both Houses was this—the continued assertions of the promoters of the Bill that if the scheme were passed by Parliament they would be able without the slightest difficulty to raise in Manchester and the district the amount of money that might be required for carrying out the undertaking. Indeed, it was stated that Manchester itself would not only raise the capital required under the Bill, but a great deal more if necessary. I must, therefore, take exception to what fell from my hon. Friend in regard to that matter. I have a copy of the speeches delivered in Committee, and also the evidence of the chief witnesses called in support of the Bill. Now, what was it that Mr. Pember, the counsel for the promoters of the Bill, said? He said—

> "I am not afraid that you will get any doubtful answer on the matter. The men who spent £1,000,000 on the Town Hall, upon a splendid toy, so to speak, merely to be the pride and boast of their city, are not likely to hesitate about finding six times or nine times the amount necessary for the construction of an artery which is to carry their commercial life-blood and provide for the development of their trade."

Then, again, he said, before the Lords' Committee—

> "Do you suppose that we shall not find the money? Do you suppose that a population which has invested £100,000,000 of money in one industry alone, which is the case of the cotton trade, would not find £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 or £9,000,000 or £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 of money if it were wanted, which, after all, only comes to 10 per cent upon the capital to preserve an industry which £100,000,000 represents? Of course they would."

He said, further—

> "Are you going to disbelieve these people, and to say that the caste which they represent, and in a measure who are worth hundreds of millions of money, invested in businesses which they see stagnating or pining, and they believe conscientiously to be in a decline, cannot find a tenth or a twentieth part of the money invested to save what they have already invested? The notion to me is too absurd for argument."

Let me turn now to the evidence of Mr. Adamson, the chief promoter of the Bill. Being asked if the promoters would be able to raise the capital, he said—

> "I should be very much disappointed if a large excess of the capital required is not raised."

That was his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons. In the Lords' Committee in 1883 I find these Questions and Answers in his evidence—

> "You say that you are certain that you will be able to raise the capital? Answer—That is my impression.—Question—Then I suppose, as you would be able to do so, you would not see any objection to being compelled to do so?—Answer—Not to raise a very large portion of it I am quite sure."

When the Bill was before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1884 Mr. Adamson was asked—

> "Do you think that there will be any difficulty, if this Bill passes, in raising the necessary capital to commence and complete these Canal works?"

His reply was—

> "No; I think with Sir William Forwood, when speaking in Liverpool about a fortnight ago, that there will be no difficulty; and my own private impressions are that if the capital was £20,000,000, and Lancashire saw that there was a prospect of a reasonable remuneration, she would find the money for this great project."

Then he was further asked—

> "You have not the least doubt of raising the capital if the Bill is passed through Parliament?"

and he replied—

> "Not the slightest doubt."

Evidence to a similar effect to that of Mr. Adamson was given by the Mayor of Manchester, the Town Clerk, and others. Last year Mr. Adamson was asked—

> "Have you any doubt that if the Committee see fit to authorize this scheme the capital will be forthcoming?"

His reply was—

> "I have not indeed, or I would not have given my time and my money annually to the support of this scheme; and I think when the Committee have before them the fact that the great Corporations of Manchester, of Salford, and of Warrington, and all the other boroughs that are interested in this matter are supporting us, there can be no question of finding the money from 7,000,000 of people."

There can be no doubt that the statement was distinctly made that the people of Manchester were so largely interested in the undertaking that the general public would not be asked to subscribe a farthing. That statement materially influenced the Committee both in the Lords and Commons. The feeling was that it would not be right, when Lancashire or so large a portion of Lancashire was unanimous in asking for these powers, to reject the Bill; and it was, therefore, decided to pass the measure. At the same time, it was passed in a manner which is worthy of the attention of the House. It must be remembered that the objections to the Bill were urged in three successive years; and the various Committees to which the Bill was submitted were so much struck with the force of those objections that in passing the Bill they imposed on the promoters very stringent provisions, such as I do not recollect to have ever seen inserted before in an Act of Parliament. I may add that they were simply inserted for the protection of the opponents of the Bill. I rather think that it was at the invitation of the promoters, in the first instance, that a provision was inserted to require that £5,000,000 should be subscribed within two years of the passing of the Act before one sod of earth was turned; and that was exclusive of the sum of £1,710,000 which it was necessary to raise for the purchase of the Bridgewater Canal, which sum was also to be subscribed within the period of two years. The original deposit of £276,000, instead of being released on the passing of the Bill, was impounded, and it was actually to be impounded for three years after the passing of the Bill. Engineering works were also required to be carried out, not at the instance of the Port of Liverpool, but of other Petitioners. These stringent provisions were all accepted without demur by the promoters of the Bill; they accepted them gladly, and raised no objection to them. I have no doubt that the Committee thought they were prepared to abide by them; and, as I have said before, not one word was said about the payment of interest out of capital. On the contrary, the promoters assured the Committee that the capital proposed to be raised under the powers given by the Bill would be raised without any further clause to provide for payment of interest out of capital. What took place when the Bill passed? There was great rejoicing in Manchester; there was a magnificent pageant through the streets of Manchester. Champagne flowed, and there was a good deal of tall talk indulged in. When everyone had been raised to the proper pitch of excitement, then Mr. Adamson commenced his canvass in order to raise the capital. The response was something magnificent. Out of a capital of £8,000,000 the promoters of the Bill actually succeeded in raising £750,000—rather less than one-eighth of the whole sum. Now, what was the reason of that? Was it an admission that Manchester is poor and impoverished? Poor impoverished Manchester! I am sure that Liverpool looks upon her with the greatest possible commiseration. Here is a work which we are told is necessary to save her existence; to protect her trade from stagnation and ruin—here was a measure in which there was at once to be invested millions of the capital of Lancashire, and which the people of Lancashire would freely support in order to save the money they had already invested; but when the time comes, and an appeal is made to impoverished Manchester, they only raise a sum of £750,000. But are they really impoverished? Does my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) look like an impoverished man? Does the hon. Member for Manchester, who supports the Bill on the other side of the House, look as if he was going through a period of privation and starvation? No, Sir; the reason why the money was not raised was very apparent to every man who has been behind the scenes in this matter; and I will briefly and graphically describe what it is. A short time ago a respectable artizan of Manchester called upon the Secretary of the Liverpool Dock Board, and he said that he would like to renew a Dock-bond he held, and which was falling due. "Ah," said the Secretary, "why not take them out and invest them in the Manchester Ship Canal?" With a knowing wink, the artizan replied—"No, Sir; I shouts for the Canal, but they see's none of my brass." That, Sir, is the whole question. My hon. Friend the Member for Manchester "shouts for the Canal." My right hon. Friend who represents Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel), who appears to be so itching to speak, is about to shout for the Canal; but the Canal will see none, or very little, of their brass. The people of Manchester are a long-headed, a cute, and astute people; they know that this undertaking is unsound; and, knowing that, they will not invest their capital in it. What do they propose to do? They appear to be acting upon a maxim which has now become somewhat celebrated—that the people who have money and no brains were made for the people who have brains and no money. They come now to Parliament for power to pay interest out of capital, and then to go to the general public in order to induce them, under specious promises of paying interest out of capital, to invest their money in this undertaking, to which the people of Lancashire decline to subscribe. Now, I maintain that the principle of paying interest out of capital is unsound in itself; but that is not the question which I wish to raise at the present moment. What I want to point out is that this is a breach of the solemn agreement come to between the promoters of the Bill and the Committee of the House of Commons. What were the proposals in regard to the capital to be raised under these different Bills? In 1883 the capital was to be £8,000,000, and in the Bill of that year the promoters inserted a power to pay interest out of capital; but the payment of interest out of capital was over and beyond the share capital of £8,000,000. In 1884 they repented that provision; but in 1885, in addition to the £8,000,000, power was asked to raise additional capital, which would add £2 to every share, with the intention of devoting that sum to the payment of interest out of capital, the sum itself amounting to something like £600,000—that was beyond the £8,000,000 of share capital which the promoters declared to be necessary for the construction of the works, and which was admitted by the witnesses to be necessary. What does the present Bill propose to do? It proposes to pay interest out of the existing capital of £8,000,000 to the extent of £752,000, and to reduce the borrowing powers by £188,000; so that the promoters reduce the capital of £8,000,000 by £940,000, or, roughly speaking, by £1,000,000 sterling. Now, how can they come with an honest face to the House of Commons and ask for a reduction of share capital, when only last year, before a Committee of the House of Lords, they stated that the total sum of £8,000,000 was absolutely necessary for the due construction of the works? I think I have given some reasons why the Bill, on its merits, should be rejected on the second reading; but if the House in its wisdom thinks fit to pass the Bill, I would ask that we be allowed to be heard before the Select Committee. Had the promoters proposed before the Committee of last year that they should have the power of paying interest out of capital, we, the Petitioners, would have been before that Committee, and would have had our own *locus standi.* Since that time the promises held out to the Committee have been ignored, and the House has been cruelly deceived. What are we to do under existing circumstances? Are we, the Petitioners, with such enormous interests at stake, to be deprived of the advantage of being heard by counsel before the Select Committee? I do not believe for a moment that the House will perpetrate such an injustice, or impose such a manifest hardship upon us. We want to hear from the Chairman of Committees personally what his views are on this subject. We have already seen a Report, which comes from the Board of Trade, on the general proposal of the Bill, and I wish to make one observation in respect to that most remarkable Paper. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade received a deputation representing the promoters of the Bill, to which he very properly replied that he could give no opinion as to the Bill, but that he would do whatever was right. Subsequently he received a deputation from the Petitioners, and he received them, as the right hon. Gentleman always does, with the greatest courtesy. Having heard the statements of the deputation, the right hon. Gentleman said he would give due weight to what had been urged, but that he could not pledge himself to a particular course. But before the right hon. Gentleman heard that deputation what had happened? Why, it appears that that irresponsible authority—that Bismarck of Whitehall—Sir Thomas Farrer, had sent a document to the newspapers in support of the Bill. [Mr. MUNDELLA: No.] Surely it cannot be denied that before the right hon. Gentleman made his statement to the deputation on Friday last the document to which I refer was already in the hands of the Press! I make no charge against the right hon. Gentleman, but merely against Sir Thomas Farrer, who has adopted a course almost without precedent in regard to this Bill. I hope that the House of Commons, if they do not see fit to reject the Bill, will see that the Petitioners against it have a due *locus standi,* and that they are not placed in a worse position than they would have been if they had been heard upon this point before a Select Committee last year. Our Committees are proverbial for the impartiality with which they act in a judicial character; and I, for one, would never question the impartiality and integrity of the Members who discharge the onerous duties imposed upon them by the House; but I say that when, after three years, an undertaking was come to, after a protracted and painstaking inquiry, an undertaking was given by the promoters of the Bill, it is a monstrous thing for the same promoters, within four months of the passage of the Bill, to come to the House of Commons with a new measure asking us to upset the decision arrived at, and to introduce an entirely new principle, foreign, I am happy to say, to a great extent, to the Legislature of this country, in an attempt to raise money for the prosecution of a scheme which I believe to be ridiculous, and one which will never be carried out, and which is opposed to the interests of a large and important body of the community.

Sir HENRY MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Lincolnshire, Brigg): In rising to second the Motion of my noble Friend, that this Bill be read a second time on this day six months, I wish to say that I have no hostility whatever to the Manchester Ship Canal itself as an undertaking. My opposition is confined entirely to the payment of interest out of capital; and I shall heartily oppose any Bill, whether it is a Railway Bill, a Canal Bill, or a Dock Bill, which sanctions the payment of interest out of capital, and which is a payment of no interest at all, but simply a return to the investors of a portion of their own capital. I listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. Houldsworth), in the hope of finding out whether he had any arguments to offer in favour of the Bill; but I fail to find any argument at all. According to his account, all I could gather was that the House last year had sanctioned a Bill, and had sanctioned an appeal to the public to raise £8,000,000 in order to carry out the undertaking, but that the public have declined to find that £8,000,000. Naturally, that is extremely annoying to those who hoped to benefit by the expenditure of that sum of money; and, therefore, the promoters of the Bill now come to the House and ask to be allowed to offer new inducements, new baits, and new supposed advantages to the public, in order to make them find the money. Now, what are the inducements which the House is asked to sanction? What are their character? Are they such as would induce any sensible man to put his money into this undertaking, and would he feel inclined to do so without such inducements? Are they inducements of such a character as would enable a man of intelligence to look upon this undertaking as a good investment? Would they convert, if granted, a bad investment into a good one? What can any investor gain from the undertaking? It confers no pecuniary advantage on the investor. There is no glory or honour to be obtained in holding shares in the Manchester Ship Canal Company. If any man wishes to put £100 into this undertaking, would he be a richer man if this Bill is passed or not? It is a mere question, as the Americans say, of whether there is money in it. If there is money in it, I grant that this advantage must make the investor a richer man; but is it a genuine thing? If the inducement held out to him will not make the investor richer, then, I say, it is not a genuine thing, and it ought to be unhesitatingly condemned by the House. There are two considerations involved in this question. The first is—ought a Company to be allowed to return to an investor his own capital and call it interest? The second is—ought they to be allowed to increase the nominal amount of their capital by the payment of a further amount on account of interest? By this Bill the House is asked to do both of these things. We are asked to allow the Company to spend £750,000 in the shape of interest on capital during the construction of works, and to add that sum to the capital of the Company. If they are to add £750,000 to the capital so long as a shareholder holds his shares, it is a matter of no moment to him what the amount of the capital is nominally; but when he sells his shares he has an advantage in having marked on a piece of paper that a share for which he has only paid £90 is worth £95. But the ordinary public do not like to pay a premium for their shares; and, therefore, if only £90 is to be spent instead of £95, why should we give the investor a piece of paper on which £95 is to be marked? We are asked to allow this Company to pay interest out of capital during the construction of works, so that the shareholder who is induced to put his money into the concern should receive interest on an amount of each share which it did not really represent. It is not fair to put that before the public, because if it is done the public would see too plainly what the real issue was. They would understand that they were paying themselves interest on an amount of capital which had not been subscribed. The hon. Member (Mr. Houldsworth) said that the investors in Yorkshire could not afford to forego their interest for so long a time. Well, I have heard that very often before—that the investor cannot stand out of his money for such a long period as that which it will require to complete this undertaking. But in what way is he to receive his money under the system proposed in this Bill, and what advantage does he derive if he hands over his money to a Company and the Company pays it back to him? If this House were to order that for every £100 made up annually by the investors of this Company there should be handed in at the same time a signed and sealed packet containing four sovereigns, and that the Company should retain these four sovereigns without breaking the packet for a period and then pay them back in the shape of interest, everyone would see in a moment what a miserable farce it is. But that is not proposed. The Company are not proposing to do that. This is what they desire to do—to return a man his own money in another form. No money can be returned to a man but his own. The Company are earning none; they have no other funds; and I ask the House is there anything to induce an investor, if he is a sensible man, to put his money into an undertaking of this kind? Is there anything in the privilege promised him that he shall be paid 4 per cent interest out of capital? Is there anything in the privilege that out of the money he has solemnly paid in January and June he shall receive something back in June and January? Yet we are told that this privilege of paying money with one hand and receiving money with the other is so valued by investors that the public will find £8,000,000 on these terms for the construction of this Canal if they are allowed to do it, but that they will subscribe none if this privilege is not permitted them. I ask is the House willing that this arrangement should be allowed, and that this temptation should be held out to the public to subscribe their money? It is evident that the public misunderstand the nature of the operation. Is it right, I ask, that the House should allow these tempting advantages to be held out to the public when we know perfectly well that they are not advantages at all, but are arrangements which will tend to the disadvantage of the investors by causing a certain amount of their money to be wasted—by causing a certain amount to be distributed to them half-yearly, nothing being done in the meantime to earn money to supply its place? Several hon. Members have asked me why I have interested myself in this question. I will tell the House why I am interested in it. I have availed myself of the first opportunity of opposing the principle of paying interest out of capital while the undertakings are being carried out, because when I first had a seat in this House, in 1880, I spent a great many days in a Committee Room listening to the proceedings in connection with the Hull and Barnsley Railway and Dock Bill. I there heard it stated that the cost of the undertaking was so great as compared with any possible profits that it was extremely unlikely that any investor would ever receive 1*d.* of his money in the shape of interest. The conclusion arrived at then was that the capital would not be subscribed for the carrying out of that undertaking; but, to my great surprise, before very long I found that the money had been subscribed two or three times over, and I found, to my still greater surprise, that several of my own friends, whom I had always considered to be men of great intelligence in the ordinary affairs of life, had been foolish enough to invest their money in this undertaking. I made inquiries as to what could have been the inducement to these people to identify themselves with this scheme, and I found that it was the fact that interest at the rate of 5 per cent had been promised them during the construction of the works. I found that they had no real idea in their minds that this 5 per cent was, as a known fact, returned to them out of their own money. It was advertised that the dividends would be paid by the contractor, and the investors had some crazy idea that the advertisements set forth the real fact, and that this money would in some way be advanced by the contractor. They thought he must be gaining some advantage from the undertaking which enabled him to pay this interest. But that was an entirely mistaken idea. The contractor was paid by measurements—the engineer certified as to the amount of work done, and the contractor got the money for it; but it was not a fact that the contractor reaped any advantage which would enable him to pay interest out of capital to the investors. If these gentlemen understood that really the 5 per cent was their own money, and that the capital of the Company was paying compound interest in consequence, they would have thought twice before they put their names to such an undertaking. Many of my own constituents took shares in this Railway. The amount of money invested in the concern by investors from the district I refer to was something enormous. I do not know whether it was mentioned to the House before; but some hon. Members may have read the interesting pamphlet published by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Durham, in which it was shown that in 1881, in the way I have described, £20,000 was withdrawn from the money subscribed for the construction of the Hull and Barnsley Railway. Probably the money paid in this way would represent £100,000. When we see a number of working men, who, under ordinary circumstances, would put their money into the Savings Bank, subscribing money to an undertaking of this kind and losing it simply on account of the inducement held out to them that they would receive 5 per cent interest during the course of the construction—the interest received in the Savings Bank being no more than 2½ per cent—and when we hear Gentlemen speaking so glibly about the great amount of employment to be given to working men by this Bill, I quite understand that so long as you look upon an investor as a person walking about with a great deal more money in his pocket than he knows what to do with, you may regard his subscribing money under the circumstances I have pointed out with great philosophy; but when you see your friends, the working men who have painfully accumulated money by dint of great self-denial, putting the whole of their savings into undertakings of this kind, and being misled into these transactions in the way I have desbribed, you cannot look upon it with such philosophy. I, for one, feel very indignant that such misleading baits should be permitted to be held out to the public. If we have come to such a pass in England that labour can only be found for working men at the sacrifice of the savings of other working men by putting them into undertakings of this kind, I think we have come to a very bad pass indeed. I must apologize to the House for having detained it for so long upon this question; but I hope hon. Members will admit that, feeling as strongly as I do upon this matter, I could not very well have avoided rising to protest against a principle that I think has misled investors in the past, and which, if this Bill is passed, will inevitably do the same in the future.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Lord Claud Hamilton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): I think it right that I should, at as early a period as possible, attempt to state the view the Government entertain on this question. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton), at the conclusion of his speech, complained of the Report which was presented to this House, and which he attributed to Sir Thomas Farrer. He spoke of Sir Thomas Farrer in language of complaint as the Bismarck of the Board of Trade. [Lord CLAUD HAMILTON: No; of Whitehall.] Well, as the Bismarck of Whitehall. Let me inform the noble Lord that we are not accustomed to lay any blame for any act done by any Department on the permanent officials. I take the entire responsibility for that Report on myself. It is quite true that last Tuesday that

Report was sent to the Press. A rough revise of it, with my corrections, was obtained before bringing it under the notice of the House. But late on Tuesday night the noble Lord came to me, and asked if I would see a few Members of the House on the question of the Manchester Ship Canal Bill. It was decided upon at his request, and on Wednesday I telegraphed to him at the House that I would meet them on Friday. From the moment I made that appointment I suspended the Report, and it was not until after I had met the deputation which the noble Lord brought to me on Friday that the Report was considered by myself and the officials of the Department, and resolved on and placed in the hands of the Clerks at the Table at the latest moment it was possible that they could comply with the Forms of this House. There was nothing to complain of.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON: I at once withdraw all imputation upon Sir Thomas Farrer.

MR. MUNDELLA: If anyone is to blame it is myself. I think, however, I did everything that is fair and courteous to the noble Lord. I withheld the Report to the last moment. I may say, further, that several of the gentlemen who came on that deputation on Friday had been with me a fortnight before, and had expressed the same views almost in the same detail. I had their printed statement before me before I decided on the Report; so that, in any case, there has been no haste in deciding on a question so important as that before us. Well, now, I should like to tell the House why we are of opinion that this Bill ought to receive the assent of Parliament. The promoters of the Bill appeared before this House in 1883, and the measure passed in that year—that is to say, it passed a Committee of this House with this clause in, and it was rejected in the other House. Next year it was brought in in the House of Lords, and then the Chairman of Committees objected to the clause, and in deference to him it was omitted. He opposed it as objectionable in principle, and substituted the clause (Section 214) which it is now sought to repeal. That clause inserted by the House of Lords applies in the general law to Railways, and not to Canals at all; and it is a hard thing on the Manchester Ship Canal Company to force this clause on them. I may point out that the clause of the Lords' Standing Orders to which I refer read thus—

> "A clause shall be inserted in every Railway Bill prohibiting the payment of any interest out of capital,"

and so on. This, as I say, was inserted in the House of Lords at the instance of the Earl of Redesdale. The Manchester Ship Canal Company now ask us to relax the clause inserted in the measure, which properly only belongs to Railway Bills. What are the objections to this course? I have heard something about engineering and the navigation of the estuary of the Mersey. But we have nothing to do with those things. These questions have been settled once for all by Committees of this House. The noble Lord says—"Send it to a Select Committee; give us a *locus standi* before that Committee, and let us have counsel to plead before that Committee." But I would point out that the question is one for the promoters of the Bill and this House. I do not see what the London and North-Western Railway Company, from whose office these statements have emanated, have to do with the question at all. It is a question whether the House of Commons is willing to relax the clause and to bring the undertaking under another Standing Order, which is a very large relaxation, and one that has been recommended to be applied by a Committee of this House. It is said—"If you do these things great harm is likely to result." But there is a great deal of difference on that point. I think I can quote an eminent authority to show that great harm can result from the Standing Order. This Standing Order, if allowed to operate upon Bills of this kind, will have the effect of restricting enterprize in this country. It has done very much to help monopolies in this House. Surely the Railway Companies in this country have sufficient control over the waterways at the present moment, and they should not have that control extended. The hon. Member who has just sat down speaks with great emotion about the working men whose savings are invested. I give the hon. Gentleman all credit for consideration in the interests of the working men; but let me say this—I say the leaders of the working men; I say those who take a leading part in the co-operative movement in Manchester who are subscribing largely to this undertaking; I undertake to say that these co-operative working men are as shrewd a set of men as any in this House. They manage co-operative mills as well as many of their masters could do; and no doubt if they had railways to manage they would be able to manage them quite as well as many people in the country. I want to know why the House should enforce this harsh measure against this Canal Company? Railway Companies make their lines in sections, so that when one section of railway is complete, without respect to the remainder of the line, it can be worked, and can commence earning income; whereas in the case of this Company every farthing of capital must be expended—the whole undertaking must be completed—before any income can be earned. With regard to the statement that the rich men of Manchester have put £8,000,000 into the undertaking in consequence of their belief in the scheme, I would say that this is not a time when men are prepared to lock up their capital for seven years before they can begin to earn a farthing. The House must remember that the whole Standing Order is itself a matter of doubtful utility. It exists in no other country in the world. In France, it is necessary that the promoters of a scheme shall pay 4 per cent interest out of capital, and add it to the cost of the undertaking, because it is practically part of the cost. I want to ask what is the effect of this enterprize, so far as it has gone? It is impossible to deny that coincident with, and subsequent to, the introduction of this Bill, the railway rates for the conveyance of traffic in Manchester and Liverpool and the district have been reduced 25 per cent by three reductions, and now it is said—"Oh, that would have been done if the scheme had never been broached." Well, for my part, I think it is very clear that it was the broaching of this scheme that very much helped the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce in their efforts to get the first reduction, and more especially in getting the subsequent reductions. There have been three measures brought through this House, I think last year and the year before, in which this Standing Order was relaxed. I would refer the House to a speech made by the late Prime Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury) as recently as July 7 last, on the subject of allowing the Regent's Canal (City and Docks' Railway) Bill to pay interest out of capital. He said—

> "There was no doubt that this Rule discouraged the employment of capital, and that but for its existence work would go on which it now stopped. The Standing Order must justify itself. It was supposed to protect foolish investors, and to prevent persons from investing in any enterprize which would not yield them a good interest on their money. If he were asked which of two things he would choose, whether he would refuse to protect investors from the result of their own incaution, and set up an obstacle to the expenditure of capital, in order that men might be able to invest their money without inquiring into the real character of the enterprize in which they placed it, or whether, on the other hand, he would incur the inconvenience of stopping the expenditure of money in support of labour at a time of extreme and almost unprecedented calamity and distress, he confessed that he would feel that the consciousness that he was sustaining a Standing Order of their Lordships' House would be no satisfaction to him when he reflected that, by doing so, he was preventing many an honest man from getting his living. He would go a step further. He did not believe in the system of protecting the foolish investor at all. In his opinion, all of their Standing Order legislation erred grievously in that direction."—(3 *Hansard*, [298] 1800.)

Again he said—

> "It was the business of investors to protect themselves, and to examine for themselves the soundness of the enterprizes in which they embarked. If they failed to do so, they were generally in a condition of life in which they might fairly be expected to take the consequences. It was wholly unreasonable to provide securities for investors at the cost of stopping the flow of that capital by which alone the life and prosperity of industry could be maintained. It was a general error in the Standing Orders of both Houses of Parliament that they had bound industry up too tight in order that improvident and careless investors should be protected. It might be said that, whatever the General Rule might be, it ought not to be relaxed in any case when the Rule itself had not yet been taken up for the purpose of alteration. He believed that the General Rule ought to be altered."—(*Ibid.* 1801.)

I would refer, further, to an answer given by the noble Marquess the other day to a deputation of the unemployed, which waited upon him. He said—

> "He believed that if the attention of the working classes was directed to efforts towards inducing Parliament to be more generous in giving facilities for the investment of capital, of which there was an abundance in the country, for the purpose of starting works of private enterprize which would give work to large

> numbers of people, that, to some extent, would meet the existing difficulty. He had done something last year to effect this in the case of the Regent's Canal Docks and Railway Bill, and the Northfleet Docks Bill. But in this matter they had had strong vested interests to contend against."

The noble Marquess seemed to think that one of the obstacles to enterprize in this country, and the development of new enterprizes, was the Standing Orders, which were altogether too much on the side of the capitalist. He was of opinion that, whenever anything had to be done for the labouring classes, there was a stiff battle to be fought with the vested interests. I think there is much to be said on this side of the question, and the Government believe the House will do well to relax the Standing Order and allow the Bill to pass. With regard to the suggestion that the Bill should be sent to a Select Committee, I would really ask the House to consider whether there has not been enough money wasted on inquiries before the Select Committee? I would like to ask the House whether it is fair that a Company, like the Canal Company, starting to work upon what is deemed to be an enterprize of great public utility, shall have to pit itself against rich Companies, like the London and North-Western Railway, who can give their £500 or 500 guinea briefs to gentlemen of the Long Robe? Is there, I ask, to be any more money wasted in this way? I trust the House will agree that this Bill shall pass, and that the House will not lay itself open to the condemnation of the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who, when last the House rejected the Bill, went straight to Manchester, and, in the presence of the right hon. Gentleman opposite the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), said—

> "It was an incompetent House of Commons that rejected the Manchester Ship Canal, and it is because of the incompetence of the House of Commons that we demand an appeal to the people."

I hope the House will pass the second reading of this Bill.

SIR ROBERT PEEL (Blackburn): I am sure, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, it is hardly necessary for me to prolong this discussion. I am sure that everybody in Lancashire interested in the great undertaking that we are now discussing will feel grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for the manner in which he has broached the question to-day. It is quite clear that one of the motives of the hon. Gentleman—the noble Lord (Lord Claud Hamilton), I think, in the observations he has addressed to the House—was, that the Bill should be now read a second time and sent to a Select Committee. But the right hon. Gentleman opposite clearly pointed out that we have had enough Committees on this question. My noble Friend near me said that the Committee sat last year to consider it in the most praiseworthy manner. Well, I would remind him that there were not two Committees, but six, that sat upon this Bill; and if the Members who sat upon the Committee which considered the Bill are not here to speak in favour of the Motion which is now before us it is because the right hon. Gentleman who was Chairman of the Committee (Mr. W. E. Forster) was half killed by the labour of the inquiry, and because three other Members who served have none of them been re-elected to seats in this House. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) will, I hope, satisfy the House that this Bill ought to be passed. The hon. Baronet opposite below the Gangway the Member for the Brigg Division of Lincolnshire (Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson) says he puts his name down as an opponent of the Bill upon the highest motives. He says they ought not to pay interest out of capital during the progress of the works, and he endeavours to persuade the House that this is a novel principle. My noble Friend who sits near me (Lord Claud Hamilton) went further, for he made this statement. He said that the payment of interest out of capital was foreign to the legislation of this country. I should like to point out to the House, however, that it is very far from being foreign to the legislation of this country —as a matter of fact, it has almost always been the practice that interest should be paid out of capital during the progress of the works. All the great works in this country, not to mention foreign countries—as has been done— have been contracted and carried on on the principle of paying interest out of capital during the course of construction. There are the great railways of the country; and we hear the statement that the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, whose costly works in Liverpool are also connected with the new undertaking, have all been carried out under the principle of the payment of interest out of capital. I think I am justified in making these statements when I am told that it is unsound in principle to allow the payment of interest out of capital. I will only further allude to those works carried on by the Metropolitan Board of Works. Every work carried out by that Board is carried out under the principle held by those who support this Bill. I may say, also, that all the railways of India pay interest on their shares from the day of the commencement of their works. I will not detain the House longer, because I hope, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, the House will be prepared to accept the second reading of the Bill. If we do agree to the second reading, I entreat the House not to yield to the suggestion of my noble Friend (Lord Claud Hamilton), and allow the Bill to go again before a Select Committee—before a Select Committee where the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) so well and clearly pointed out the rich Companies—the Railway Companies—with their 500 guinea fees, will be able to throw every obstacle in the way of a work which, I firmly believe, if it is carried out, as I expect it will be, will prove of immense advantage to the great City of Manchester.

Mr. BRAND (Gloucester, Stroud): I do not often trouble the House of Commons, and I think I have some claim to say a few words upon this particular question. I was a Member of the Committee of the House of Commons to which the question of the application of Standing Order 167 was referred in 1882, and three of the Members of that small Committee are now no longer Members of the House—Mr. Baxter was the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Salt was on the Committee, as was also Mr. Shaw. Now, at that time the Board of Trade were of the opinion that interest might be paid out of capital during the construction of the works; and I believe that the Board of Trade are still of that opinion; certainly my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) has expressed himself in no undecided language upon that point. The question, however, was not so clear to the Committee as it was to the Board of Trade. The Committee considered that there were a great many points to be urged on both sides. Roughly speaking, there are two contentions in the matter. One contention is, that it is necessary that Parliament should protect people who desire to make investments—protect people against their own acts; that it is desirable, in fact, that Parliament should interfere to protect persons from the consequences of their own folly; and the other contention is, that the public are well able to take care of themselves; that investors must depend upon their own judgment; and that the most natural course—and the course which will lead to the best development of the country—is to allow speculation to find its own natural level. Well, Sir, upon these contentions the Committee came to a compromise, recommending that exceptions should be made in particular cases, and that each case should be decided by the House on its own merits. I promised the House I would not detain them long; and, therefore, I will, in a very few words, give the House my reasons why they should, at least, accept the second reading of this Bill. We have heard the case of the Manchester Ship Canal. I will not enter into the merits of the question, but simply say that this much is clear—that the Manchester Ship Canal Bill is not a small one; the undertaking is not a small one; but is, on the contrary, a very large and stupendous undertaking. It has been discussed all over the country; it has been thrashed out by two or three Select Committees of this House and of "another place;" and the consequence is that every man in the country—every individual who wishes or who is likely to invest his money in the concern—must have had every possible opportunity of acquiring some knowledge of its probable success or otherwise. For these reasons, I say that this Bill ought to be passed; but I will give a third reason, and it is this—that this undertaking, if it is successful, will prove of great advantage to Manchester and the surrounding district. Well, now, Sir, there is one point upon which I disagree with my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella). As I have said, this Bill ought to be read a second time; but I think that it ought then to be referred to a Private Bill Committee. My reason for this is, that if you give this Company the right, which the former Private Bill Committees did not give it, to pay interest out of capital, you will affect the amount of capital which the Company ought to raise. It may be a proper question for a Private Bill Committee upstairs to consider whether a Company having obtained leave to pay interest during the construction of the works ought not to increase its own capital. It is on this point I think the Bill, after having been read a second time, should be referred to a Private Bill Committee. I hope the House will read the Bill a second time, because I think this House ought not to put any obstacles in the way of the promoters of the Company obtaining the capital which they now seek.

Mr. GIBSON (Liverpool, Walton): Sir, I do not intend to trespass very long on the indulgence of the House; but I do desire to make a few observations upon this matter, which vitally affects the interests of my constituents. I am glad that upon the first occasion on which I rise to address the House of Commons I should be required to speak upon a subject which is entirely free from any Party complexion. Now, I do not think that hon. Members will be likely, in the decision they arrive at, to be influenced very much by the remark of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel) that if this Bill goes to a Select Committee the labours of the Committee will probably result in injury to the health of its Members, or in injury to their future political success. It appears to me that the matter upon which the House is called upon to arrive at a decision is one of a simple enough character. I do not intend to go into any questions of a technical nature, nor do I intend to consider whether or not it is right, or prudent, or justifiable to pay interest at all during the construction of the works of a Company like this. But, Sir, the modest proposition I have to submit to the House—a proposition which, I think, will commend itself to the judgment of hon. Members—is this—that where a Select Committee of the House, after two or three years' contest, have given a Bill to promoters upon certain terms, this House ought not to take upon itself the very serious responsibility, without an examination of witnesses, without hearing counsel, without any financial investigation, of saying that those terms should be varied, and that £1,000,000 of the capital which the Select Committee thought was essential to the completion of the enterprize should be taken away. That, Sir, I submit, is a matter pre-eminently for the consideration of a Select Committee; and I wish to correct now, in the very few words I am going to make, a very serious mistake into which my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Houldsworth) has fallen, and to which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) appeared, to some extent, to be a party. I may inform hon. Members, though possibly it may already be within their recollection, that the capital which was sanctioned by the Committee of last year for the construction of these works was £8,000,000 in share capital, and £2,000,000 in loan capital. In the Bill which was brought before that Committee the proposal made with regard to the payment of interest was nothing like the proposal which is made in the Bill now under consideration—it was a proposal to provide interest in a wholly different way. By the Bill introduced in 1885 interest was to be paid by adding £2 to each £10 share—the capital of £8,000,000 was to be raised in shares of £10 each; and that £2, which was called added capital, and not permanent capital, was, I think, to last for seven years during the period of construction. It was to receive no interest and no profit, and it itself was to form a fund to pay the interest, and the moment the seven years were up that £2 disappeared. You will observe, Mr. Speaker, and hon. Members will observe, that that interest fund, so provided by the promoters in their plan of 1885, amounted to £1,600,000. That was in addition to the £8,000,000 share capital, and the £2,000,000 loan capital. By the Bill which is now before the House, and which the House is asked to adopt, it is proposed that the £2, a share mentioned in the Bill of 1885, and which disappeared in the Select Committee, should be omitted. The consequence is that the present existing capital of this Company is £8,000,000 share capital; and £2,000,000 loan capital, and what is proposed to be done by this Bill is that £752,000 is to be taken away from the existing share capital for the purpose of founding an interest fund. The loan capital is reduced by £188,000; and, as the noble Lord (Lord Claud Hamilton) who moved the rejection of the Bill to-night told the House, the result of these figures is to reduce the capital of this concern, this gigantic concern, which it is so important should succeed in the future, and which, if carried out, may grievously affect the great Port of Liverpool—the effect of the operation proposed to-night is to reduce the capital of this Company by the sum of £940,000, nearly £1,000,000 sterling. But let me call the attention of the House to some other charges which also bring the sum alarmingly under the estimate put upon it by the Select Committee. When the Bill was before the Select Committee, and you know it ran the gauntlet for three successive years, it was very fully discussed, and I am glad to think that the counsel for the promoters had some advantage, and that the heavy briefs were not altogether on the side of the Railway Companies, for I observe, with a certain amount of professional interest and enthusiasm, that the fees in the case amounted to the enormous sum of £150,000. That has to be added; and then, if in addition you have to float this Company on the London Stock Exchange, and not locally in Liverpool, you will have to pay the London financier something for his countenance and support. Now let us see what is proposed to be done by the House of Commons to-night. I have to submit to the better judgment of the House, and I think it is not an unreasonable thing to put to the fair play of hon. Members, that where a Bill has been remitted to the proper tribunal—namely, a Select Committee, where a Bill has been discussed with counsel and witnesses before that Committee, it is a very inconvenient thing afterwards for the House, without hearing witnesses, without the action of a Select Committee, to vary the terms at which the Committee arrived. When the matter was before the Select Committee last year, we all knew that there were strong arguments put forward that it would be difficult to work this Company successfully as a financial speculation; and it was suggested, and the suggestion had great weight with the Committee, as is shown by the alterations they made in the Bill—it was required by the Committee that stringent measures to prevent any injurious effect to the Port of Liverpool should be adopted. It was felt to be a dangerous thing that, in order to create a new Port, they should destroy or seriously injure the finest Port in the Kingdom, and, accordingly, the most stringent financial precautions were taken by the Committee. These precautions required that £5,000,000 of the capital should be subscribed in two years; and it does occur to some of us as a most extraordinary thing that a proposition should now be made that that precaution should be abandoned. ["Divide."] I thank the House very much for their kindness in listening to my remarks. I do not think I have trespassed at any unreasonable length upon the patience of hon. Members, and I am sure I am not going to show my ingratitude by trespassing on their attention any longer.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): Although we have had very interesting and valuable speaking in the course of this debate, I am not unwilling that it should close without begging the House to allow me to offer a few remarks on the course which I think the House would be well advised to take, from the point of view of one who is neither concerned in Manchester or Liverpool, but who is simply desirous, as far as possible, of helping the House to come to a decision in accordance with its well-known principles of action. I am one of those who are most strongly in favour of jealously guarding freedom in regard to investments, and I altogether dissent from the opinion that we are able or that we can wisely take care of the investments of other people; and, therefore, I should go further, if called upon to do so, than the Standing Order. I should like to remind the House that the Standing Order is much more restrictive than some hon. Members appear to think. The Standing Order, which refers to Railways only and not to Canals, provides against the payment of interest on works, except such interest, if any, as the Committee to which the Bill was referred, might, according to the circumstances of the case, think fit to allow. So that the allowance of the payment of interest out of capital is, according to our Standing Order, a question to be decided by the Committee. Therefore, I am wholly averse to the notion that this Bill should be rejected now. There appears to be no reason why it should be rejected, and I cannot assent to the position taken up by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Claud Hamilton) that there was any breach of faith on the part of the promoters of this Bill in coming here and asking to have the action of last year set aside. The promoters may have gone the length of saying that they hoped to raise the capital without these powers; but there is no reason, having found that they could not raise it without, why they should not come to the House again, and ask that that provision prohibiting resort to these powers should be struck out. But the chief point which occurs to me is this—that a scheme for making this Canal as a certain financial basis was agreed upon by the House last year, having passed through Committee, and now it is proposed that that financial basis should be materially altered. The question is whether we ought to remit the question of the alteration of the financial basis to a Committee in the ordinary way — such Committee restricting their attention entirely to the alteration. Now, as it happens, this question of the financial basis of the Manchester Ship Canal has never been considered by a Committee of this House. That is a remarkable fact—it has never been considered by a Committee of this House. The first Bill which was brought into this House was passed on the Preamble, and this special clause was never considered by the Committee to which the Bill was referred. Last year it came down from the other House with this clause prohibiting the payment of interest out of capital in it; and the promoters of the Bill, feeling very eager to save their Bill, took it as it stood, running, perhaps, the chance of coming here again this year. Therefore it is that the financial basis of this case has never been considered by a Committee of the House at all. The question arises under the special circumstances of the Bill coming before us now with an altered financial basis. I confess I think that the House will be well advised if it agrees to refer the question to a Committee, carefully restricting the Reference to the financial basis; and if the noble Lord's Motion is defeated or withdrawn, I shall be prepared, if necessary, to move this proposition—

> "That the Manchester Ship Canal Bill be referred to a Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection; that all Petitioners who have presented Petitions against the Bill within the time limited by the Standing Orders have leave to be heard by their Counsel, Agents, and Witnesses before the Committee, against so much of the Preamble and Clauses of the said Bill as relate to the payment of interest out of capital; and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions."

I think that if this Resolution were agreed to, it would be in conformity with the spirit of the Standing Order.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY (Oxford University): I only wish to offer one observation with reference to the remarks of the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney). No doubt the question which the hon. Gentleman has raised is a very difficult one. It is said the financial basis has never been considered by a Committee of this House. It was not considered by the Committee appointed in 1883, because the opponents withdrew. It may be well that the question should be considered by a Committee; but I hope my hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees will consider whether it is not possible to settle the point without the very long discussion which took place upon the proposal to construct this Ship Canal being re-opened. The consideration of the Bill extended over a period of 175 days, and my hon. Friend now suggests that everyone who presented Petitions against the Bill should be allowed to be heard before a Select Committee. [Mr. Courtney: Only on the financial question.] I do not see how, if everyone who has presented a Petition is to be heard again, we are to prevent the inconvenience we experienced before. I know something more about the difficulty of constructing Committees than most hon. Members. We had extreme difficulty in 1883, 1884, and 1885 in the construction of the Committee to try this case; and my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel) did not exaggerate the case when he said that the unfortunate illness which had befallen my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) is in a great degree attributable to the overpowering labours of that Committee during the month of July last. Do not let us at present make any special order for reference of this Bill to a Committee. It is very well known that no work is better done in this House than that which is done on unopposed Bills by the Chairman of Committees, assisted by two experienced Members of the House. Unopposed Bills are, under the present system, most carefully watched in all their details; and I think, if this financial question is the one question to be raised, it could very properly be left to the judgment of my hon. Friend (Mr. Courtney) and two other hon. Members. If we refer the Bill to a Select Committee, we shall find that an appearance is put in by a large number of Petitioners, every one of whom would demand another long inquiry.

Mr. L. L. COHEN (Paddington, N.): I hope the House will allow me to say a few words. I belong neither to one district nor the other; but it appears to me there are positive and evident grounds for not accepting the proposition of the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney). All that the House desires to do now is to determine the narrow point whether interest should or should not be paid out of capital during the construction of the works; and I venture to submit that that is a question which the House is quite competent to decide for itself, and that we require no information from a Committee upon such an extremely narrow point. There can be no question that the promoters of the opposition to this Bill would be in no way prejudiced by not referring the Bill to a Committee. They have no *locus standi* upon this particular question. This is a question as between the House and the promoters of the Bill; and the opponents of the Bill have no particular right to be heard upon it. They have a right to be heard upon questions which affect their particular interests, such as an interference with the estuary of the Mersey; but they have no claim whatever to be heard upon this matter. With respect to the general question, I would point out, from long experience, that if you do not allow the payment of interest out of capital, you will cause the promoters to resort to very undesirable measures; and indirect arrangements for attaining the same end are practicable under the present law, but are very costly. There are, Mr. Speaker, other and more important reasons why every inducement should be offered to the promoters of this Canal to proceed as soon as possible with this work; and one is that there is, at the present time, a great deficiency in the employment of labour. Every month's delay in the commencement of this work prevents the employment of thousands of men in the construction of this Canal. The opponents of this measure allege too much for their own case; if, as they say, the undertaking will be unremunerative, we ought to be grateful to those who, at such a time as the present, undertake a difficult and hazardous enterprize, which will certainly materially add to the amount of available work. But I am much more sanguine of the ultimate result; and, personally, I think we ought, on all grounds, to feel very much indebted to the promoters of this undertaking, and that no impediment whatever ought to be put in the way of its accomplishment.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby): With the leave of the House, I will make a suggestion which I hope will meet the views of hon. Members. If we are allowed a Committee, as proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), I would agree, on behalf of the Petitioners, to exclude from the Reference both the commercial and the engineering question, limiting the Reference to finance. I would also undertake, on behalf of the Mersey Dock Board and the Corporation of Liverpool, to merge their oppositions into one opposition, thus leaving only two oppositions—namely, that of the Corporation and Dock Board merged, and that of the London and North-Western Railway Company.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): I hope the House will not entertain this proposal. I quite agree with my hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees that the Standing Orders to which reference has been made have no application to the facts of this case. We have been asked to remit this question to the Committee. Now, we cannot remit the question to the Committee; the Committee is extinct, and many of its Members may be so also, as far as I know. You cannot remit this question to the Committee on the Bill, and that is what the Standing Order states. You may, of course, create a new Committee; but it would not be the Committee on the Bill to consider the question of finance. The simple question of finance is whether you are to authorize interest to be paid out of capital; and whether you are to constitute a Committee for that purpose appears to me to be a question for the House to determine. As a general principle, the House ought to declare its own opinion; and this certainly appears to be simply an obstructive procedure to send the question to a Committee at all. Perhaps I ought not to object to this as part of the lawful gains of the Profession to which I have the honour to belong; and I can understand the advantage, in that sense, of multiplying these Committees; but a Committee, as I understand it, is appointed to inquire into questions of disputed fact, and there is no question of disputed fact to be referred to a Committee at all; and therefore I hope the House will decide upon the Motion itself, and not consent to refer the Bill to a Committee.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH (Hants, Basingstoke): I have only one word to say in regard to this Bill, and it has reference to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House. He seems to be unaware that all Bills go to a Committee; and the only question we have to decide now is what this Committee shall be—whether the proposition of the Chairman of Ways and Means should be adopted, or that which has been submitted to the House by the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton). The Bill must, under any circumstances, go to a Committee; and the only objection I have to the ordinary course being adopted on this occasion is that we have no security that a very important question as to the relaxation of our Rule in regard to the payment of interest out of capital would be fairly fought out by the promoters of the Bill. If the proposal of the noble Lord is accepted, then all parties would have an opportunity of being heard; but we have no security that the case would be fairly argued unless the parties interested on both sides are heard upon the question. It seems to me that the House ought to allow the matter to be decided in the only way in which it can properly be decided; and the question is whether it should be decided *in camerâ*, by a Committee presided over by the Chairman of Ways and Means, or be fought out by counsel before a Select Committee.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I shall not interfere between the House and a division for more than a few minutes; but I wish to call the attention of the House to some remarks made by one of its most distinguished Members, whose absence we all very much regret to-day—I mean the senior Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). I wish to quote just three lines from his remarks which I think go directly in support of the proposition which has been made by the Chairman of Ways and Means. The question has been raised whether the Ship Canal Bill came technically within the Standing Orders applicable to Railway Bills. The right hon. Gentleman's (Mr. W. E. Forster's) words were these—

> "I think we all of us feel that whatever were the grounds on which Parliament has made this concession to Railways, certainly, if they had foreseen such a Canal as this, they would have made the same restrictions for that Canal. It is clear it must be fought out on its merits, as a question going *pari passu* with railways."

These were the remarks made by the right hon. Gentleman on one of the inquiries before a Committee of this House; and all that is now asked by the opponents of the Bill is that they may be put in the same position this Session as they would have been had the promoters introduced these provisions into the Bill of last Session. If you do not grant the Petitioners that modicum of fair play, you will be doing this—the House will be placing a premium on promoters to come to this House one year with clauses in a measure drawn in a certain way, and then coming again next year, as in this case, to cancel some of those clauses, when their opponents cannot be heard in reply. This matter, as was well pointed out by the Chairman of Committees, involves a serious inroad on the capital authorized by the Bill. The sum to be deducted from capital is £750,000, with something like £80,000 in the shape of commission to the Messrs. Rothschilds. I submit to the House that it is only fair that the opponents and the promoters of the Bill as well should be offered an opportunity of having this matter discussed in Committee on the question of the Standing Orders, as well as to the financial position of the Company itself.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I wish to submit a question of Order to you, Sir, before the division is taken. I have here a list of 15 Members who have a personal interest in this question. One of them is a Director of the London and North Western Railway Company; six are Directors of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company; four are Directors of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lancashire Railway Company; and four are Directors of the Midland Railway Company. Considering the nature of the Standing Orders of the House as to the pecuniary interest of Members in questions which may be brought before us, and also the fact that this is a proposal which is to facilitate the construction of a Canal which may affect the financial position of the Companies I have enumerated, and the dividends which the shareholders of those Companies may receive, I wish to ask you, Sir, if these 15 Members are entitled to vote in the division?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is entirely a matter for the consideration of the individual Members concerned, having regard to the directness of their interest.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to give Notice that if any Member who is in the position I have named takes part in the division I shall call attention to the matter again.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby): Sir, I now beg to move the Resolution of which I have given Notice:—

> "That the Manchester Ship Canal Bill be referred to a Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.
>
> "That all Petitions against the said Bill already presented, or which may be presented not later than three clear days before the sitting of the Committee, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, and Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions."

I am quite willing to exclude from the Reference to the Committee all questions relating to commercial and engineering matters; and that being so, I do not believe that the deliberations of the Committee would last more than two or three days. The Petitions, in point of fact, would be confined to two or three which have already been presented, and even in regard to them I believe that two will be merged into one. I therefore hope that, in accordance with the custom generally observed in this House, the House will not refuse to refer the Bill to the Committee which I propose.

Mr. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I beg to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That the Bill be referred to a Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection."—(*Lord Claud Hamilton.*)

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I hope the House will not agree to this proposal. It seems to me it runs altogether counter to the spirit of the decision we have unanimously arrived at in favour of the second reading of the Bill. The Standing Orders require that the Committee on the Bill shall, in such exceptional cases, fix the rate of interest to be paid during construction, and the time during which it shall be allowed. I may be under a misconception on this point, but it may be that these matters might be settled by the Committee of the Whole House; but if a Select Committee is to be nominated, certainly all questions which were debated at such length and deemed to be finally decided by the Committee which sat on the Bill last year ought to be excluded. I do not wish to repeat anything that has been said before in the course of this debate; but, on the part of the promoters, I want to say that it is not the case that any more capital would be required if a provision is made for payment of interest out of capital during the construction of works. I must point out that the amount of capital for that purpose has already been provided in the Bill which has been submitted to the House; and although the clause for the payment of interest out of capital was struck out, the amount was still left in; and, therefore, with all necessary deductions, the amount of £750,000 is still available, and sufficient to provide interest during the construction of the works. That is a matter for the consideration of the tribunal to which the

Bill may be referred. I beg to move, as an Amendment to the Motion of the noble Lord, to insert, after the words "referred to a Committee," the words—

> "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to consider and determine only what rate of interest shall be allowed under Clause 3 of the Bill, and the time during which such interest shall be paid, according to sub-sections 1 and 2 of Standing Order 167."

The conditions attaching to the relaxations which may be given in certain cases in regard to Railway Bills are in most respects fixed; but in two subsections they are elastic; and they relate to questions as to the rate of interest to be paid, and the arrangement of the time during which the interest shall be paid. I beg to submit to the House that the Order of Reference should be strictly limited to these two subjects.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Baronet proposes to move this Amendment after the House has decided to refer the Bill to a Committee; but the Question now before the House is that the Bill be referred to a Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection. The Amendment of the right hon. Baronet, therefore, would come in after the Motion of the noble Lord.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY (Oxford University): I am only desirous of saying one word, and that is on behalf of the Committee of Selection. We have no wish to shrink from any duty that may be cast upon us by the House; but I think it will be very unwise for the House to pass any Resolution of this kind. Leave this Bill, like any other Bill, to take the ordinary course. If there are parties affected by the Bill, they are entitled, by the Rules of the House, to become Petitioners; they will present their Petition, and such Petition will be heard in due course. In the first place, it would have to be proved that they have a *locus standi*; and if it should turn out that the Petitioners have no *locus standi*, then the Bill will become an unopposed Bill, and will be considered by the Committee presided over by the Chairman of Ways and Means. In that case the House will have sanctioned, by reading the Bill a second time, the principle of paying interest out of capital; and the one question to be decided will be the amount of capital on which interest is to be paid, and the rate of the interest itself. My right hon. Friend the Member for Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) says there must be a Committee, in accordance with the ordinary Rules of the House. No doubt there will be a Committee; but a Committee on an unopposed Bill consists of the Chairman of Ways and Means, with two Members called in to assist him; and I must say that most of these Bills, and the clauses which they contain, are more carefully scrutinized as unopposed Bills than they would otherwise be. With regard to the present Bill, I am quite sure that my hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means is fully competent to deal with it, with the advice of the Speaker's counsel and two Members of the House.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT) (Oldham): As representing a constituency which is greatly interested in the Bill, I should like to say a word or two in support of what has fallen from my right hon. Friend opposite. When we look at the Bill, and the noble Lord from whom the opposition comes, and who proposes to refer the matter to a Select Committee, we know that the proposition proceeds from those who are decidedly hostile to the measure. I can only regard the object which hon. Members who support this Resolution have in view, and I cannot conceal from myself that it has been suggested with a view, if possible, of smothering the Bill altogether. On that ground I trust the House will not agree to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, as proposed by the noble Lord. I do not see why we should give up any powers we have in order to allow it to go to any four Gentlemen to be nominated by the Committee of Selection. If it is not referred to a Select Committee, it will go naturally before the Chairman of Ways and Means as an unopposed Bill, and no one will have any further interest in opposing the Bill, except those who have a fair and proper *locus standi*.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 61; Noes 375: Majority 314.

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baily, L. R.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bethell, Commander
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bolton, J. C.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Brocklehurst, W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Connolly, L.
Corry, Sir J. P.

Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Courtney, L. H.
Cranborne, Viscount
Dillwyn, L. L.
Duncan, D.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Finlayson, J.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, A. S.
Howard, J.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lowther, hon. W.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
March, Earl of
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Muntz, P. A.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P.
O'Connor, T. P.
Pearce, W.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Percy, Lord A. M.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Ramsay, J.
Rathbone, W.
Roberts, J. (Flnt. Bgs.)
Russell, E. R.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Sturgis, H. P.
Tennant, Sir C.
Thompson, Sir H. M.
Tipping, W.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Trotter, H. J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Watson, J.
Whitley, E.

TELLERS.

Forwood, A. B.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Addison, J. E. W.
Agnew, W.
Ainslie, W. G.
Allen, H. G.
Allison, R. A.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Armitage, B.
Asher, A.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Ashton, T. G.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baggallay, E.
Baker, L. J.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Barnes, A.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bass, Sir A.
Baumann, A. A.
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beith, G.
Bickersteth, R.
Biddulph, M.
Blake, J. A.
Blake, T.
Bolton, T. H.
Boord, T. W.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bright, right hon. J.
Bristowe, T. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buckley, A.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Burt, T.
Buxton, E. N.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, H.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carew, J. L.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Clarke, E. G.
Cobb, H. P.
Cobbold, F. T.
Cohen, L. L.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J.
Compton, Lord W. G.
Condon, T. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cook, E. R.
Coote, T.
Corbet, W. J.
Corbett, A. C.
Cossham, H.
Cowen, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crompton, C.
Cross, H. S.
Crossley, Sir S. B.
Crossley, E.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
Dawson, R.
Deasy, J.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
Denison, E. W.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillon, J.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Egerton, hn. A. J. F.
Egerton, Admiral hon. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Ellis, J. E.
Esslemont, P.
Everett, R. L.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Ferguson, R.
Field, Captain E.
Finch, G. H.
Finucane, J.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Fletcher, B.
Flynn, J. C.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Dr. B.
Fowler, H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gibb, T. E.
Giles, A.
Gilhooly, J.
Gladstone, H. J.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gower, G. G. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Greenall, Sir G.
Gregory, G. B.
Grey, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gunter, Col. R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, C.
Hamilton, Lord F. S.
Hanbury, R. W.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Harker, W.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hartington, Marq. of
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Henry, M.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hibbert, rt. hon. J. T.
Hickman, A.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hobhouse, H.
Holden, A.
Holden, I.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, W. A.
Hutton, J. F.
Illingworth, A.
Ingram, W. J.
Jacks, W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
James, hon. W. H.
James, C.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jennings, L. J.
Johns, J. W.
Johnson-Ferguson, J. E.
Johnston, W.
Joicey, J.
Jones, P.
Jones-Parry, L.
Jordan, J.
Kelly, B.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, M. J.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kilcoursie, right hon. Viscount
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.

Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Leicester, J.
Leighton, S.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Lloyd, W.
Long, W. H.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
MacInnes, M.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Culloch, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Mather, W.
Mellor, rt. hon. J. W.
Menzies, R. S.
Molloy, B. C.
Montagu, S.
More, R. J.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Muncaster, Lord
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Newark, Viscount
Newnes, G.
Noel, E.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Norris, E. S.
Norton, R.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J. (Kerry)
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Paget, T. T.
Parker, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Peacock, R.
Pease, H. F.
Peel, right hn. Sir R.
Pelly, Sir L.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Price, T. P.
Priestly, B.
Pugh, D.
Puleston, J. H.
Pyne, J. D.
Quilter, W. C.
Redmond, J. E.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, H. G.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Ritchie, C. T.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robertson, H.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, T.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Ross, A. H.
Ruston, J.
Rylands, P.
Salis-Schwabe, Col. G.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Saunders, W.
Seely, C.
Sellar, A. C.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheehy, D.
Sheil, E.
Shirley, W. S.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Sitwell, Sir G. R.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Spensley, H.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stewart, M.
Sturrock, P.
Sullivan, D.
Talbot, J. G.
Tanner, C. K.
Taylor, F.
Thomas, A.
Tottenham, A. L.
Trevelyan, rt.hon.G.O.
Tuite, J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Valentine, C. J.
Vanderbyl, P.
Verney, Captain E. H.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Wason, E.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
West, Colonel W. C.
Westlake, J.
Weston, J. D.
Whitbread, S.
White, J. B.
Wiggin, H.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A.
Williams, J. C.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Wilson, J. (Durham)
Wilson, J. (Edinbgh.)
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Yeo, A. F.

TELLERS.

Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Houldsworth, W. H.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I beg leave to move, Sir, that the vote of the right hon. David Plunket in this division be disallowed. He was the only one of the 15 Gentlemen who, after the Question I put to you, Mr. Speaker, about them and your expression of opinion, entered the Division Lobby.

Mr. TIPPING (Stockport): Will you allow me to say, Sir, that I had the honour of going into the Division Lobby, and I am a North-Western Railway Director.

Mr. SEXTON: Will the hon. Member give me his name? Then, Sir, I beg to move that the votes of the right hon. David Plunket and Mr. Tipping in this division be disallowed. Both those Gentlemen are at present Directors of the London and North-Western Railway Company, and in that capacity receive a large pecuniary compensation for their services. That fact alone, I submit, constitutes a conclusive reason why neither of them should intervene in any division in this House concerning the pecuniary interests of that Company. The London and North-Western Railway Company are pecuniarily interested in the matter, for if the Canal is constructed the receipts and the dividends of that Company will be affected; and therefore these two Gentlemen, in addition to being interested as Directors, are interested as shareholders.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Votes of the Right honourable David Plunket and Mr. Tipping be disallowed."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby): I am sorry also, Sir, to call attention to the fact that Mr. Houldsworth, Member for Manchester, and a Director of the Manchester Ship Canal, told in the division.

Mr. PLUNKET (Dublin University): Of course, Mr. Speaker, I submit myself most humbly to the decision of the

House, and I am not going to argue the question at all. I might, perhaps, say that as a Director, whose salary is fixed, this Bill can make no difference to me at all. But, being a Director—I am also a shareholder—and, as far as the hon. Member's (Mr. Sexton's) criticism is a just one, of course it would apply to me on this occasion; but I will only say this much to the House—that if I am an offender on this occasion I am a very old and a very notorious offender, because this precise point was raised against me three years ago by an hon. Member who sits close to the hon. Member for Sligo—I think the hon. Member for South Cork (Mr. J. E. Kenny). I submitted myself to the judgment of the House on that occasion, and a division was taken; and by a majority of 256, I think, against 36, the House, on that occasion, acquitted me. And if the hon. Member should go to a division now I humbly trust the House will acquit me again.

Mr. TIPPING (Stockport): I looked upon the observations of the hon. Member below the Gangway (Mr. Sexton) as a threat—if he will allow me to use the word—as a form of "Boycotting," and I thought it was necessary for me to go into the Lobby at once, and I should do so again under such a threat.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): I will ask the House to hear what the practice has been in this matter. I think it will be well to follow the Rule which certainly, for a great many years, has been followed. I find the following in Sir Thomas Erskine May's work on *Parliamentary Practice*—

> "On the 16th of June, 1846, objection was taken to the vote of a Member who had voted with the Noes, on the ground that he was a Director and shareholder in the Caledonian Railway Company, and had a direct pecuniary interest in the rejection of the Glasgow, Dumfries, and Carlisle Railway Bill. Whereupon he stated that the sole direct interest that he had in the Caledonian Railway was, being the holder of 20 shares, to qualify him to be a Director in that undertaking; and that he voted against the Glasgow, Dumfries, and Carlisle Railway, conceiving it to be in direct competition with the Caledonian Railway, as decided by the Legislature in the last Session."

Mr. SEXTON: He had no salary.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, I presume he had. At all events, he was a shareholder in the Caledonian Company, and he voted against the Glasgow, Dumfries, and Carlisle Railway Bill. The report goes on to say—

> "A question for disallowing his vote, on the ground of direct pecuniary interest, was negatived. On the second reading of the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway Bill, 15th May, 1845, objection was taken to one of the Tellers for the Noes, as being a landholder, whose property would be injured by the proposed line. A Motion for disallowing his vote was withdrawn. On the 15th July, 1872, objection was taken to two of the Tellers in a division who had voted against the Birmingham Sewerage Bill,"

of which the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Blackburn (Sir Robert Peel) will have a lively recollection

> "on the ground of pecuniary interest, but was not sustained."

Then there is the note—

> "And see case of London and North-Western Railway Bill (Mr. Plunket) 8th May, 1883."

Well, as far as the records go, these cases seem to be very similar to the present case, and I think it has not been considered by the House that this is the sort of pecuniary interest which is covered by the Rules. As these precedents seem to extend over 40 years I think that we ought to follow them. If the opponents of this measure are to be put under this ban, its supporters ought to be under the same ban. I think, under these circumstances, a truce ought to be declared.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 81; Noes 291: Majority 210.—(Div. List, No. 22.)

The following is the Entry in the Votes:—

Objection being taken to the Votes of the Right honourable David Plunket, Member for the University of Dublin, and Mr. Tipping, Member for Stockport, who voted with the Ayes, on the ground that they are Directors of the London and North Western Railway Company, and had a direct pecuniary interest in the question before the House:—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Votes of the Right honourable David Plunket and Mr. Tipping be disallowed."

And, the Right honourable David Plunket and Mr. Tipping, being heard in their places, withdrew:—

Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 81, Noes 291.

Bill *committed*.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [2nd March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, whilst not unwilling to consider favourably an application from the said Company, under proper conditions, for power to make arrangements with other Companies tending to economise the cost of transport to the Company, refuses to entertain the same as a mere incident in a Bill for miscellaneous objects, and unaccompanied by the offer of any compensating advantages to the public,"—(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury): I am now prepared to withdraw my Amendment to the second reading of the Bill, and I may, perhaps, be allowed to state the condition under which I am prepared to do so, for I am not quite sure that it was made plain when the question was last before the House. The Company have consented to introduce a clause into their Bill by which it will be provided that in every case of amalgamation or other arrangement with any other Company the terms of that amalgamation shall be submitted to the Board of Trade, and shall be considered by them, or by some tribunal to be appointed by them, whose duty it shall be to see that the terms of such amalgamation or arrangement shall be not only just, but advantageous to the public. The Midland Company are prepared to consent that that provision shall be submitted to the Select Committee which will have to consider the Bill, and the Committee must have power, of course, to insert such a clause. The terms are satisfactory to us, as well as, I hope, to the Board of Trade; and, therefore, so far as we are concerned, the Bill may now be allowed to be read a second time.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I will take the trouble, Mr. Speaker, to remind the House for a moment how this matter stood on Thursday last. The Resolution, or Instruction, which my hon. Friend has mentioned was proposed upon the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for West Wolverhampton (Mr. Hickman) to read this Bill a second time on that day six months. Now, it is most undoubtedly the case that in 1872 the original Midland Bill was obtained from this House upon an absolute promise made to the Select Committee by Mr. Allport, now Sir James Allport, the manager of the railway—a promise made not only to the Committee of the House of Commons, but also to the Committee of the House of Lords—that there should be a lowering of the rates from the Staffordshire district. That promise was given most carefully in the words which were read by my hon. Friend the Member for West Wolverhampton on Tuesday last. But as soon as they had got their Bill that promise was utterly ignored. They entered into an agreement with the London and North Western and the Great Western Railways; and, instead of reducing the rates, the rates at the present time between Staveley and Wolverhampton and London, and Wolverhampton and Staveley and London, are such as give a very large preferential rate in favour of the two points that are most distant; in fact, with regard to coal, the rates between Staveley and London are 1*s.* 3*d.* less in favour of Staffordshire than they are in the case of Wolverhampton. We have, then, a promise clearly made to Parliament—a promise under which the Company obtained the right of entering into these arrangements and joining a line from Walsall to Wolverhampton to the main line; and we find that as soon as they obtained their Bill the promise was utterly ignored. Under these circumstances, my hon. Friend the Member for West Wolverhampton has moved that this Midland Bill should not be read a second time until that promise is fulfilled. A Resolution was then proposed by the hon. Baronet—[Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON: I beg pardon; I moved nothing.] Well, at all events, there is a Resolution upon the Paper standing in the name of the hon. Member for Mid Oxfordshire. That proposition was put forward the other night; but those of us who were sitting at the other end of the House had considerable difficulty in hearing it. It was supposed to meet the difficulty which was raised by my hon. Friend the Member for West Wolverhampton, and was in terms declaring that any agreement made under this Bill should be subject to the approval of the Board of Trade or a tribunal to be named by them. But that was not the difficulty in which we were placed. What we said was this—"You obtained your Bill and the support of the district around Wolverhampton and the South Staffordshire mining district. But you obtained that support on certain terms, for the people came here and gave evidence in favour of your Bill on your undertaking to reduce the rates, and that undertaking you have not yet carried out." Well, a clause which says that any future agreement made between the Midland and the London and North Western and the Great Western Railway Companies shall be under the surveillance of the Board of Trade does not meet this difficulty; and I think the House will be of opinion that I was justified in moving that the further consideration of the Bill should be adjourned until we saw more into it. But now the case stands on a different footing. On behalf of Staffordshire, I say that the Midland Company have frequently broken their promises. I know we were led to believe it was possible that we should have a good thing for the trade of Staffordshire from the action of the Midland. We rather believed, as they say in America, that "one railway spoils a town, two bring it to par, and three make it boom." We thought we should have trade reviving under the new railway arrangements which were to be brought about. But what I am coming to is this. I should not have given way upon this point—I should have taken the sense of the House upon it, because a more flagrant breach of faith I do not remember in the annals of Private Bill legislation — only the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) will introduce his Railway Rates Bill at no distant day, and I hope that that will include a clause to prevent any preferential rates from being given to one district over another, and to give to commercial bodies a *locus standi* to be heard with reference to those rates. If that is so—I think I see my right hon. Friend shake his head—but if that is so, and that Bill is to be brought in speedily, I will not press the case any further now; but it will remain for us to say, when we have heard him introduce his Bill, whether we will move that the consideration of this Bill which is now before us shall be further adjourned until we see what the general Bill for dealing with railway rates is like, or whether we will at once withdraw our opposition and allow the Bill to be read a second time, because the general measure is one likely to prove satisfactory to traders. I need not take up any more of the time of the House now; but this matter is one of the most serious and vital importance. If I were to go on with my case, I could point out how one very large firm in South Staffordshire—a Joint Stock Company—is now in a state of liquidation through having fallen a victim to the present rates upheld by the three Companies. Those rates cannot be cut except by the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mundella) is about to bring forward. Under these circumstances, and hoping that good results may be brought about by the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman is to bring in, I will not now take up any more of the time of the House.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): My hon. Friend the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) has raised a question of some importance. The Midland Railway Company, after conferring with the Board of Trade, have agreed to the insertion of a clause which will entirely meet the objection of my hon. Friend, which will make the rate charged a perfectly reasonable rate, and which will give the Board of Trade a proper control over any arrangement that may be made. Now, my hon. and learned Friend opposite (Mr. Staveley Hill) has complained of some breach of faith committed by the Midland Railway Company so far back as 1872. But this Bill does not deal with Staffordshire rates at all—it has no relation to any question affecting that district. It would be vindictive not to allow it to be read a second time because there is a grievance which ought to be redressed, and which only can be redressed by such a measure as that which I hope to introduce very soon on the subject of railway rates. I may say to my hon. and learned Friend that if an undue preference is given against any locality or Company, then my Bill will be found to deal with it and to provide a remedy. I hope, therefore, that he will not insist on opposing the present Motion, but will allow the Midland Railway Bill to be read a second time on the distinct pledge that a new clause will be introduced into it when it is before the Committee, which will provide for proper arrangements being made.

Mr. LLOYD (Wednesbury): The matter which has just been referred to and explained by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade does not in any way affect the question which I wish to bring before the House. The question is not whether these preferential rates should be granted—that is not the question of which we are complaining. The question really is this—the Midland Company, in 1872, came to this House, and before a Select Committee made certain statements that they would give certain advantages if a certain Bill were passed by the House. The House allowed the Bill to be passed upon the distinct pledges made on behalf of the Company that these arrangements should be carried out. It is not a question of preferential rates at all; and, therefore, the Bill which has been mentioned does not meet the case at all. This House is always willing to listen to, and to sympathize with, the toiling multitudes of London and other places. But I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, whether the House is willing to pay any heed to the burdens which are placed upon the toiling multitudes of the Midlands by this Bill, and in consequence of the Midland Railway Company not fulfilling their pledges? It is now suggested that we should be put off again. How? By a Bill which has yet to be brought in. What it may be none of us knows, nor do we know that it will ever pass. The Government may disappear long before their Bill comes to maturity, and the grievance from which we are suffering will not be dealt with and will not be removed. We are anxious that that grievance should be removed. The Midland Railway Company themselves admit the grievance. If you read the Report of the evidence given by Sir James Allport you will see that he admits the grievance in South Staffordshire. A certain number of ironmasters come together; they promote a Bill; the Midland Railway Company take up that Bill; the Bill is brought in entirely for the purpose of bringing competition into South Staffordshire, so that we may have lower rates than those which exist, and which are admitted to be too high. Sir James Allport then says—

> "We will reduce the rates and allow the competition to come in. Your rates shall be reduced."

He goes on—

> "We cannot tell how the charges will remain, or what the cost of certain items will be. It is impossible for us to fix any absolute rates, but you may trust us, because as Staveley is 148 miles off, and we only charge 10*s*. 6*d*. per ton, while Wolverhampton is only 124 miles off, and the present rate there is 15*s*., you may rely upon it that we shall put the Wolverhampton down to the level of the Staveley rate."

When asked whether Staveley had any competition he said—

> "No. It is all in our system. We do it without competition, so you may surely trust us to fulfil our pledge."

Will the House believe it that up to the present time, though all this occurred 14 years ago, no change has been made? It was in 1879 that the line was completed. The ironmasters called upon the Midland Company to redeem their promise, and wrote to them; but then they forgot all those beautiful pledges they had given, and I hope the promises we hear to-day will not be broken in the same kind of way. Forgetting all the promises they had made, they said—"Oh, we have made a compact with the London and North-Western Company, and we cannot do it." In the evidence he gave, Sir James Allport admitted that the rates in Staffordshire were exceptionally high; but three years afterwards he said—

> "We cannot do what you want, because we have made a compact."

How is it that the House allows these compacts to be entered into? How is it that trade is allowed to be crippled by them? Why is it that the toiling miners in Staffordshire and the traders are permitted to be checked by these annulling compacts? What I should like to know is, why do we not make the Companies keep their promises? We ought, I think, to insist upon this pledge being fulfilled, and allow me to say that there is no reason why it should not be kept. During the last debate one hon. Member admitted that the Midland, where there was water competition, reduced the rates. If they voluntarily, of themselves, reduce the rates where it suits them, surely we may ask them to fulfil their own pledge, which cannot be very onerous, and cannot be very painful to them. It has been admitted that they have reduced the rates where the water competition comes against them; and, therefore, Sir, I should very much regret it if the House is willing to give way on this question, and allow these Companies to go on in the old way, with their unsatisfied pledges still remaining unfulfilled. I should hope the House would not again trust to promises when giving new and additional powers to the Midland Company. I therefore hope that some check will be adopted to prevent the continuance of the present high rates. The case has been admitted ever since 1872. The Midland Company then admitted that the rates were too high, and they promised to reduce them. Wages and material never were lower than now, and therefore there is no excuse for the promise not being kept. I hope the House will say—"We insist upon these pledges being fulfilled." I will not trouble the House further; but I do hope that some other hon. Member will take the question up, and will not be satisfied to allow these matters to go on in this way. We hear very much of the claims of the labourers to consideration on both sides of the House. Why not the claims of the ironworkers? The agricultural labourers and the crofters are to be considered; surely the claims of the miners and the ironworkers ought equally to be admitted. Surely it is not because they are quiet bodies, who make no noise, that they are to be neglected. I hope hon. Gentlemen will not any longer allow these pledges to be unfulfilled.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON: With the leave of the House I withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR ARTHUR BASS (Stafford, Burton): I hope the House will not give way in consequence of pathetic appeals as to toiling multitudes. Settle this Bill on common-sense and practical lines. The Bill is a very small and ordinary one. It is a very small Omnibus Bill containing no sort of controversial matter, dealing mainly with the creation of three miles of railway and a few deviations of lines and roads. It does not even seek to raise any capital. The hon. Member for Wednesbury (Mr. Lloyd) will not advance the cause of the toiling multitudes if he rejects this measure, which has nothing to do with South Staffordshire rates. The Midland Company do not at all acknowledge the substantiality of the accusations he makes. The Bill to which he refers was not a Midland, but a Walsall and Wolverhampton Bill; and the evidence of Mr. Allport was given, not as a Midland Director, but on behalf of that Company. The Midland Company traverse entirely the assertions of the hon. Gentleman; but are willing to meet those assertions in the only place where they should be met—upstairs before a Select Committee. The Midland Company do not desire to throw any impediments in the way of the fullest inquiry—they are quite willing that the question shall be fought out before a Committee—but that object would not be gained if the House were to consent to so unusual a step as to reject this Bill on second reading.

MR. STAVELEY HILL: May I add just one word? Mr. Allport, when giving the evidence which has been referred to before a Select Committee, was asked—

> "Do you come here to express the views of the Midland Company with regard to this Bill?"

His answer was—

> "I do."

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

——o——

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—THE MID-ARMAGH DIVISION — DISTURBANCE AT TANDERAGEE.

MR. ALEXANDER BLAINE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the last Election for the Mid-Armagh Division, on the day of the polling at Tanderagee, Mr. Thomas Clarke, of Ballymore, agent for Mr. Dickson, was jostled, hooted, pushed, and nearly knocked down, and pursued from the courthouse by a shouting crowd, and, in the evening, had to take shelter in Mr. Thomas Mathers's from the rabble; whether Mr. John Magenis, of Mullins Hill, was knocked down at the courthouse door and had to run to a house for safety; whether Mr. Thomas Kelly, of Ballykeel, his son, and Mr. Alexander Adair, were surrounded in the street by a mob and savagely beaten with sticks, and Mr. Adams, J.P., driving home after voting, was hooted and stoned, and John Kavanagh threatened that if he did not vote for Sir J. P. Corry they would take his life; whether a bottle was thrown into the passage leading to the polling station, and struck a constable on duty; whether the police were ordered to barrack by Major O'Brien, J.P., when following a mob pursuing a voter, and, on another occasion, having carried off a stick from a rioter, the police were ordered to restore the bludgeon by Major O'Brien, J.P.; and, whether the Government will inquire into the conduct of the resident magistrates, the officers of police, and others accountable at that election for the protection of voters?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): There was a disturbance in Tanderagee on the occasion of the late Armagh Election, caused by some Orange drumming parties coming into the town. Some police and civilians were assaulted, and stones were thrown; but my information differs in several respects from that of the hon. Member. Some of the parties have been identified, and were, I believe, brought before the magistrate today. There was an extra force of Constabulary in the town. There was no Resident Magistrate present, and the police appear to have been in charge of a head constable.

ARMY—ORDNANCE—HEAVY SERVICE GUNS.

Mr. BRAND (Gloucester, Stroud) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Sheffield and Manchester firms holding contracts to deliver steel ingots for the heavy Naval and Army service guns, are completing those contracts to the satisfaction of the War Department?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): Yes, Sir; the firms referred to in the Question are supplying steel forgings for guns to the satisfaction of the War Department.

ARMY—RIFLE RANGES—WORMWOOD SCRUBS.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, When the rifle ranges at Wormwood Scrubs will be re-opened for practice; and, should they not be ready when the shooting season begins on the 1st April, if he will take care to provide accessible range accommodation, to enable the Metropolitan Volunteers to go through the annual class firing required by the War Office?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): Every effort will be made to have these ranges ready for use by the 1st of April. There has been delay in consequence of unfavourable weather.

THE LONDON CUSTOMS—SURVEYORS.

Colonel MAKINS (Essex, S.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If the number of surveyorships in the London Customs, as fixed by the re-organization of 1882, has been reduced, and is to be further reduced by compelling First Class Examining Officers to perform, at a lower salary, the work originally allotted to Surveyors; and if these reductions will have the effect of stopping promotions for a long period, inflicting severe disappointment and pecuniary loss on the Redundant Clerks who had been induced by the prospects of promotion to accept the altered conditions of service incidental to the duties in the Outdoor Department; and, if the Treasury is prepared, in view of the withdrawal of these prospects of promotion, to compensate the late Redundant Clerks, or, as an alternative, to allow them to return to their former employment and conditions of service on equitable terms?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): The number of surveyorships in the London Customs which it was considered would be required when the service was re-organized in 1882 is not now felt to be requisite for the Public Service, and the number is being gradually reduced.

Some of the duties which are now performed by surveyors will in future be performed by first class examining officers, as the remuneration which these latter officers receive is considered sufficient for the performance of those duties. The reduction in the number of the surveyors will naturally have the effect of retarding promotion in the Department. I cannot admit that under these circumstances the officers whose promotion is retarded have any claim to compensation. The services of the officers who, in 1882, joined the outdoor department are not required in their former offices. If the hon. Member will bring to the notice of the Treasury any particular case of hardship from the alteration of 1882, proper inquiry shall be made.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BANTRY PIER.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a statement of account showing amounts of receipts and expenditure in connection with the tolls of the Bantry Pier since its erection, the salary paid to each official, and the name of each official to whom such salary has been paid; if there is a fixed tariff for each vessel discharging and loading cargoes at the pier, and what the tariff is per ton; and, whether a portion of the revenue derived from the tolls will be devoted to the clearing away of the mud convenient to the pier, in order that vessels may be brought to it without difficulty?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to inform the hon. Member that the pier at Bantry was completed in 1872, and in due course handed over to the County of Cork. The Grand Jury of the County alone can supply the particulars asked for. I have, however, received copies of the telegrams, Rules, and Regulations of the pier and Schedule of the tolls, which are entirely at the hon. Member's service.

NAVY — COALING PORTS FOR H.M. SHIPS OF WAR—RETURN OF DEFENDED AND UNDEFENDED PORTS.

Viscount LEWISHAM (Lewisham) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If the Government would be able to grant a Return of British Ports ordinarily used for coaling purposes by Her Majesty's Ships, distinguishing the defended from the undefended Ports, and, as far as can be done without injury to the public service, the amount of coal stored at the various Ports, and the state of their defences?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Osborne Morgan) (Denbighshire, E.): A Return of British ports ordinarily used as coaling stations by Her Majesty's ships would practically embrace all the more important ports of the Empire; and I do not see that their enumeration could serve any useful purpose. To distinguish the defended from the undefended ports would, in the interests of the Public Service, be very undesirable, and might also turn out to be misleading, as a port might appear in the Return as "undefended" because no permanent land defences had been erected there, whereas the Admiral on the station might have taken very efficient though unobtrusive steps to protect it against naval attack. If, however, the noble Lord will refer to Parliamentary Papers 4,186 and 4,226, on the defence of Colonial Possessions, published in 1884, he will see what has been done in the direction of fortifying our principal coaling stations. I am sorry I cannot consent to grant a Return of the quantity of coal stored at the various ports and the state of their defences. The quantity of coal varies, and any such Return could only be approximately accurate and to some extent misleading; while the Return itself might, for reasons which the noble Lord will doubtless understand, prove very detrimental to the Public Service.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SUB-COMMISSIONERS — SITTINGS IN CORK CITY.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of the Sub-Commissioners in the county of Cork to sit in Cork City in the ordinary course?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Yes, Sir; it is their intention.

PUBLIC LUNATIC ASYLUMS, IRELAND.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Boards of Visitors of Public Lunatic Asylums in England are empowered to grant to the officials and servants of those institutions who have served twenty years, and attained the age of fifty, pensions amounting to two-thirds the annual value of the salary and emoluments of such officials and servants; whether officials and servants of similar institutions in Ireland enjoy considerably smaller salaries and emoluments, and cannot, under similar circumstances, be awarded pensions exceeding one-third of the value of their salaries and emoluments unless the Treasury, by warrant under sec. 4 of 22 Vic. c. 26, declares that the service requires professional or peculiar qualifications, and that a number of years, not exceeding twenty, for the purposes of estimating pension, be added to the period of service of such officials and servants; whether the contribution of the Treasury to the Irish Public Asylum Service is now limited to the annual sum of four shillings for each lunatic; whether all other expenses are borne by the Irish Counties; and, whether it is intended to use the powers vested in the Treasury by sec. 4 of 22 Vic. c. 26, or to confer on Boards of Governors of District Lunatic Asylums in Ireland the discretionary powers as to pensions possessed by similar Boards in England?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The liberality of the scale of pensions for officers and servants in lunatic asylums in England is rather understated in the first paragraph of my hon. Friend's Question. I believe that, as a matter of fact, these fortunate persons are treated in respect of pension pretty much on the same footing as Her Majesty's Judges, and far better than permanent Under Secretaries of State. In Ireland these officers and servants are pensioned on the lines of the Civil Service Superannuation Act. In Scotland, I understand, they have no pensions at all. I do not think it would be possible to induce Parliament to sanction again such terms as have been given in England. My hon. Friend further asks that all appointments in lunatic asylums in Ireland should be treated exceptionally under the provisions of Clause 4 of the Superannuation Act. Looking, however, to the analogy of the Public Service generally, I fear it would be difficult to make a case that would satisfy the Treasury of the sufficiency of the claim. I should explain that the Treasury contribution to public lunatic asylums both in England and Ireland is at the rate of 4*s*. per head per week, and not per annum.

IRELAND—THE LEGISLATIVE UNION—ADDRESS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

SIR JAMES CORRY (for Mr. JOHNSTON) (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table of the House the Address presented, on Thursday the 4th instant, by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, to the Lord Lieutenant, in which it is said—

> "We are firmly persuaded that the maintenance of the legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland, in its full integrity, is essential to the material prosperity and the internal peace of the country; and the Presbyterians of Ireland, amounting to half a million of the population, will, therefore, oppose to the utmost of their power every measure which would tend to disturb it?"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Mr. Speaker, I confess I do not see the object of laying on the Table of the House Addresses presented to the Lord Lieutenant which are already published in the daily papers. However, if the hon. Member thinks fit to move for this particular one I shall, of course, have it laid upon the Table.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Did the Lord Lieutenant make any reply to the Address; and, if so, will that be laid upon the Table?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I really cannot say.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Will the Return include the reply?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: No doubt, if the hon. Member will move for the reply as well as the Address, he can have it.

SIR JAMES CORRY: On behalf of my hon. Friend I beg to give Notice that I will move that the Address and reply be laid on the Table.

ARMS' LICENCES (IRELAND)—CASE OF JOHN DUNSEATH.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that a man named John Dunseath was prosecuted by the Excise authorities, at the Stewartstown Petty Sessions, on the 6th

January 1886, for having arms without a licence; whether the facts were clearly proved by three witnesses named James M'Keown, Thomas Conlan, and Jane Magowan, no contrary evidence being adduced, and that, notwithstanding the protest of Mr. French, R.M., the unpaid magistrates dismissed the case; whether the same John Dunseath was further prosecuted by the Queen, at the complaint of Sergeant Matthew Price, for having arms in his possession at Stewartstown, contrary to the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act; whether the said John Dunseath was proved, by the evidence of the three before-mentioned witnesses, to have had and presented a revolver at an unarmed crowd on the 2nd December 1885; whether this case was also dismissed by the same unpaid magistrates, Mr. French, R.M. leaving the bench after recording his dissent; whether the chairman, Mr. C. Stanley, J.P. is correctly reported as having said—

> "You see, the presentation of the implement, whatever it was, had the desired effect of frightening the people;"

and, whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been, or will be, directed to the conduct of these unpaid magistrates?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Mr. Speaker, I understand that John Dunseath was prosecuted on the two charges mentioned in the hon. Member's Question. The evidence was given as stated; but the charge was dismissed by the majority of the Bench, Mr. French, R.M., dissenting. It is, I believe, correct that Mr. Stanley, during the course of the trial, made the observation attributed to him. His explanation is that his observation was a jocular one. An appeal has been taken against the decision of the magistrates, and is now pending.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—THE CODE FOR 1886.

MR. MENZIES (Perthshire, E.) asked the Vice President of the Scotch Education Department, Whether he is willing to postpone the operation of the Scotch Code for 1886, to a later date than the 31st of December 1886, so as to allow sufficient time for preparation in the case of schools where a new school year has lately begun?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): In consequence of the representations made upon the subject, a Minute will be laid before Parliament postponing the operation of the Code for 1886 to the 31st of March, 1887.

BOUNTIES ON FOREIGN GOODS.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether any and what endeavours are being made, or recommended by the Board of Trade to the Foreign Office, to induce the abolition of subsidies or bounties on Foreign goods imported into British markets, or to prevent the importation and sale of subsidised goods in competition with British goods not so subsidised?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): The subject of the hon. Member's Question is one of those which is being inquired into by the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade, and the Board of Trade will take into consideration any recommendations they may make respecting it. Her Majesty's Government, as at present advised, while disapproving of any interference with trade, whether by bounties or by protective duties, are not aware that they have any means of inducing or compelling foreign Governments to abandon them. They have no intention of entering upon a war of tariffs against bounties which, whatever harm they may do in other ways, certainly have the effect of giving English consumers cheap foreign sugar at the expense of the foreign taxpayer.

MR. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was aware that the Prime Minister, during his previous Administration, replying to a deputation which waited upon him in reference to this subject, said he could not view with any favour a cheapness artificially brought about by foreign bounties?

MR. MUNDELLA: I am not aware of such an answer. If the hon. Member desires me to reply to the Question, perhaps he will give me Notice of it.

POST OFFICE—THE AMERICAN MAILS.

MR. GILES (Southampton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, When the Committee on the American Mails is likely to be re-appointed?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton): No steps have yet been taken towards re-appointing the Committee on the American Mails question; but the matter shall receive the consideration of the Government.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH OFFICE AT BUNDORAN.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Why the Postal Telegraph station at Bundoran Junction was recently closed, first for the delivery of telegrams and afterwards for their receipt for transmission; and, whether, having regard to the great inconvenience caused thereby, he will cause the office at Bundoran Junction to be re-opened?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the telegraph business was transacted at Bundoran Junction Station, on behalf of the Post Office, by the Great Northern Railway of Ireland. The delivery of messages was discontinued in May, 1882, at the request of the Railway Company, because they were unable to spare their porters or obtain messengers; and the collection of messages was stopped in December last also, at the instance of the Railway Company, because they were unable to make satisfactory arrangements for signalling telegrams. The number of messages dealt with at Bundoran was not sufficient to justify the opening of a telegraph office by the Post Office.

METROPOLIS—CLERKENWELL AND COLDBATH FIELDS PRISONS.

Mr. HOWARD SPENSLEY (Finsbury, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in reference to his letter to the Vestry Clerk of Clerkenwell, on the subject of the demolition of the two prisons of Clerkenwell and Coldbath Fields, Whether, as the matter in the present state of the labour market is pressing, he will endeavour to make a statement of his decision at an early date to the House, or will fix a day to receive a deputation from that Vestry?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Broadhurst) (Birmingham, Bordesley) (who replied) said: My hon. Friend appears to think that these prisons are at the disposal of the Secretary of State, and that he has only to order them to be pulled down. This is not the case. His first duty was to reconvey them to the county authorities. A few days ago he received their final refusal. It is now his business to sell them on the best terms he can; and the statute prescribes what shall be done with the proceeds. Negotiations for their sale are now proceeding. Considering the many interests involved, he cannot precipitate his action; but he will tell my hon. Friend when the sale is effected.

INSPECTORS OF IRISH FISHERIES—LOANS.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware of a great number of applications for loans having been lately sent in by the fishermen of the Galway Coast to the inspectors of Irish fisheries, and that no decision thereon has been communicated to the applicants; and, if he will inquire as to the cause of the delay in granting such loans and take such steps as he may consider advisable to enable these and other poor fishermen to avail of the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund Act, which was passed for their benefit?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that although some delay has taken place in dealing with these applications they are now being proceeded with as rapidly as possible. Some time must always be occupied in making the necessary inquiries and examining the records of previous transactions with the same applicants. The loans are numerous and of small amount.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE DONAGHMORE UNION.

Mr. O'MARA (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Local Government Board will favourably consider the proposal to merge the Donaghmore Union in the adjoining Unions of Roscrea and Abbyleix, with a view to relieving the ratepayers of that portion of the Queen's County of an unnecessary burden?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne):

The Local Government Board have sanctioned this proposal.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MURDER OF PATRICK FINLAY.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the case of the murder of the process server, Patrick Finlay, in Woodford, county Galway, it was a fact that his widow, while returning through the town after having seen the murdered body of her husband, was received with laughter, jeering, and hooting, and if the foul crime caused general satisfaction, and also if the body had been refused burial in consecrated ground, and a coffin could not be obtained within a distance of twelve miles, and who had carried out his burial; whether also the authorities had considered it necessary to place a guard over Mrs. Finlay's house, and if they considered her life in danger, and would render protection to her and any other boycotted persons in Woodford and its neighbourhood; and, whether also, by the murder of her husband, Mrs. Finlay has been deprived of her sole means of existence?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): As this Question appears without Notice I have not been able to ascertain the facts with respect to all the points mentioned in it. From a police report which reached me this morning, however, I learned that a coffin had to be procured from a distance and brought under police escort; that as no one could be got to bury the deceased it had to be done by the police; and that the state of public feeling in Woodford is extremely bad.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE BARROW DRAINAGE.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to have printed and circulated the Report of the Barrow Drainage Commission; and, if so, how soon it may be expected?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Yes; the Report is in print, and was presented to Parliament on the 19th of last month.

STEAMSHIPS BETWEEN VANCOUVER AND JAPAN—THE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he will state the names of the gentlemen on the Inter-departmental Committee to whom the question of the advisability of subsidising a line of steamships between Vancouver and Japan has been referred?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): The Inter-departmental Committee to whom the advisability of subsidizing a line of steamships between Vancouver and Japan was referred by the late Government consisted of General Sir Andrew Clarke, Inspector General of Fortifications, representing the War Office; Captain Codrington, R.N., a Lord of the Admiralty, representing that Department; Mr. Barrington, representing the Treasury; Mr. Rea, representing the Post Office; and Mr. Bramston, representing the Colonial Office. When the late Government resigned Office the Committee lapsed, but it has been revived; and, so far as I am aware, no alteration in the constitution of the Committee is contemplated.

MOTIONS.

—o—

MEETING OF THE HOUSE.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): I rise, Sir, to make the usual Motion with reference to Ash Wednesday. I beg to move that this House do meet to-morrow at 2 of the clock.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will meet To-morrow at Two of the clock."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) asked his right hon. Friend whether there was really any necessity to make this Motion? To-morrow the first Order of the Day was a Bill relating to local government, which would probably not take long. The next Bill on the Paper was one in which the House, and especially the English Members, took a good deal of interest. It related to Sunday Closing. In order to give more time for the discussion of that measure, he hoped his right hon. Friend would withdraw his Motion, and allow the House to meet at the usual hour.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 156; Noes 82: Majority 74.—(Div. List, No. 23.)

CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN WALES.

RESOLUTION.

MR. DILLWYN, in rising to move the following Resolution:—

> "That, as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers to only a small minority of the population, its continuance as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist,"

said, that the Church of England prided itself on being the Church whose ordinances and discipline commended themselves to the majority of the people of the country. It might be that the Church of England commended itself to the majority of the people of that country; but, at any rate, no Church could justify its position as the Established Church of a country unless it was the Church of the majority. He now proposed to bring this question before the House, solely on the ground of the nationality of Wales and of the Welsh Church. So far as the English people were concerned, he did not intend to say anything with regard to their wishes. As a Welshman, representing a Welsh constituency, he well knew that, whatever the position the Church of England might hold in England as the National Church, it was not the National Church in Wales in any shape or form; and if the Welsh people had their way it would be swept away without any delay. The principles upon which a Church should be maintained as a National Established Church were well laid down by the present Prime Minister on a former occasion. The right hon. Gentleman, after stating that a Church should only be retained as an Established Church when it was the Church of the majority of the people and in sympathy with them, went on to say that—

> "An establishment that neither did nor was doing work except for a few, and those few a portion of the community whose claims to public aid were the smallest of all, an establishment severed from the mass of the people by an impassable gulf and a wall of brass—an establishment whose good offices would be intercepted by a long unbroken chain of shameful recollections—an establishment leaning for support upon the extraneous aid of a State—a Church which had become distasteful to the people—such an establishment would do well for its own sake to devote itself, as soon as it might, to shaking off the trammels that surrounded it, and commence a new career without assistance from without, but seeking its strength from within."

He accepted that as the definite ground on which the Welsh Church should be disestablished, and he would show that in the case of Wales all the conditions laid down by the Prime Minister were entirely fulfilled. He should show that the Church of England in Wales had not fulfilled its duty, and that at the present day it was severed as though by an impassable gulf and a wall of brass from the Welsh people. As for many years there had been no Religious Census, they had no means of knowing exactly the number of members of the English Church in Wales. Some conception of the numbers could, however, be gained from a debate in that House in 1870. The discussion turned upon the relative numbers of religious denominations in Wales; and the Prime Minister stated, though not on his own authority, that the members of the Church in Wales were as one in four. Even one in four would not, he (Mr. Dillwyn) thought, justify the position of the Church in Wales; but his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Osborne Morgan) afterwards alleged, and he believed, much more justly, that the number was one in seven, and his own information went to prove that the proportion was much smaller than that. A letter appeared the other day in a North Welsh paper which gave the attendance at church, based on a careful analysis of the proportions between the two Churches, as one in eight. That was nearly his own opinion. But they did not rest their conclusions altogether on the estimates of others. The Nonconformists of Wales had made a very careful calculation as to the numbers of the different religious denominations of that country, from which it appeared that there were 253,016 Congregationalists, 250,274 Calvinistic Methodists, 144,307 Baptists, 78,506 Wesleyans, 17,767 Primitive Methodists, and 8,000 of different small sects, making a total of 751,944. Taking the number of Nonconformist children at 223,871, of those who professed no religion at 100,000, of Roman Catholics at 50,000, there would be a population of 1,125,825 out of a total Welsh population—according to the Census of 1881—of 1,343,227, leaving about 217,400, or about one-eighth of the whole, who were professed members of the Church of England. The case against the Church of England in Wales was really underrated by these figures, inasmuch as many of those who were dependent upon the territorial and wealthy classes were induced to curry favour with their masters by professing that they were members of the Church of England, whereas, in fact, they were Nonconformists at heart. A discount must also be made from the number of the Church of England members in Wales on account of the English foreigners who were resident in the country. The overwhelming majority of the Welsh population, therefore, consisted of Nonconformists. He was now speaking in the presence of Welsh Members. He hoped those hon. Members would speak in the debate. If they did, they would be able to say whether he was over-stating or under-stating the case. At all events, he had, as far as he was able, only submitted facts to the consideration of the House. He perceived there were two Amendments to his Resolution. One of those stood in the name of the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), who opposed the Resolution with a direct negative. Then there was another by the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), who proposed to leave out the words after the word "population," and to insert the words—

> "This House is of opinion that the time has arrived for introducing, without delay, into its organization such reforms as will enable it to adapt itself more effectually to the religious needs and wishes of the Welsh people."

His right hon. Friend knew little of Wales. If he knew as much about that country as he (Mr Dillwyn) did, he would be aware that among the Welsh people there was no hostility between Nonconformists and Churchmen as such. The disinclination of the people was not towards the members of the Church, but to an Establishment at all, which was repulsive to their habits and thoughts. What was once said by the Prime Minister on this subject was quite true—namely, that a wall of brass had been raised between the Church in Wales and the general body of the inhabitants, who could never forget the long chapter of persecution which had characterized the Church in its relations to the people. For 200 years the Church had been in possession of Wales, and during that period, in spite of her power and status, she had undoubtedly betrayed her trust. The Church first came into existence there in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, but so disgraceful was the apathy, drunkenness, and vice of the clergy that the people took refuge in Nonconformity. Amongst the Church clergy in those times was a man named Henry, who denounced the scandalous and evil lives of the clergy, and who endeavoured, as far as he could, to introduce reforms. But what was his reward? He was put on his trial, and paid the penalty of his zeal and temerity on the scaffold. This was one instance of the persecution which attended efforts of reformers, and there were numerous cases of a similar nature. The evidence which he (Mr. Dillwyn) would now submit to the House, showing how the Church in Wales had failed completely in her mission, would not be drawn from Nonconformist sources, but from the testimony of Churchmen themselves. Those instances he would refer to in the briefest terms possible. The Prime Minister had said that the bitter and unhappy memories of the Church's history in Wales had raised a wall of brass between that institution and the people of the country. The Church had at all times so conducted her ministrations as to maintain that wall of brass. In 1681 a magistrate in Oswestry, addressing Nonconformists, reminded them that the magistrates had acquired power, which, by the grace of God, they would keep, and not allow to rust. That was not the tone by which the Church would recommend itself to poor people. Yet that was the tone which was adopted, and which finally had ended in thoroughly alienating the Welsh people from the Establishment. During the recent elections, and for some time previously, he had gone a great deal among the people of Wales, and he found that the utmost enthusiasm and unanimity of opinion prevailed among Welshmen on this vital question. He did not think that any attempt would be made to controvert the facts he had stated. One objection which had been raised was that it would be impossible to separate the Welsh and the English people, because they were practically one people, and that it would be impossible to abolish the Church without, at the same time, causing a separation between the two peoples. That objection had been raised in former years, and had been fully answered by Mr. Justice Williams, an able lawyer, who gave it as his opinion that the abolition of the Church in Wales was quite feasible, and that there would be no more difficulty in abolishing the Church in Wales than there would be in abolishing it in Norfolk, Lancashire, or any other county of England. Those who contended that Wales and England were practically one country did not really understand the character of Welshmen. In his opinion the Welsh were quite different from the English people in thought, character, and feeling, as well as in religion and language. No one could doubt that there were wide differences, and the differences of language, so far from diminishing of late years, was, he believed, rather on the increase than on the decrease. It must be remembered, too, that this country had acknowledged that there was a difference between the two countries. Within his memory he could remember that the Welsh had a different system of judicature from that of England; their Turnpike Laws were different, and their Sunday Closing Law was different from that which existed in England. He thought, therefore, that it could not be denied that Wales was practically, both in fact and by law, a separate nationality. In this matter of religion they appealed to the justice and the sense of fair play inherent in the English people. It was not a question of liberation, or of policy between one religion and another; it was a claim on the part of a weak and small country against a powerful ruling country. He need hardly point out that Welshmen were loyal and law-abiding. They had not given the authorities in this country any trouble; on the contrary, on all reforms and improvements favoured by England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, Welshmen had always been found ready to assist in carrying those amendments of the law into force. Neither had Welshmen given much trouble on account of any grievances from which they might suffer. They had been content to cast in their lot with the inhabitants of this country, and they were still quite content to do so; but the question of religion would not be allowed to stand where it was in Wales. The Welsh people were thoroughly in earnest about this subject; and although hitherto they might have been disinclined to force it on the attention of Parliament in consequence of other pressing business, they were now determined to press it, if they could, to a solution. Welshmen were deeply religious in sentiment; but they wished to have their own religion. A few days ago he observed the sale of an advowson in Liverpool, in which a living was sold, after a sharp competition, between High and Low Church. That system of handing over the entire population of a locality to the highest bidder was one which the Welsh people could not and would not tolerate. Some time ago a Commission was appointed to inquire into the subject of education in Wales. The Report made by that Commission was that the Welsh were a deeply religious people, and that they had covered the whole country with their chapels, which they supported and maintained. He would not now say any more. He was speaking in the presence of his countrymen, who, he hoped, would speak and vote on this question, and he would conclude by moving the Motion which stood in his name—

> "That, as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object, as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers to only a small minority of the population, its continuance as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist."

He would ask Members on this side of the House, and he ventured to ask Members on the other side of the House, if that was a right state of things? They all, he knew, wished to do as they would be done by; and, that being so, he would ask Members of the Church of England, if such a state of things existed in England as existed in Wales, would they allow it to continue for a single moment? He would move the Resolution standing in his name on the Paper.

Mr. RICHARD (Merthyr Tydvil), in seconding the Resolution, said: I must own that I approach the subject which engages our attention this evening with some reluctance, because I know how difficult it is to discuss questions of this nature without giving some pain to good men whom one honours and esteems, and with whom we may be in sympathy on many points of higher importance than those which pertain to the externals of religion. I wish especially to avoid casting any opprobrious imputation upon the present members of the Church of England in Wales. If some of the things we have to describe in connection with the past history of that Church are grievous and scandalous, the responsibility does not rest upon them, but upon that system of ecclesiastical rule adopted and pursued by the English Government towards the Welsh Church—a system which, I think, presents as deplorable an illustration as can be found anywhere of the evils which flow from making a Christian Church a mere creature of the State, dependent upon its caprices, and subservient to its unscrupulous worldly designs. Like my hon. Friend, I am not going to argue this question on the abstract principle as to the justice, wisdom, or expediency of civil establishments of religion. My hon. Friend has put his Motion in a purely practical form. Our contention is, that the Church of England in Wales is not, and never has been, the Church of Wales; that it has failed to win the love and loyalty of the people, and has never discharged, in anything approaching a satisfactory manner, its own professed function as the religious instructor of the nation. For a large part of its history it has partaken very much the character of an alien institution, imposed upon the country from without for purely political purposes. A significant indication of this is afforded by the fact that to this day, in the common parlance of the people, it is known, not as the Episcopal Church, or the National Church, still less as the Church of Wales, but invariably as the Church of England—*eglwys Loegr*—a designation probably importing traditions of repugnance and hostility from the time when England was the enemy of Welsh freedom and independence, and the Church of England was the Church of the invader and conqueror. And, indeed, for generations the Church was employed, especially under Norman rule, as an instrument for the extinction of the Welsh language and the suppression of Welsh nationality. For this purpose English Bishops were forced upon the British Church—men of arrogant temper and boundless rapacity, whose sole inspiration was hatred towards the native Welsh. We have a very curious and a very touching illustration of this in the appeal, still extant, which was sent by the Welsh Princes to Pope Innocent, in the Reign of Henry III.—

> "The Archbishop of Canterbury, as a matter of course, sends us English Bishops ignorant of the manners and language of our land, who cannot preach the Word of God to the people, nor receive their confessions but through interpreters. And these Bishops that they send us from England, as they neither love us nor our land, but rather persecute and oppress us with an innate and deep-rooted hatred, seek not the welfare of our souls; their ambition is to rule over us, and not to benefit us, and on this account they do not but very rarely fulfil the duties of their pastoral office. And, whatever they can lay their hands upon, or get from us, whether by right or wrong, they carry into England, and waste and consume the whole of the profits obtained from us, in abbeys and lands given to them by the King of England."

This stupid policy, of course, failed, as it richly deserved to fail. The hatred of the alien episcopate towards their flocks was cordially reciprocated. Some of them could maintain their position only by being surrounded with a body of armed retainers; and whenever the British arms prevailed the Norman ecclesiastics had to scuttle over the Border, while the people showed their detestation and scorn for them by burning their episcopal palaces. But how did it fare with the Welsh Church after the Reformation? Some of my clerical countrymen indulge in a fond historical dream to the effect that, after the accession of the Tudors, there was a golden age for their Church, when it was ruled by native Bishops, and enjoyed a season of great spiritual prosperity. But it is only a dream, with which the reality does not correspond. There was, no doubt, a certain number of Welsh Bishops then appointed—as many as 30 in 157 years. But that brought little improvement in the religious condition of the country—so far otherwise, that I venture to say it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the utter — one might almost say the contemptuous—

neglect with which Wales was treated during the early years of the Reformation. To begin with, what surely must be regarded as the first duty of a Protestant Church—that of supplying the people with the sacred Scriptures in their own language—how does the account stand with the Welsh Established Church in this respect? Dr. Llewellyn, in his account of the Welsh versions of the Bible, tells us that—

> "For upwards of 70 years from the settlement of the Reformation by Queen Elizabeth, for near 100 years from Britain's separation from the Church of Rome, there were no Bibles in Wales, except in the cathedrals and parish churches."

In the year 1563 an Act of Parliament was passed ordering the translation of the Scriptures into Welsh, the Preamble of which recites that—

> "Her Majesty's most loving and obedient subjects of Wales, being no small part of this Realm, are utterly destitute of God's Holy Word, and do remain in the like or rather more darkness and ignorance than they were in times of Papistry."

Well, the same Act ordered the Welsh Bishops, under heavy penalties, to translate the Bible into the Welsh language within three years. But this was not done until 25 years later, and then it was done not by the Bishops, but by the simple vicar of a parish in Denbighshire, Dr. William Morgan, whose name and memory deserve to be held in lasting and grateful remembrance by the people of Wales. In the absence of the Scriptures, there was all the more need of an earnest personal ministry among the clergy. But what was the case? I believe for 100 years there was scarcely any preaching or teaching of the people in the churches. Strype, in his *Annals of the Reformation* and his *Life of Archbishop Parker*, gives us some curious and very melancholy glimpses into the state of the Welsh Church in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth. He says that for two or three years Llandaff had no Bishop at all, and the great dilapidations had so impoverished the See that nobody liked to meddle with it. Bangor was out of order, there being no preaching used, and pensionary concubinacy openly continued; which was, allowance of concubines to the clergy by paying a pension, notwithstanding the liberty of marriage granted. In 1587 Dr. Hughes, Bishop of St. Asaph, was charged with misgoverning his diocese; and, an inquiry being made, it was found that he himself held 16 rich livings *in commendam;* that most of the great livings were in possession of persons who lived out of the country, and only three preachers resided on their livings. If we come down to the Reign of James I., we have the testimony of a most admirable man, himself a clergyman of the Church, known and venerated to this day in Wales, as Vicar Pritchard, of Llandovery. He says that in his time not one in a hundred of his countrymen could read the Bible; that no copy of the Scriptures was to be found even in the mansions of many of the gentry; that the country was sunk in ignorance and immorality of every description, while "the clergy were asleep, leaving the people to sin unwarned and unrebuked." If we come down lower still, we find that in the year 1623 Dr. Baily, Bishop of Bangor, paid a visit to the parishes, or some of the parishes, in his diocese, in Anglesea, Carnarvonshire, Merionethshire, and Montgomeryshire. His report of what he found is still partially extant. In parish after parish the reports are these—

> "There have been only two sermons here for the last 12 months;" "No sermon here for five years;" "Never any preaching here;" "Only two sermons in a twelvemonth;" "The curate here spends his time in taverns, is a public drunkard and brawler."

We come down a few years later. In 1651 a clergyman of the name of Edwards translated an English book into the Welsh language. In his preface he deplores the neglect into which the Welsh language had fallen among the instructors of the people, and declares that among the Church clergy scarcely one in 15 knew how to read and write in Welsh. Following down the chain of evidence, we come to 1677, when another work was published, it is supposed by a clergyman of the name of Thomas, called *The Welshman's Friend*, in which he says—

> "It pains me to be obliged to say that in each of the Welsh Bishoprics 40 or 60 churches may be found without anyone in them on Sundays, even in the middle of summer, when the roads are driest and the weather finest."

And this he ascribes to "the utter neglect which prevails among us Welsh Churchmen." I have come down nearly to the end of the 17th century. Did matters mend at the beginning of the 18th century? In 1721 the Rev. Erasmus Sanders published his *View of the State of Religion in the Diocese of St. David's*, in which he draws a most deplorable picture of the state of things then. He describes several churches, which he specifies by name, as totally decayed—

> "They only serve for the solitary habitations of owls and jackdaws. The Christian service," he goes on, "is totally disused in some places; in others half-served, there being several churches where we rarely, if at all, meet with preaching or catechism, or the administration of the Holy Communion."

Well, about the middle of the 18th century there arose in the Church a most admirable man—the Rev. Griffith Jones, of Llanddawror—who was the founder of the celebrated circulating schools. In one of his writings he speaks of the—

> "Lazy vicars and rectors who have led a careless life from their youth, and have set their minds on keeping company and going unsteadily from tavern to tavern,"

and who are—

> "as ignorant of their mother tongue as they are of Greek and Hebrew; and, therefore, without sense of shame, preach in English in the most purely Welsh assemblies throughout the country."

After the Revolution the English Government reverted to the old policy of attempting to extinguish the Welsh language and nationality by appointing only English Bishops to Welsh Sees. For 150 years not a single Welshman was raised to the Episcopal Bench in his own country. To understand the full significance of this fact, it must be borne in mind that during the whole of that time the overwhelming majority of the people were Welsh-speaking, and knew no other language but Welsh. The Prime Minister, in a speech quoted the other night by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, estimated the number of people in Wales now who speak hardly anything but their own tongue at 800,000. But, for the far greater part of the period to which I have just referred, the proportion of the people of Wales who spoke only Welsh must have been much larger than it is now, for then there was far less intercourse with England than there is at present, and there were very few schools in which the English language was taught. Now, I ask the Members of the Church of England in this House to imagine—if, indeed, so monstrous a supposition is conceivable—how they would have felt if for 150 years all the Episcopal Sees in England had been filled with Frenchmen, or Germans, or Italians, absolutely ignorant of the English language. What were the fruits of this extraordinary system in Wales? The alien Bishops, as a rule, lived wholly apart from the people, and even from the clergy. Some of them did not reside in the country, and one, at least, during the whole term of his episcopate, never once set his foot in his diocese. But while neglecting their spiritual duties, they displayed the most rapacious spirit as regards the temporalities of the Church. The apostolic injunction that Bishops should not be greedy of filthy lucre did not seem to have attracted their regard; but there was another precept to which they paid the most religious heed, that—

> "If a man provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he is worse than an infidel."

They lavished honours and emoluments with the most shameful prodigality upon their own relatives and friends, to the utter neglect of the native clergy; and thus nearly all the highest offices in the Church were in the hands of men who were ignorant of the language of the people to whom they were to minister in holy things. The daring extent to which this system of nepotism was carried was almost incredible. So late as the year 1836, Mr. Benjamin Hall, afterwards Lord Llanover, stated in this House that in the diocese of St. Asaph a relation of the then late Bishop had 11 sources of emolument, producing between £6,000 and £7,000 a-year, and that the total amount enjoyed by the Bishop and the relations of former Bishops was £23,679, and exceeded the whole amount enjoyed by all the other residents and native clergy put together. At length this scandalous system attracted the attention of this House; and in the year 1835, by a small majority, a clause was inserted in the Pluralities and Non-Residence Bill, to the effect that no person who did not possess a thorough knowledge of the Wesh language should be appointed to any Bishopric or living in Wales. But the House of Lords, whose function it is, we know, to impose a check upon the rash and hasty legislation of this House, exercised their function on that occasion, and erased that part of the clause that related to the Bishops, as they did not think it necessary that the primary pastors of the Church should have any knowledge of the language of the people over whom they ruled. And so this system of alien Bishops continued until some 14 or 15 years ago, when the present Prime Minister, infinitely to his honour, broke in upon this dismal monopoly of incompetence by appointing, for the first time in more than 150 years, a thoroughly Welsh-speaking clergyman to the diocese of St. Asaph. I suppose that the other part of the clause referred to proved inoperative, for I find that in 1838 another Act was passed against the appointment of clergymen to vacant benefices in Wales without a previous competent knowledge of the language of the parishioners. But this led to a state of things in some respects worse than before. Englishmen were still presented to Welsh benefices, who, after a few months' study of the language, tried to preach in Welsh, but in the attempt committed such gross and ludicrous blunders as taxed to the utmost the gravity of their hearers, and turned religion into burlesque. In order to help them, a clerical agent in Wales sent round a circular to this effect—

> "Sir,—We have been requested by influential parties to publish, from time to time, sets of sermons in Welsh for the assistance of the clergy in Wales. . . . . They will be very plain and practical, and translated in a popular, preachable style by an able translator, and one accustomed to instruct the poor. Owing to the extra expense necessarily attendant upon translations, &c., 12 sermons will be charged 30*s.* and single sermons 3*s.* each."

Under these circumstances, it is no wonder that everything fell into neglect and disorder; that the churches got into a ruinous condition; that even Sunday services were often omitted for weeks and months, and, when performed, were performed in a manner that provoked ridicule, and then something which I refer to with reluctance—the clergy themselves fell into disreputable courses. I do not like to dwell on this. They were my own countrymen; they were placed in circumstances that exposed them to temptations for which we must make great allowance; none of their ecclesiastical superiors took the slightest interest in them, or exercised the slightest supervision over them—they were abandoned to themselves, and no wonder that they fell into habits I would rather not characterize. I will only read an extract from a speech delivered by Mr. G. B. Hughes at the Church Congress in 1879, in which he described the state of things as it existed within living memory—

> "The Holy Communion was administered at most four times a year—rarely that. The churches were miserably out of repair, ruinous in some intances; always damp, mouldy, and unwholesome; the pews fast falling into decay, in many cases incapable of occupation; but, alas! seldom put to the test. . . . . The services were slovenly and irreverent, the congregation —what wonder?—miserably small. The singing was often confined to a painful solo, executed by the 'Amen' clerk. In one parish a woman was clerk. Save at the Bishop's visitation, the clergy were never brought together. The archdeacons never visited, and ruridecanal meetings were unknown. It is a painful and humiliating picture to present to you. I have not, I think, exaggerated it. No wonder to find Dissent in nearly every parish flourish and abound. . . . . What the clergy were I hesitate to say; but we are met to hear and speak the truth. If a clergyman was sober, moral, and respectable, it was, I fear, an exceptionally fortunate parish that claimed him."

Lord Aberdare followed this speaker, and a more competent witness could not be found, for he has been from his youth a steadfast and zealous friend of the Church in Wales, and has done much to promote its reform. He bore similar testimony, and said the account just given in no way exaggerated the state of things, such as he himself remembered them when a young man. The House will observe that all the testimony I have cited, from the Reformation to our own time, is testimony from members of the Church of England. I might cite the testimony of Nonconformists equally explicit; but I carefully avoid doing so, confining myself to testimony of members of the Establishment. Thus I have illustrated a period of 300 years; and during the whole of the time I maintain, and I think I have proved, that the Church of England has failed or disregarded its professed duty as the religious instructor of the Welsh people. Yet, in spite of all this, there is probably at this moment no part of the United Kingdom—I think I might say no part of the world—so amply supplied with the means of religious worship and instruction as the Principality of Wales

And I think I may venture to add that the inhabitants of Wales are as intelligent, as religious, as moral, and as orderly a people as can be found in any quarter of the globe. To what is the country indebted for its Christian civilization? Beyond all doubt mainly to the labours of the Nonconformists. Nonconformity originated in Wales in the Reign of Charles I. by a few Puritan clergy, who were driven out of the Church for the excess of their zeal. During the short period of the Commonwealth they displayed great activity. But when the Restoration came persecution was renewed with redoubled severity. Nowhere was the penal legislation of the Reign of Charles II. more pitilessly enforced than in Wales. Mr. Arthur Johnnes, the author of a remarkable work *On the Causes of Dissent in Wales*, though a zealous Churchman, pays this generous tribute to the zeal and courage of their ministers—

> "Even in the persecuting times of the Stuarts the Nonconformist pastors still continued to traverse the wild hills of the Principality, braving all dangers for the sake of their few and scattered followers. Their congregations still met in fear and trembling, generally at midnight, or in woods and caverns, amid the gloomiest recesses of the mountains."

And whenever there was a lull in the tempest they did more. They promoted education. They printed and disseminated religious books, and were specially active in the printing and circulation of the Bible. During the half-century following 1630 the persecuted Nonconformists published nine editions, consisting of about 30,000 copies of the whole Bible, and 40,000 of the New Testament alone. About the middle of the last century the Methodist revival arose, and added an immense impulse to the activity of Nonconformity in Wales; and their efforts to provide the means of religious instruction, which had been so grievously neglected by the official Church, were indefatigable. The Nonconformists were, especially in the early part of their history, for the most part a very poor people. Yet, have they not succeeded in covering the whole face of the country with the means of religious instruction? To show the rapidity with which this was done, let me cite the following figures of the number of Nonconformist places of worship in the Principality at five different periods. In 1742 there were 105; in 1775, 171; in 1816, 993; in 1861, 2,927; in 1884, 4,200. But not only have Nonconformists provided the religion for the people; they have provided the literature for the people of Wales. An interesting and exhaustive Paper was read at the Church Congress at Swansea in 1879—the production of a clergyman, the Rev. David Williams; and he, speaking of the periodical literature of Wales, said they numbered 12 weeklies, two quarterlies, and 18 monthlies; and out of that number the Nonconformists supported the two quarterlies, 16 monthlies, and 10 weeklies—

> "The native Press is almost entirely in the hands of Dissenters, the proportion in publications being the same as in the populations between Churchmen and Nonconformists. Out of 32 Welsh periodicals the Church claims the significant number of four. This number is the exponent both of her history in the past and her strength in the present."

I am happy to add that within the last 25 or 30 years there has been a great improvement in the Church in Wales. I readily and ungrudgingly acknowledge that. Dilapidated churches have been repaired or rebuilt, and new ones erected, and the services are conducted with far more earnestness and zeal; and we have seen clergymen devoting themselves zealously to the duties of their high calling, ready to go forth into the streets and byways and compel wanderers to come in, and not unwilling to tempt a stray lamb from the Nonconformist fold. But it is too late. We are obliged to say to these good people—"Others have laboured, and ye are entering into their labour." In many parts of Wales the literal truth is, clergymen had nothing to do but to try and pervert Nonconformists. I turn to the latest official statistics—those of 1851, when Wales had a population of 1,180,944. The Established Church had provided Church accommodation for 301,897, or 30 per cent; the Nonconformists 699,232, or 70 per cent; and, assuming with Mr. Horace Mann that the Church should provide 48 per cent, it followed that the Church fell short of its requirements by 387,672, while the Nonconformists exceeded their supply by 2,879. The same Return showed in the attendance at public worship—Churchmen, 22 per cent; Nonconformists, 78 per cent; and the difference, I believe, is now greater than in 1851. A similar proportion existed in regard to Sunday Schools and general education. I appeal to the candour and justice of hon. Gentlemen opposite whether this is not an anomaly that cannot be tolerated? The only argument I have heard against the proposal of my hon. Friend is that, except for conventional purposes, there is really no Welsh Church — that it is only a part of the Church of England, and, therefore, cannot be dealt with alone. Well, I am not very much dismayed by this difficulty. We can remember the time when the same reason was urged to show the impossibility of touching the Irish Church. Properly speaking, we were told there was no Church of Ireland, but only the United Church of England and Ireland—the two Churches having at the time of the Union been joined together by a compact so solemn and binding, that Her Majesty the Queen could not give her consent to any measure for dissolving that compact without incurring the danger of committing perjury, and bringing her Crown into jeopardy. And as for providing legislation for Ireland distinct from England, the suggestion was scouted as an absurdity. Ireland was as much a part of the United Kingdom as Yorkshire or Lancashire, and must be governed by the same laws. The sense of justice, however, and the urgent necessity of the case, triumphed over these foregone conclusions as respects Ireland, as they will triumph as respects Wales. The Welsh are an eminently loyal people. Every soldier in Wales might be taken out of it, and the country would still be quiet and tranquil. If anything could disturb the loyalty of Wales and engender discontent it would be to be told that their union with England would hold them in bondage to this alien system. Therefore I say—"For your own sakes look fairly and candidly at this matter." I appeal to the justice and generosity of Englishmen to liberate the Welsh people from what they feel to be an anomaly that ought to be swept away, and they will gain a thousandfold by the gratitude and loyalty of my countrymen.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers to only a small minority of the population, its continuance as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

Mr. ALBERT GREY (Northumberland, Tyneside), in rising to move, as an Amendment, to leave out all the words after the word "population," in line 4, and to insert the words—

"This House is of opinion that the time has arrived for introducing, without delay, into its organization such reforms as will enable it to adapt itself more efficiently to the religious needs and wishes of the Welsh people,"

said, he had listened with interest and also with some surprise to the speech made in support of the Resolution by the Mover and the discursive historical lecture of his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil. Those speeches had been directed against the past and the present form of the Establishment; but not one word had been directed against the principle of a National Establishment itself. That was a fact of great significance, considering that this was the first move of the Liberation Society in this Parliament. He understood the hon. Member for Swansea to say that what the Welsh people objected to especially was the establishment of a Church of England in Wales, and that they would not object to the establishment of a Welsh Church.

Mr. DILLWYN, interposing, said, the hon. Member had misunderstood him. He had said nothing about the establishment of a Welsh Church.

Mr. ALBERT GREY said, the hon. Member had confined his attack to the present application of the national principle in Wales; and this being so he would be wasting the time of the House were he to attempt to defend the principle of Establishment, inasmuch as it had not been attacked by either of the hon. Members who had spoken. If he should succeed in proving that the evils which the hon. Members attacked were the results of causes which were not essential to Establishment, and which were capable of being removed without recourse to the drastic remedy of Disestablishment, he hoped that the hon. Members would accept his Amendment, if they could do so without running the risk of being misunderstood by their constituents. He admitted the substantial accuracy of the facts which the hon. Members had adduced. He admitted that among the bulk of the Welsh people the National Establishment was regarded as an alien Church—as a Church of conquest which had supplanted their own native Church; as an instrument of conquest of which use had been made to try and win the Welsh people from their native tongue, and to Anglicize rather than to evangelize the people. It could not be disputed—and he made this statement with great reluctance—that the revenues of the National Establishment intended for the religious education of the whole people had been appropriated to the exclusive use of a small minority, chiefly drawn from the wealthier classes. The Dean of Bangor, speaking on this subject before the Church Congress at Swansea in 1879, said—

> "The Church in Wales has lost five-sixths of the Welsh-speaking people, and her strength survives among the English-speaking upper and middle classes."

It was monstrous and indefensible that the revenues intended for the religious instruction of the whole people should have been appropriated to the exclusive use of a small and wealthy minority. But when all this was granted, it by no means necessarily followed that a case for Disestablishment had been made out. It followed that there was an irresistible case for the immediate passing of such reforms as would make the National Establishment the Welsh Church and not the Church of England in Wales. He entreated hon. Members opposite, inasmuch as it was impossible for them to controvert these facts, to give a little generous consideration to proposals of reform that might be made by a friend of the Church, because the existing evils were so scandalous and indefensible, that unless reforms were speedily initiated and pushed through the House, it would be almost impossible for any power in the House, either on the Treasury Bench or the Benches opposite, to avert for even a short period the Disestablishment of the National Church in Wales. He therefore accepted the first part of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn)—

> "That the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers to only a small minority of the population."

Could he have anticipated the speeches that had been delivered that evening, for the words "Church of England in Wales" in the Resolution he would have proposed to substitute the words "National Establishment for the support of religion." He would have done this because the term "Church of England in Wales" was rather misleading. It implied a sectarian institution, irrevocably pledged to immutable forms, protected and privileged by the State because of its sectarian character, and governed by an ecclesiastical hierarchy independent of State control. Now, such a view of the Church was not warranted by the facts. What was called the Church of England in Wales was only the National Organization through which, under such conditions as Parliament might impose, religious ministrations were offered gratuitously to everyone willing to accept them. He agreed with the hon. Member for Swansea that the application of the whole income derived from Church property to support the religious services of a small minority was a monstrous injustice and scandal. What, then, it might be asked, was the difference between that hon. Member and himself? While the hon. Member thought that the scandal was one which could only be removed by Disestablishment, he held that it could be removed by a policy of Church reform. The hon. Member advocated the displacement of the National Establishment; he was in favour of its development by such reforms as would make it the Church of the Welsh people, to be controlled by them, under such conditions as Parliament might impose, for the religious advancement of the whole community. From what source were the large revenues of the National Establishment in Wales derived? He was sorry that his hon. Friend the Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) was prevented from bringing in his Motion for a Select Committee to inquire into the revenues of the Church, and he hoped that although that Motion was blocked, it might still be brought on. These revenues represented the accumulated gifts of private individuals. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, that was one of the interesting points which a Committee of Inquiry would clear up. His contention was that the revenues represented the accumulated gifts of individuals ranging over several centuries which had been handed over to the State for the support of the national religion. The position of the State was that of trustee, and two main conditions regulated its great and sacred trust. The first was that these revenues should be administered by the State for the spiritual education of the people at large; and the second, that they should be administered in such a way as to insure the greatest possible result. The State had from time to time changed the conditions regulating the administration of the funds of the National Church, and there was nothing to prevent its doing so again. There was every reason why it should do so whenever such charges as had been made that evening could be substantiated. He might be told that that was an Erastian proposition which could not be countenanced by true Churchmen. In this connection he might draw attention to a recent correspondence between the Bishop of St. Asaph and the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel) upon the subject of the Church of Wales. The Bishop in that correspondence said that he freely admitted that it was the duty of the Legislature to enact laws to promote the best use of ecclesiastical endowments for the glory of God and the spiritual welfare of the people. He would like to ask what care the State had taken in the past to see that these Church revenues should be properly administered? The House had been told by the hon. Member for Swansea that the State had so administered its trust as to divert the Church revenues from the mass of the people, and appropriate them exclusively to one-sixth of the people at large. That fact alone showed that the State had neglected and betrayed its trust. It stood up before the country in the character of a negligent and faithless trustee. It had taken no precaution to secure that the Church funds should be used in the best way to promote the spiritual well-being of the people at large. This was the the charge which was brought against the State; but so far from this charge being a justification for the abandonment of the trust committed to it, it was, in his (Mr. Albert Grey's) opinion, a reason why the State should see to the fulfilment of the trust it had so long neglected. The betrayal of a trust could not be made a reason for its abandonment. What was the present position of the Church in Wales and in England also? The people for whom the Church existed had no voice whatever in the management of the affairs relating to their own parish churches. The parson and the patron alone had power. The patron of a living might put any man he pleased into that living, and the people had no power to remonstrate; and the clergyman, when once appointed, had the power of doing whatever he liked. They had in the National Church an aristocratic and sacerdotal form of government, the result of which, in this democratic age, had been to turn the people away from the Church, and to prompt them to seek for the spiritual consolation they might require, not in the churches belonging to the National Establishment, but in Nonconformist chapels. How was that state of things to be remedied? By placing the churches in the hands of the people for whom they existed. The people should have some voice in the appointment of the minister, and they should also have some control over the minister when he was appointed. In Wales there certainly could be no question that the aristocratic form of government had absolutely failed. Let them, therefore, abandon this aristocratic form of government, and go in for a church democracy. It might be said that that would be a dangerous policy, and that license and riot might ensue. It would be easy to devise safeguards against this possibility. The law of the land carefully defined the limits within which the services of the Church should be conducted, and within those limits there were many different ways of conducting the services. His complaint was that at present the clergyman, who was an irresponsible and powerful autocrat, could alone exercise any choice in the matter. That was not right. The people, for whom the Church existed, in conjunction with the clergyman, should be allowed to settle what services allowed by law should be held in the parish church; whether the national service should be in Welsh or English; at what hour the English service should be held; at what hour the Welsh service should be held; what hymn book should be used, and all other such points There were two arguments which might be adduced against that proposal. One body of objectors said that that was too great a power to intrust to the people;

while others said that the power was not sufficient, The first body of objectors, however, must remember that, even if the people in the parish were given the power now enjoyed by the minister, it would be absolutely impossible for them to overstep those limits which were carefully laid down by Act of Parliament. To the second body of objectors he would say that if, after the people had been enfranchised, after they had got the power of managing their own Church affairs, it was even then impossible for them to get services congenial to their own tastes and feelings, it would be in their power to bring pressure upon Parliament to relax somewhat the Act of Uniformity. He did not, however, wish to pursue that subject further. He only wished to point out that it would be in the power of future Parliaments, should the people desire it, to relax the Act of Uniformity in such a way as to allow of greater flexibility in the use of the Book of Common Prayer and the enrichment of it by additional offices He wished particularly to draw the attention of the House to the point that, whereas the hostility to the National Establishment in Wales had been owing to its aristocratic and feudal and Conservative government, if it was the desire to win back the people to the Church, they must be prepared to give them, under such conditions as Parliament might deem it right to impose, a share in the control and management of the affairs of their own parish churches. He might be asked what hope there was that such reforms as these would bring back the Welsh people to the National Establishment. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard) had delivered an interesting historical address; but he was going to quote against the hon. Member another Member of the House, whose opinion would be accepted on all Church matters as of great authority—the Prime Minister, whom, he regretted to hear, was absent through indisposition. In a speech the right hon. Gentleman delivered in 1870 he said that it appeared from history that so long as the sympathies of the nation were cultivated the Church had been perfectly acceptable to the people of Wales. The Prime Minister declared that the proposition was completely sustained by history that the people of Wales had been the staunchest Churchmen so long as their Church was administered in a spirit of sympathy with the national feeling. The fact was that the people of Wales had been alienated simply because the National Establishment, since the Revolution, had been working in opposition to the prejudices of Welshmen. Was there any reason, then, to suppose that if they gave to the people of Wales the management of their own Church they would not become the same staunch Churchmen as they were in the days of yore? In Switzerland formerly the Church was most unpopular. The patron, as in England and Wales, regarded his patronage as a means of making his son rich or the husband of his daughter rich. [*Ironical cheers from the Opposition.*] He did not understand the cheers of hon. Gentlmen opposite; but he might state that this interested dispensation of patronage in Switzerland alienated the common people from the Establishment; the clergy were out of sympathy with them, and the Church was hated by the majority of the Swiss nation. But now in Switzerland they had adopted democratic reforms in the Church; the people had a voice in the appointment of the ministers, and a control over the services of the parish churches. The result was that the ministers were in close sympathy with the people, and Dissent had almost disappeared. He hoped he had made his position clear. It was his hope that reforms of a popular and democratic character would be adopted in time by that House, which would transfer to the people a large share of the power which was now monopolized by the patron and parson. That policy was, he believed, infinitely more in accordance with the rising Liberalism of the present day than the destructive policy of Disestablishment. He stood at an advantage as compared with the hon. Member for Swansea. In his Amendment he proposed a policy liberal and democratic. What was the policy of the hon. Member for Swansea? He had listened in vain for any intimation of what the hon. Gentleman intended to do; and had the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil supplied the deficiency? Not at all. Was the hon. Member going to disestablish without disendowing? If he was, it would be an infamous act of robbery, because it would be depriving the people of Wales of a great national inheritance, and be giving money belonging to the nation to a sect. He was confident that neither the people of Wales nor that House would ever consent to this. Well, then, was the hon. Member going to disendow as well as disestablish the National Church in Wales? If so, how was he going to appropriate the endowments? Was he, as proposed by Mr. Justice Williams, going to divert them to secular purposes? The people of this country would never consent to the secularization of revenues and desecration of fabrics devoted to the religious education of the people. Well, then, if the hon. Gentleman was not ready with a policy, why not accept the policy which he had suggested? [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members might laugh; but he would say he compared favourably with the Mover of the Motion in that he had a clear and intelligible policy, while his hon. Friend had come without a scheme or a policy to ask the House to pass an abstract Resolution. He hoped the House would give his Amendment a favourable consideration, and that hon. Gentlemen opposite would recognize the importance of reforming the Church without delay. He had heard ugly rumours in the Lobby that if by the favour of the House his Amendment should be carried, hon. Gentlemen opposite would then vote against the amended Resolution. If they did they would render themselves liable to the accusation that they were not only against Disestablishment, but against all reform. There was nothing in his Amendment that need frighten hon. Gentlemen opposite. They need not read his views in it. The hon. Member for Swansea said that a wall of brass divided the Church of Wales from the people. Well, if they wanted to break down that wall of brass let them introduce the principle of local self-government; let them nationalize the Church; let them make what was called the Church of the English in Wales the Church of the Welsh; let them make it not only the Church of the clergy and of the wealthy minority, but the Church of the people, governed and controlled by the people in each parish, as the people acting through their representatives might decide, always provided such control did not conflict with the regulations laid down by Parliament. It was a Liberal and Democratic Amendment, and as such he, with confidence, submitted it to the consideration of that Democratic Asssembly. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

MR. MAC INNES (Northumberland, Hexham) seconded the Amendment, and, in doing so, said, that everybody knew how unsatisfactory had been the position of the Church in Wales for ages past. The hon. Member who introduced this Motion had proved abundantly what little sympathy there was at present between the vast majority of the people of Wales and the Church as it now existed in that country. But as the House had listened to the two interesting speeches of the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution, and heard of the vice, drunkenness, and immorality in connection with the clergy of the Principality in years gone by, as well as the gross system of nepotism that prevailed, surely it must have occurred to many hon. Members that if the case had been stated *mutatis mutandis*, the same thing would have applied to other parts of the country besides Wales. And, therefore, perhaps the House would listen to a few observations from him, although he could not claim to be the Representative of a Welsh constituency. His hon. Friend below him (Mr. Albert Grey) acknowledged that the present state of things in Wales involved an anomaly and an injustice that must be dealt with. The question was, how the Church should be dealt with? This matter was not to be dealt with as hon. Gentlemen opposite were about to deal with it, by meeting the Resolution with a direct negative, but they should try to obtain a measure of reform that would meet the necessities of the case. They might be told, perhaps, that it was now too late—that the time was past for reform. Those were fatal words to write over the door of any institution, and any institution over which they were written was inevitably doomed. He trusted, however, that it was not too late to reform the Church in Wales. His reason for seconding the Amendment of his hon. Friend was because he thought that on this, the first occasion which any matter of Church discipline had come before a new House of Commons, it was well that those hon. Members who felt strongly on matters of reform should see one more effort made to introduce a scheme of reform—so bold, generous, and far-reaching—that they might try whether in this matter it might not be possible once more to do good by amending and reforming rather than by destroying any institution in the country. It was for that reason he begged to second the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Northumberland.

Amendment proposed,

> To leave out all the words after the word "population," in line 4, and insert the words, "this House is of opinion that the time has arrived for introducing, without delay, into its organisation such reforms as will enable it to adapt itself more efficiently to the religious needs and wishes of the Welsh people,"—(*Mr. Albert Grey*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. RAIKES (Cambridge University) said, he was sure that hon. Members on that side of the House would join with him in the expression of satisfaction at seeing the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) sufficiently restored to health to take part in this debate. He hoped to imitate the candour with which the Mover and Seconder of the Motion had handled their arguments. As to the Amendment which suggested Church reform as a universal panacea, it was really more embarrassing to him than the Motion, for he did not entirely disagree with the principle underlying it. But the proposition was not really germane to the subject now under discussion, and was only calculated to lead the House away from the real question raised by the Motion. He quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman who proposed the Amendment, that the second part of the Motion was exceedingly vague. The assertion that—

> "The continuance of the Church of England in Wales as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly and injustice which ought no longer to exist,"

appeared to be characterized by intentional vagueness. Some years ago the late Mr. Watkin Williams brought forward a Motion which in its first part was very like the present Motion; but in the second part it declared that Disendowment ought to follow, and that the funds ought to be devoted to secular purposes. But the present Motion was so vague that it would be open to some of its supporters to say that they were not in favour of Disendowment; while others said that, though in favour of Disendowment, they were not in favour of applying the funds to secular purposes; and a third set of its supporters might assert that they were in favour of Disendowment and of the funds being applied to secular purposes. There was some ground for complaint that the Motion had been brought forward at all. He thought that, by common consent, hon. Gentlemen opposite were not to raise Church questions in the present Parliament. ["Oh, oh!"] He did not refer to individual Members; but there was conveyed to the minds of the Opposition the impression that, following the lead of the Prime Minister, the Liberal Party had taken up the attitude of postponing for the next few Sessions of Parliament the consideration of Church questions. ["No, no!"] At all events, a great many Members of the present Parliament owed their election to an attitude of that description. He feared he must describe the observations of the hon. Member for Swansea as being of too general a character. Nor did he think the hon. Gentleman went into the question with that closeness of argument which the House would have expected from him. He (Mr. Raikes) objected to his phrase, "Church of England in Wales." That phrase in this connection he thought misleading, and represented an opinion for which there was no foundation. It represented that the Church of England was regarded in Wales as an alien and intrusive institution. ["Hear, hear!"] There might be Welshmen who thought so; but he had lived in Wales for 35 years, and had heard many arguments against the Church, but never this one. He also objected to the reference of the hon. Member for Swansea to the fact that he was a Welsh Member, and that the Welsh Members generally were of certain opinions on this subject, as if upon this question a Welsh Member stood in any different position from that of an English Member. Retrograde as our policy might be in the future, we had not yet gone back so far as to regard Wales as a Principality and entity separate from England. It would be a fatal day for Wales if such a thing came to pass. The hon. Member pointed to the fact that Wales once had its own Chief Justice, though this office was now abolished; that there were Turnpike Acts which applied to Wales and not to England—but that was due to particular local circumstances not at all affecting the Welsh counties at large — and that a Sunday Closing Bill had been passed for Wales. But this last fact did not show that Wales was to be treated as a separate entity. It was merely due to the circumstance that the Welsh people were willing to accept it, while the English people were not. The hon. Member had referred to some remarks made by the present Prime Minister in 1869 on the Irish Church Bill; but in 1870, when speaking on Mr. Watkin Williams's Motion in favour of Church Disestablishment in Wales, the Prime Minister pointed out that the whole history of the case in Wales was entirely different from that in Ireland. Whatever view might be taken of the anomaly of the Established Church in Wales, it would be, said the Prime Minister, the greatest exaggeration to represent the attitude of the Dissenting bodies in Wales to the Established Church as similar to that of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland to the Established Church in Ireland. He need not dwell at any length on the interesting historical review which the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had given them. The hon. Member was well informed on all Welsh questions, having paid special attention to them, and he always listened to him with interest. But when the hon. Member spoke of the Church in Wales as being an "alien institution," and the "Church of the invader and conqueror," the hon. Member was too good an antiquary not to know that the Church existed in Wales long before the English arrived there, or, indeed, in any part of this Island. The hon. Member must be aware that the ancient British Church existed in the mountainous districts of Wales before St. Augustine came to Canterbury, St. Patrick to Ireland, or St. Columba to Scotland. To represent the Church in Wales as the Church of the invader and the conqueror, appeared to him to be an entire misrepresentation, which, while no doubt unintentional, was calculated to mislead those outside the House who did not know the facts so well as the hon. Member. Reference had also been made by the hon. Member to English Bishops being forced on the Welsh under Saxon and Norman rule. He should like to know any instance of a Bishop being forced on the Welsh by Saxon Sovereigns, for, as a matter of fact, they were not able to establish their authority over the Welsh, who had their own Archbishop. But even if these matters were as the hon. Member represented them, he should like to know what practical bearing they had on the question before the House. As he did not wish it to be supposed that he had allowed anything to go by default, he would now state clearly the position he took. With reference to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), he should feel bound to vote ultimately against the Amendment of the hon. Member if it should become the substantive Motion, because it accepted the premisses of the first part of the original Motion. For his part, he was not prepared to assent to the proposition that the Church in Wales had failed to perform its professed object to minister to the religious interests of the Welsh people. He did not know what object it professed; but he could show that the Church had been far more successful in ministering to the religious interests of the Welsh people than the hon. Member would have them believe. Nor did he believe that the Church ministered but to a small minority of the population. He admitted the Church was in a minority; but he denied that it was in so small a minority as had been represented. Therefore, he objected as strongly to the admissions of principle conceded by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northumberland as he did to the conclusions of the original Motion. There was one contribution to the discussion of this question which should not be unnoticed in addition to the speeches they had heard that night. In November last an interesting contribution to contemporary literature on this subject proceeded from the pen of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies. In that paper he gave no uncertain sound in advocating the proposition now put before the House; and it was remarkable, having regard to the confidence which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had in the views of the Welsh population towards the Established Church, that he had not recently seized an opportunity of being re-elected. One or two subjects alluded to by the right hon. and learned Member he should like to notice. He stated that the chapels were crammed to suffocation, and that the churches were empty. On referring to a newspaper called *Y Goleuad*, one of the organs of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, he found various facts set forth with reference to chapel building. He could not go into all the figures, but he would select some of the instances given. In the parish of Trimsaran he found that a chapel had been built with 500 sittings at a cost of £1,200, of which £1,100 was unpaid, and the congregation numbered 40. At Blaenrhondda, which the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard) might know something about, as it was in his district, a chapel to seat 550 had been built at a cost of £1,740, and the debt upon it was £1,765. The number of the members of that congregation was 79. He could run through a long list of similar cases, but he would merely rely upon the last, which was at Penmaenmawr, where he found that a chapel had been built containing 230 seats at a cost of £1,200, of which £940 remained unpaid, while the congregation numbered 18. He ought, in justice, however, to remark that he was referring only to communicant members of the congregation; but he believed that if the communicants were multiplied by four, it would give a fair average of the attendants at the services; and 18 multiplied by four gave 72, which could hardly crowd to suffocation a chapel with 230 sittings, unless the Welsh were a very peculiar people. He had no disposition to throw discredit upon the very laudable and honourable exertions of the Welsh people to provide chapel accommodation for themselves, because they deserved the highest praise for the earnestness and zeal with which they had endeavoured to supply in even more than sufficiency their religious wants. He wished, however, to point out how unreliable the statistics were that had been put forward by hon. Members opposite, doubtless with perfect good faith in their accuracy. He wished now to come to the large and broad question of the possibility of separating the Church in Wales from the Church of England. Hon. Members opposite spoke glibly enough on the subject; but he doubted whether they could define what they included in the expression Wales. Was it a geographical Wales, an ethnological Wales, an ecclesiastical Wales, or the Wales that was included in the registration districts? Of the four dioceses into which Wales was divided two—those of Llandaff and St. Asaph—included portions of England. Were only those parts of those dioceses that were in Wales to be disestablished, and were those portions which were in England to remain established? With regard to the statistics put forward by hon. Members opposite, he absolutely declined to accept them as in any respect final or reliable, inasmuch as the allies of those hon. Members had frustrated the endeavours of Parliament to obtain an accurate religious census of the country. In such circumstances, it could not be right to accept the unofficial religious census which they had put forward, and which had been drawn up by irresponsible persons. These statistics were noticeable for the discrepancies which occurred in those put forward by different Nonconformist bodies. He wished to point out the original manner in which the number of Churchmen in this instance was ascertained by Dr. Rees and other gentlemen. They found that there were 253,000 Congregationalists, 250,000 Calvinistic Methodists, 144,000 Baptists, 78,000 Wesleyans, 17,000 Primitive Methodists, and so on; but, after going through the list in this manner, Dr. Rees found that he had got about 500,000 persons left. Instead, however, of making the Church a present of the residuum he was pleased to put all those persons down as of the non-religious order. Dr. Rees, having had his attention called to this curious feature of his calculations, was also apparently informed that there were some Roman Catholics in Wales; he therefore took off 30,000 for Roman Catholics. Having done this, he seems to have thought that, on the whole, the fairest thing to do with the 470,000 people left was to give 220,000 to the Church, and 250,000 to the non-religious order. But how, why, when, and in what manner he arrived at that distinguishing line which separated the parties in such nearly equal proportions could not be gathered, because, unhappily, Dr. Rees was no longer alive, and his statistics could not be explained by any living person, except, perhaps, the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Hussey Vivian). The hon. Member for Swansea, when he made his speech in 1883, estimated the number of Churchmen on somewhat the same principle, putting the number down as 142,000, and the non-religious 150,000. That evening, however, the hon. Member had estimated the number of Churchmen at 217,000, as against 100,000 non-religious persons. Taking the hon. Member's figures, therefore, the House would see that he himself had made out a very small excess on behalf of the largest Nonconformist denominations as compared with the number he was willing to allow to the Church. Even on the statistics which had been submitted to the House by hon. Members opposite—taking their accuracy for granted—he thought a fair case had been made out for assuming that the Church was still considerably the most numerous denomination in Wales. Dealing next with the failure of the Church in Wales, he stated that he had been at pains, in view of this discussion, to enter into communication with the clergy in North Wales as to certain points. A certain number of questions were put to the clergymen, and he found from the replies which had been returned to his inquiries that in 164 parishes in the diocese of St. Asaph there were 201 Church schools at the present time and 76 Board or British schools. He also found—and this was perhaps the most remarkable and instructive fact which could be found in connection with the attitude of Welsh people towards the Church—that since the Burials Act of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies had been passed, there had been celebrated under the provisions of that Act by Nonconformist ministers in these 164 parishes 666 funerals; while there had been 11,384 funerals according to the rites of the Established Church. He should say that those figures admitted of being largely supplemented, because of the parishes which sent in returns 16 had failed to send in the number of Church funerals. Another question which had been put to the clergymen was with regard to the attendance of Nonconformists on special occasions, such as harvest festivals, public thanksgivings, Christmas Day and New Year observances. He had found that without a single exception Nonconformists frequented the churches in large numbers, and, judging from his own experience in his parish church, he should say that the church, containing from 1,200 to 1,300 persons, was filled at a New-Year's Eve service with a great majority of Nonconformists. Then, again, with respect to the expenditure of the Church in the last 10 years. In the 164 parishes already mentioned he found that £159,550 had been spent on church building and restoration; £14,177 on mission rooms; the increase in endowments from private liberality being £69,963. In 272 parishes in North Wales he found that the total number of Church schools was 321, the number of Board schools 205; the number of funerals under the Burials Act of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, 1,441; the total number of funerals according to the rites of the Established Church, 20,598; the total sum spent in 10 years on church buildings and restorations was £249,046; on mission rooms, £30,740; and the increase in endowments from private liberality £124,349. Having received these statistics, and believing them as he did, he would be wanting in his duty if he allowed the statement to go forth unchallenged that the Church had failed in its object of furthering the religious interests of the Principality, or that it ministered to a mere minority of the population. Church progress had been even more remarkable in some respects in the populous diocese of Llandaff, the particulars of which might be found in the official Year-Book of the Church. The statistics relating to the diocese of St. David's were in nearly the same proportion as those of the diocese of Llandaff. He had one other great fact, which he humbly offered as a basis for computing by a positive method the number of Church people in Wales. He entirely repudiated the system adopted by hon. Gentlemen opposite in estimating everybody they could for their own particular denomination and leaving the balance to the Church. In nine parishes of the diocese of Bangor, not including the seaside towns, there were 1,227 communicants to a population of 9,028, and in a similar district of the diocese of St. Asaph the proportion in entirely rural districts was the same — about one-ninth of the population being communicants. In the diocese of Llandaff the proportion was a little larger, and in that of St. Davids it was about the same. From these figures it might well be judged that the number of the population belonging to the Church were something like one-third. But he did not stop there. In Wales there was a great many Nonconformists who were extremely unwilling that the Church should be disestablished. In Swansea, which might be regarded as the Mecca of Disestablishment, an unknown Conservative candidate polled 2,500 against a Member so long known and respected in that House. The returns of the last elections in Wales showed that the Church, which they were told claimed one-seventh or one-ninth of the population, brought up to the poll 67,593 voters, as against 98,593. It was, he thought, very desirable that their side of the case should be given, because it showed that the House could not accept implicitly the statement on which the Motion was based. He asked hon. Members to take a charitable and liberal and impartial view of this matter, and not to be led away by any question of sectarian jealousy, or denominational vexation, or personal feeling. They should look at the question, not as Welshmen, Cornishmen, or Yorkshiremen, but as Englishmen, and look at it as a great question affecting the greatest glory of our land and the greatest blessings of our people.

Mr. RENDEL (Montgomeryshire): Sir, my hon. Friend's Resolution has come on so unexpectedly late this evening that I am sure that none of its friends will risk our arriving at a division upon the substance of it by prolonging this debate. It is, indeed, needless that we should attempt to set out the arguments for the Disestablishment of the English Church in Wales, partly because that has been already done to our complete satisfaction by my hon. friends who have moved and seconded this Resolution, and partly because we have reason to believe that the great mass of the Liberal Party already recognizes and accepts the fact that the Establishment in Wales is perhaps the most crying injustice that still calls for remedy at the hands of Parliament. But it is necessary that something should be said by the Welsh Representatives in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) who has just spoken in opposition to the Motion. He has founded his main objections to the Motion—first, on the inadequacy and incorrectness of the statistics of my hon. Friend; and, secondly, on the supposed impossibility of dealing separately with Wales in this matter. Deeply as I should desire, in common with so many other Members from Wales, to enter far more fully into the merits of the case, I will trespass on the indulgence of the House only for the purpose of meeting to the best of my power the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman. Now, Sir, the House need not fear that I shall trouble them with statistics; indeed, I somewhat deprecate the use of *ex parte* statistics at all in this matter. I ask what end is really attained, what minds that are open are really convinced by the setting forth of such figures as the right hon. Gentleman has produced? He has, perhaps, amused his Friends with them, and at the expense of some needless pain to other people. But who supposes that a great question of this kind is going to be determined in this House by a nice adjustment of the exact ratio of Nonconformists to Churchmen in the Principality? Whether it is four to one, or six to one, or eight to one, will our decision turn on the exact proportion? Surely it is enough to say that the Welsh are notoriously a Nonconformist people. It is the Prime Minister himself, I believe, who has called them "a nation of Nonconformists;" and since an Established Church must at any rate be National, how can an Episcopalian Establishment be justified in Wales any more than it was in Scotland or in Ireland? The Welsh are too religious to be the enemies of the Church of England; but they are opposed to its establishment in Wales as an injustice and a spiritual monopoly. Their quarrel is not with the Church, but with its establishment, and they would be quite right even as friends of the Church in Wales to be the enemies of its establishment there, for nothing is plainer than that it was the Establishment that destroyed the Church in Wales. It was the civil and political control of the Church by means of Establishment which alone caused the Church to be used as an instrument of state for denationalizing and Anglicizing Wales. No Church and no people were ever more cruelly and more wickedly used than when, by means of an Establishment, the Church and the people of Wales were refused all religious ministrations by the State except at the sacrifice of their native tongue. In the result, as we know, the language was preserved, but the Church as a National Institution was destroyed. But, Sir, I should suppose that adequate evidence was furnished to this House of the numerical proportion of Nonconformists to Churchmen in Wales by the representation of Wales in this House. Out of 30 constituencies no less than 27 are in favour of Disestablishment. It is said that Disestablishment is not a question for the present Parliament, that it was not an issue at the late General Election; but that is not true of Wales at least, if even true elsewhere. My hon. Friends near me from Wales will all agree that the Disestablishment Question was in the very front rank at the last Election. In fact, it was the first, if not the sole, question at many places, and must continue to be so until that measure is conceded. The right hon. Member adduces figures to show that, after all, the Conservative vote at the General Election compares not so very unfavourably with the Liberal vote, and is a truer indication of the relative strength of Church and Nonconformity than Nonconformist returns of chapel and church attendance. But when the right hon. Gentleman put the Liberal vote at about 100,000 and the Conservative vote at nearly 70,000, he failed to remind the House that four Liberal Members were returned unopposed by some of the very largest constituencies in Wales. He thus omitted no less than 33,000 votes from his calculation. The right hon. Gentleman, however, considers that it is impossible to treat Wales as a separate country; but the House has been already reminded that Wales has been, in more than one case, treated individually and as a distinct country. There is not only the Sunday Closing Act—there is also the Intermediate Education Bill, and the much more important case, as it appears to me, of the County Franchise Act. Now, Sir, there is no doubt that had Wales been treated as one with England for the purposes of the franchise, Wales would have been far from entitled to retain the whole of her 30 Members, and the Prime Minister—whose absence on this occasion Wales has so much reason to regret—was careful, in introducing the measure, to lay down a principle under which Wales was to be entitled to treatment as a separate country for the purpose of the franchise. He said, in introducing the measure on November 6th, 1884—

> "Further—and to this I attach immense importance—it must be equitable and liberal as between the great divisions of the country—and in speaking of these great divisions I have avoided the term 'the three countries' known to the Constitution, because it is not unnatural to substitute the number four for the number three, and speak of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales."—(3 *Hansard*, [293] 1126.)

If, then, Wales was entitled to be regarded as a separate country for the purpose of representation in this House, it seems clear that Wales is entitled to separate treatment for any purpose for which Parliament exists. I submit that the representative and Parliamentary rights of Wales being admitted to be rights belonging to her as a separate country, she is entitled to be recognized here as a separate country in all matters over which Parliament has control. The right hon. Gentleman considers that there is no clear line of boundary between England and Wales, and no plain and sufficient distinction; but it might be contended, on the other hand, that Wales is separated from England by a clearer and stronger barrier than Ireland—that is, not only by the barrier of race but of language; a separation which, for the purposes of religious ministration, is of the sharpest and most insuperable nature. No doubt the friends of the English Establishment are utterly opposed to any course which may lead to piecemeal or Local Option Disestablishment; but I earnestly ask the House to consider whether the friends of the Church of England are justified in supposing that Disestablishment in Wales would be any blow to the Church of England. People sometimes forget that the Church of England and the Establishment are not in the least coincident or co-extensive. The Church of England extends far beyond the Establishment—I am not now speaking of the Sister Churches such as those in Ireland and in Scotland and in America. I am speaking of the Church of England as a single Church. For example, the whole of the Colonial Church is one with, and is an integral part of, the Church of England. So much is this the case, that for a great many years it was thought that the Colonial Church was a part of the Establishment. It was in that belief that the Crown appointed the Colonial Bishops. I believe the Crown still appoints in the Crown Colonies. Not until Lord Kingsdown's judgment in 1862 did it appear by the decision of the Privy Council that Ministers and Parliament had been mistaken all along, and that the Colonial Church was not a part of the Establishment, though it was a part of the Church of England. Well, Sir, has the Church or the Establishment suffered in the smallest degree by this very important decision and change? So little is this the case, that I believe a great many persons are as ignorant as they are indifferent on the question whether this great and growing Colonial Church is or is not Established. You have its Bishops consecrated in this country by our Bishops, and, as we have lately seen in two instances, the Colonial Churches send their Bishops to us; so that not only do Holy Orders run interchangeably between the Unestablished and Established portions of the Church of England, but even the Home and Colonial Episcopate are interchangeable. How, then, would Welsh Disestablishment injure the English Church; or how should it be alleged that there is any insuperable difficulty in abolishing Establishment, so far as the Principality of Wales is concerned? Will the Church in Wales be one whit worse off than the Church in any part of our Colonies? Will it not, in fact, be enormously benefited, as it is in the Colonies, by being given the management of its own affairs? In no part of the Empire is it so necessary as in Wales that the Church should have the management of its own affairs, and be enabled to adapt itself to the special condition of the Principality, and, above all, to the bilingual difficulty. If, however, Wales is to be met by a simple *non possumus;* if the grievance is admitted by the great bulk of the Liberal Party and its Leaders, yet the interests of the English Establishment are to stand in the way of justice; if Wales, while remembering how the Episcopalian Church was long ago disestablished in Scotland, and was recently in Ireland, is to be told that she, with a nationality certainly not less pronounced than the Scotch or Irish, is nevertheless to submit to a gross and palpable grievance affecting her dearest and nearest—that is her religious—feelings and interests; and if Wales is to submit to this cruel wrong at the hands of, and in the interests of, England alone—nay, not in the interests of England alone, nor even of the great Church of England, but of those of an Establishment commanding the assent of not half of the English people—then I think the demand of Wales for separate treatment will and must grow more and more urgent. Wales is notoriously law-abiding, loyal, and even long-suffering. Wales is given to no violent courses, and is on the best terms with England; but in the circumstances, and without meaning thereby to convey the slightest appearance of threat—for the Welsh are not given to threats—I must declare that you are inviting, if not forcing, Wales to have recourse to those Parliamentary expedients by which the will of a compact and united body of Representatives may secure satisfaction. Wales is determined to have her national aspirations recognized, and is resolute that matters so intimately affecting her own welfare should receive the attention of Parliament. If Parliament rejects a claim enforced by 26 out of 30 constituencies, and Constitutionally urged in this House; and if the only ground for such rejection is the refusal to recognize any separate rights on the part of Wales, then you are inviting Wales to put separate recognition and separate treatment in the very forefront of her political programme, and to send up to this House men whose first, whose perhaps sole duty it would be to direct all their political action to this object. No one will regret such a state of things more than many of the best Liberals that Wales has. But I entreat the House to believe that the question of Disestablishment is not an artificial or superficial one in Wales. It is the one question — the burning political question—in every part of Wales; and I trust that the division to be shortly reached in this House will give Wales ample evidence that in this matter of justice she has the sympathy of this Assembly.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda): I may be allowed to say, with the Mover of this Resolution, that I do not view this question from a Liberationist point of view, although I am able to attest that the principle of complete religious equality is rapidly gaining ground every day. But I view it as a Welshman, and a Welshman that feels that the Church of England in Wales, for several reasons, has entirely failed to meet the religious requirements of the people. It has failed as an evangelizing agency, and it has failed to justify its nominal position as a National Church. In my own district, including Pontypridd—Pontypridd and the two Rhonddas—I find, by a Return made to this House in November, 1882, that in that year the Church only provided for the whole district, with its 100,000 population, 12 places of worship; while the other denominations provided no less than 87. This being so, is it not evident that the Church of England, in that part of Wales, has utterly failed to meet the religious requirements of the people? On the other hand, the religious wants of that district, with its immensely increased population, have been met, and fully met, by the Nonconformists. Had it not been so, the people, by thousands, would have been lapsing into heathenism; because the Church would never have thought of doing anything for them. But the Dissenters came to the rescue; for as soon as a colliery was sunk in any remote part of the district—for it should be known that it is a colliery district—a population rapidly sprang into existence. But even before the long rows of colliers' houses were built, a few earnest men met in the carpenter's shop, the engine shed, or, possibly, an old barn on the side of a hill, and these joined in prayer. As the population increased and became stronger, they would build a simple chapel, which, in a few years, would be enlarged, and ultimately attain the cathedral dimensions that characterizes a number of those edifices in that district. And in this manner, simple as it was, the Nonconformists met the religious requirements of the district; and it is they—and they alone—that we have to thank for saving the mass of people I speak of from infidelity. I would give the House some statistics to demonstrate the overwhelming majority of Nonconformists over Churchmen in the Rhondda Valley and Pontypridd district. The following figures of attendance at all the places of worship in the Ystrad and Pontypridd urban districts, on Sunday, March 4, 1884, were obtained by a committee, of which Mr. J. Griffiths, of Perth, was the secretary, and of which I myself was a member. The number of attendances at the morning services was at church 1,464, at chapel 19,238; and the attendances at the evening services were at church 2,485, at chapel 32,474. The total attendances, morning and evening, were at church 3,949, at chapel 51,712, which gives a proportion of Nonconformists as against Churchmen of 13 to 1. If the Church of England in Wales has failed to do its duty, it is not because it has been too poor to pay its clergy. This Church, which has so completely failed in Wales, has four Bishops, whose stipends amount to £17,000; it has Deans and Canons drawing £19,530, and clergy receiving £229,240. These figures give a total of £265,979. Yet, with all its wealth, this Church has lost the people. Certainly it cannot say now, as did the Apostle of old—"Silver and gold I have none;" neither can it point to the fact that by it the poor have the Gospel preached to them. Indeed, it would be hard to find that it ever, in Wales, made a profitable proclamation, except that which was to tax the whole country. One further point on which I wish to say a few words is that of language. It appears to me, as a new Member, that hon. Members have treated this matter somewhat indifferently. In addition to all this I have mentioned, the Church has omitted and neglected to provide means to teach the people the Word of God in language that they understand. I should like to be able to illustrate to hon. Members in this House the difficulty and the folly of trying to evangelize people in a language they cannot understand. What would hon. Members think if, before the commencement of our proceedings, the chaplain were to utter these words—

> "Ein tad yr hwn urft yn y Nefœdd,
> Sancteiddier dy enw-deled dy Deyrn."

They would think it a blasphemy perhaps, and yet it would be nothing more than the first words of that most beautiful of prayers of Divine origin—"Our Father which art in Heaven," and in the language of my countrymen. In the course it has adopted, the Church has forgotten the cardinal principle of getting at peoples' hearts through their understanding. Let me ask the House, seeing that it is the Free Churches, although unaided and unprotected by the State, which have done the work that the Church failed to do, is it fair that the Principality should still have that Church imposed upon it, and be compelled to contribute towards the support of that which has failed to do it any good, while also it is of the greatest importance that it should contribute handsomely to the support of those who really have done the work? At present the National Church in Wales is but one form of religion among the many. Its doctrines are disputed by other Churches, its services rejected, and its religious administrations available to a very small section of the people. And all that we ask for is that we should be placed on an equal platform with another branch of the Celtic race—our Irish brethren; and I appeal to the Irish Members here to aid us in attaining this desirable position.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.): I cannot agree with the facts of the hon. Member who has just sat down. They may be South Wales facts; but they certainly are not facts such as we are cognizant of in North Wales. The Nonconformists claim too much for themselves in thinking and saying that they have been the only propagators of religious truth in Wales. I know there are some hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who think they are the legitimate successors of Cromwell and his band of patriots, who in times past made themselves extremely unpleasant to your Predecessors, Sir, and even ventured to lay violent hands on the "bauble." As a matter of fact, that pedigree is a very ill-established one, for the origin of Nonconformity in Wales is quite modern. The Wesleyan Body, which is, perhaps, the oldest, dating from 1735, was not firmly established until 1797; and the Calvinistic Methodists, which, I believe, is the largest of the sects in Wales, did not receive its Deed of Trust until 1811. So that, in reality, the origin of Nonconformity is comparatively recent; and I think, if that is the case, it is rather hard, when we call upon people to support the Church of England as a barrier against atheism and infidelity, that we should be taunted with the question—"Where would you have been but for Nonconformity?" We may as well say—"Where would the people of England and Wales have been throughout all the Dark Ages if it had not been for the light of the Church of England?" ["Divide!"] Hon. Members cannot deny that the founders of their own Nonconformity, the great teachers of Nonconformity, were Church of England men. Daniel Rowlands, of Llangeitho; Thomas Charles, of Bala; and John Elias—these were all Churchmen; and not only were they Churchmen, but they implored their followers never to forsake the Church of England. John Elias said—

> "No Methodist is opposed to paying tithes or any such impost. No true, sincere Methodist can be opposed to the Established Church. Its ministers were the most celebrated instruments in the commencement of Methodism in Wales."

When circumstances arose which obliged Methodists to set apart some of the elder preachers to minister the ordinances, it was not intended to make an essential alteration with regard to the form and order of the Body. It was merely a setting apart of some to assist ministers of the Established Church; and everyone who was ordained was called on to confess and declare that he most truly, from his very soul, approved and accepted the present order and constitution of the "connexion." The translation of the Bible was the gift to you of the Established Church, as long ago as the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Sir, I have to add my expression of regret to those which have already been made that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister is not in his place; because I should have liked to appeal to him to support us to-night in opposition to the Resolution of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). He did support us Churchmen in 1870, in opposition to Mr. Watkin Williams, and in doing so made some rather valuable statements in defence of the position which we occupy. It is rather late to-night to bring forward the statements which the right hon. Gentleman made on that occasion; but as allusion has been made in the course of the debate in some quarters of the House to the similarity between this Motion and the Motion for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, made some years ago, I would venture to ask the House to listen to what the Prime Minister said in speaking on the Motion of Mr. Watkin Williams in 1870.

The right hon. Gentleman, whom we all respect in Wales, said that he had, on a previous occasion, clearly stated that the question of the Church in Wales was not at one with the question of the Church in Ireland. He said there were some points of resemblance; but he added that they were capable of great exaggeration; and then he went on to say that the last half-century had been a period of the most active religious life known to the Reformed Church of England. Again, the right hon. Gentleman on the occasion referred to appealed to hon. Members to support the position of the Welsh Church upon the footing that it was an integral part of the Church of England. Well, Sir, to those remarks of the right hon. Gentleman I need add nothing; but perhaps the House will allow me to quote the words of a great authority, and a man who, I believe, no one in England will consider a bigot. I allude to the Dean of Llandaff, who has said that the Constitution of England knows no Church of Wales but as an integral part of the Church of England. Sir, I think that the real strength of our case is that we are not anxious, whatever other hon. Members may be, for Home Rule. We are contented, and wish to remain members of the dear old Church of England. I am not here to deny that the time has been when the Church of England in Wales has been slack and has not done her duty; but that time of sloth and somnolence has long passed away; and, in spite of all that hon. Gentlemen opposite may say, she is now doing her duty in the Principality—she only wishes to co-operate in the cause of Christianity; she is spreading out her arms, and inviting all denominations to join her in her strife with error, infidelity, and atheism, and in her labours for the spread of Christianity. For that reason I invite hon. Members to pause before accepting the Resolution of the hon. Member for Swansea, which, I believe in my heart, will, if it be carried out, do infinite harm to the cause of Christianity which we all have at heart.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): Sir, I am sure that hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House will entirely concur in the regret expressed by the hon. Member who has just sat down, and others, as to the enforced absence of the Prime Minister to-night. There is perhaps no question upon which, eminent as the authority of the right hon. Gentleman is on all questions—[" Oh ! "]—well, that is my opinion, and even the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Kenyon) has invoked his aid to-night on behalf of the small Party to which he belongs and with which he acts; and therefore I hope, at all events, that in referring to the Prime Minister his name may not be received in the manner it was received in just now. Sir, I was going to say that upon no subject was the authority of the right hon. Gentleman more eminent than upon a question connected with Wales and connected with the Church. [" No ! "] I should think that the hon. Gentleman who expresses his dissent from that opinion, is probably not a Welshman; if he were, he would not deny, I think, that the Prime Minister is an eminent authority on that matter. I will stand but a few minntes between the House and the division. I have only to say on the part of the Prime Minister how he regards the position that he would have to occupy with reference to this question. Now, Sir, I have no opinion whatever to express with reference to the merits of the Motion of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). So far as it expresses an abstract opinion with reference to the condition of the Church of England in Wales—if the Church of England in Wales stood upon the same footing as the Church of Ireland or the Church of Scotland—that is to say, if there were separate Churches in separate parts of the United Kingdom, I confess myself I should not be here to argue against the proposition of the hon. Member for Swansea. I think he has made out a case which has hardly been disputed on the other side of the House. [*Dissent.*] Well, Sir, I have heard nothing against it worthy of the name of argument. My mind is formed on that point, and unquestionably it seems to me that the case of Wales with regard to the Church is at least as strong as that of the Church of Ireland. Therefore, Gentlemen opposite who take a different view as to the Church of Ireland may take a different view upon this question, and no one can complain of that. But equally they cannot complain that we should think that the

Church which represents only a small minority of the people of a country ought not to be an Established Church in that country. But what is the view of the great majority of the people of Wales has been expressed in the speech of the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley (Mr. Abraham), which I am sure must have struck the House generally as it struck me very much by its fervour, eloquence, and by its evident sincerity. Well, Sir, that being the case, I must also admit with my hon. Friend the Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Rendel) that in many respects Wales does represent a separate Nationality—that the people of Wales have a language and feelings of their own—but that they have not been up to this time, and are not now, separate in respect of the question of the Church Establishment. Therefore, however much truth there may be in my hon. Friend's view, this I think he will admit—that the Church of England in Wales is so much an integral part of the Established Church of England that it is not merely difficult, but I will say impossible, to raise the question as a separate one, and that you cannot deal with the one question—I do not mean by Resolution, but practically in legislation—without involving the other. I think that this is a proposition which will commend itself to every man's mind. If you raise the question of the Church in Wales, you raise the whole question. Now, what is the position, I do not say of all Gentlemen on this side of the House, or even of a majority of them—I am not speaking at all in their name; but what is the position which the Prime Minister took on the question of the Disestablishment of the Church at the recent Election by which this Parliament was called together. The right hon. Gentleman stated very distinctly that it was desired or intended to raise the question of Disestablishment. [*Dissent.*] I do not know that Gentlemen opposite have a particular claim or right to hold him to that statement, because they absolutely refused to receive it at the Election; and when they were beaten they said it was the question at the last Election, and that they would not allow anybody in opposition to say it was not. But, whatever may have been the position of hon. Gentlemen in that respect, the position taken up by the Prime Minister was that it was not the intention to raise the general question of Disestablishment as a question for the present Parliament. Now, Sir, I do not say that this in any way precludes my hon. Friend from making this Motion on the subject, and taking the opinion of this House upon it; but the position of Members of the Government with regard to it is somewhat different from his. The Government are not in the position in which private Members stand with reference to general Resolutions of this character; they cannot, according to the established and necessary proceedings of Parliament, support such Resolutions unless they are prepared to take upon them definite and early action. That has always been the practice; and no one has ever enforced it in this House with greater earnestness than has the Prime Minister, over and over again. Therefore, with reference to this question, it is quite impossible for the Government to take up the Resolution of my hon. Friend as a Government, and support it, because they are not prepared to give it early effect by legislation. Now, as I said before, if it had been possible to distinguish upon this subject as between England and Wales, in my opinion it would have been a totally different matter; but, for the reasons I have endeavoured to state, it seems to me that the two questions are incapable of being separated for the purpose of action; and, therefore, I do not find myself able to support the Motion of my hon. Friend.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): Sir, I am not about to detain the House for more than a few minutes, because, in the debate which has taken place, we have listened to all that has to be said on this question by hon. Gentlemen from Wales, and it is the desire of the House that we should come as soon as possible to a division. I should not allude to the case of the last Election at all, were it not for the words which have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt), who said that the question of the Church was raised and decided against us at the last Election, although the Prime Minister had withdrawn it from the constituencies as a question for this Parliament. I should like to put ourselves right with reference to that matter. We say that the Radical Party raised the cry against the Church, and we say that responsible persons belonging to the Liberal Party joined in that cry; and we say, further, that when we defended the Church they found that the cry was not answered, and that when it was found that it was not answered the Prime Minister withdrew it. Sir, we have had from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer two statements which, I think, are worth remembering. He says that the Prime Minister knows all about Wales, and all about the Church Question. Therefore, I would strongly recommend to the consideration of the House the words of the Prime Minister in concluding his speech on the Motion of Mr. Watkin Williams in 1870—words which he would probably have used had he been in his place on the present occasion. The right hon. Gentleman said he would deal with his hon. Friend's Motion by a simple negative; that separate legislation would be most guilty, most unworthy, and most dishonourable; and that the Government did not intend to go in that direction, and that they would regard legislation of the kind as a national mischief. I presume that these are the words to which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has referred to-night. No one regrets more than I the absence of the Prime Minister from his place on the present occasion. I hope he has sent a copy of his speech to every Member of the present Government; and here I may say that I wish I could see the Members of the Government in their places. I want to know where they are? As the right hon. Gentleman suggests that the Prime Minister knows more about Wales and the Church Question than anybody else, I presume that when the Division Bell rings all the Members of Her Majesty's Government will vote as the Prime Minister said he should vote on the Motion of Mr. Watkin Williams. But, Sir, there have been one or two statements made which, anxious as I am not to detain the House, I cannot pass over without a few words of comment. I refer to some remarks of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn)—if he will allow me to address him in that way, whom I have known so long—who said that there was not a National Church in Wales; that the question was not one of ordinance; that the hostility shown in Wales was against the Establishment; and that he based his argument on that ground. Now, I venture to say that a more unsound ground, or, rather, that a ground having less shadow of foundation, could not possibly have been taken. I shall also refer to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who seconded this Motion, because in the course of his speech he said that the Church of England in Wales was never known as the Established Church—that it was known and called by the name it had ever borne—that is to say, the "Church of England." Well, Sir, I say that that declaration is opposed to the words of the hon. Member for Swansea, which were that, because it is the Established Church, it is opposed to the feelings of the people of Wales. But this question is not a new one; it was raised in the course of the debate which took place in 1870, and it was specially alluded to by the Prime Minister in the speech which he then delivered. What the right hon. Gentleman said was this—

> "It has not been a question with regard to National Establishments of religion that has had anything to do with the growth of Welsh Dissent. That is an historical challenge which I hold out to my hon. and learned Friend."—(3 *Hansard*, [201] 1294.)

It is clear to anyone who knows the history of the Church in Wales from the beginning that no hostility to it was ever created from the fact that it was an Established Church. Well, we will come to the grounds presently as to how that hostility arose. There was another remark made by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) which it is necessary for us to take notice of. He specially alluded to this being a question simply of Wales, and he put Wales forward separately as a Nationality. The hon. Member evidently wanted to divert the attention of the House from the great question of the Church of England, to which the right hon. Gentleman so pertinently alluded; but he could not refrain, before concluding his speech, from expressing a wish that Monmouthshire could be included. Consequently, his speech was not confined to Wales, for he wanted to include Monmouth; and it is obvious that what he wants eventually is to work round to the Disestablishment of the Church altogether. The Seconder of the Resolution gave a long historical account of the Church of Wales in the Saxon and Norman times. Now, when we come to the time of the Revolution I am willing to admit that the action, not of the Church, but the action of the State—the action of King William III.—was injurious to the condition of the Church of Wales. It was his action, because he knew perfectly well that the Welsh Church was devoted to the cause of the Stuarts—because it was an original Church and not an alien Church—that he made the mistake of forcing Bishops who could not speak Welsh upon the Church of Wales. It was from that action of the State that all the evils which afterwards existed in the Church in Wales are to be derived. Therefore, I am not concerned, any more than the Prime Minister was in 1870, to deny all the abuses which followed from the action of the State, and not from the action of the Church itself. But I say that has nothing to do with the present state of things. I should like to take the House through the matter [" Oh ! "] If this Church is worth attacking, surely it is worth defending; and I ought to be allowed to say a word or two in its defence. I only want to allude to the time when Bishop Thirlwall went to Wales. He was a great scholar, and a very learned man; he realized the position in which he was placed, and learned Welsh so thoroughly that he was able to preach in it as if it were his native tongue. Since that time Welsh Bishops have been appointed, some by the present Prime Minister, though the example was set by the late Earl of Derby. Then, again, if anybody will look into Church history and see the amounts that have been collected for the Church and for Education, they will be struck by the enormous growth of the Church since Bishop Thirlwall's days. In every diocese hon. Members will find how the Church increases in numbers, and how great is the number of baptisms, and especially of adult baptisms, which now takes place. I cannot help thinking that there is a good deal of jealousy arising from the action of the Church in Wales; it has become so active; it is doing its duty so well, that I cannot but think there is a great feeling of jealousy. From all the inquiries I have made—and they have been many—I do not believe that there is among laymen in Wales any feeling against the Church, although I think there is considerable feeling against it in the minds of many ministers of various denominations there. It is all very well to talk about the number of Members opposed to the Church of Wales returned to this House; but the statistics which were produced by the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) as to the number of persons polling at the last Election for each side ought to be considered, if we are going to consider figures at all, and they are very significant. If a vote were taken on the question of the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales or not, I believe it would be found that the friends of the Church were in much greater numbers than hon. Members opposite would make believe, and that those who supported the Church were in the proportion of 67 to 98. When it is next proposed that a that a Religious Census should be made, I trust hon. Members opposite will not be afraid to have the facts brought out. I was somewhat struck with the manner in which the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) brought forward his statistics, counting all the Calvinistic Bodies first, then other denominations, and giving what remains to the Church. In regard to what has been said by the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley (Mr. W. Abraham) and others who went into statistics, all I have to say is that, if we are to have statistics, let us have them in an authorized form. I was very much struck by the way in which the statistics were brought out by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard). If he will allow me to say so, it reminded me of the party who went out shooting, and when they returned they said to one another—" How many did you shoot ? " Well, each of the guests said so many, and when the figures were counted up it turned out that the host had shot considerably less than none at all. The hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley has made an appeal to us. He has said that what the men of Wales want is to manage their own Church. They have got that; they have shown how they can do it. I have no doubt that at the present time those for whom we speak build and manage their own chapels and churches very well; but if Welsh Churchmen prefer another form of Church discipline and ecclesiastical government, I cannot see any harm in their being allowed to worship in their own way. If the Nonconformists of Wales have built their chapels, they do not ask for endowments for themselves. Why should they wish to deprive of their endowments those who are admittedly doing excellent work, not only in the interests of their own body, but for the cause of general moral teaching? I do not know whether anything could show the value of Church work more than the education she is giving. The accuracy of the statistics contained in the Blue Books issued by the Education Department on this subject is beyond question; and they show that in the diocese of St. Asaph there is accommodation in the Church schools for 31,127 scholars, in the Board schools for 15,698, in the British schools for 2,312, and in the Roman Catholic schools for 1,406 scholars. The average attendance in the Church schools is 19,389, in the Board schools 8,854, in the British schools 1,329, and in the Roman Catholic schools 882. The amount of the grant which all these schools collectively earned is by the Church schools £17,492, by the Board schools £7,373, by the British schools £1,149, and by the Roman Catholic schools £722, showing that the Church schools in this diocese are educating considerably more than half as much again as all the other schools put together. The average amount of grant earned per head on the average attendance has been by the Church schools 18*s.*, by the Board schools 16*s.* 7¾*d.*, by the British schools 17*s.* 3½*d.*, and by the Roman Catholic schools 16*s.* 4¼*d.* I think, therefore, that I have shown that the Church in Wales is doing, and is capable of doing, great and good work. If we look at the importance of the work, I think I have a right to ask the House to agree with me in declaring that the Church of Wales is doing good work, which it ought to be allowed to continue. Therefore, if the other denominations are perfectly free to follow their own course, I do implore the House to stay its hand and to pause before it passes a Resolution of this kind, which was deprecated in 1871 by the Prime Minister, and which was then rejected by a large majority. I hope the House will take a similar course to that which it took on that occasion.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 229; Noes 241: Majority 12.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Allen, W. S.
Armitage, B.
Ashton, T. G.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barbour, W. B.
Bass, Sir A.
Beamont, H. F.
Beith, G.
Biddulph, M.
Blaine, A.
Blake, J. L.
Blake, T.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. H.
Borlase, W. C.
Boyd-Kinnear, J.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, right hon. J.
Bright, W. L.
Brocklehurst, W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buckley, A.
Burt, T.
Buxton, E. N.
Cameron, C.
Cameron, J. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carew, J. L.
Chamberlain, R.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Cobbold, F. T.
Cohen, A.
Condon, T. J.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbett, A. C.
Cossham, H.
Cowen, J.
Cox, J. R.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crompton, C.
Crossley, Sir S. B.
Crossley, E.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Currie, Sir D.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dixon, G.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Esslemont, P.
Everett, R. L.
Fairbairn, Sir A.
Fenwick, C.
Finlayson, J.
Finucane, J.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Dr. B.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gibb, T. E.
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, H. J.
Goldsmid, Sir J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gray, E. D.
Grey, Sir E.
Haldane, R. B.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harker, W.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Hingley, B.
Holden, A.
Holden, I.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Ince, H. B.
Ingram, W. J.
Jacks, W.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, C. H.
Johns, J. W.
Joicey, J.
Jones-Parry, L.
Jordan, J.
Kelly, B.
Kenrick, W.
Labouchere, H.
Lane, W. J.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leicester, J.
Lyell, L.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Carthy, J.

M'Culloch, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
Maitland, W. F.
Mason, S.
Mather, W.
Menzies, R. S.
Molloy, B. C.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, J. (Kerry)
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Paget, T. T.
Parker, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Peacock, R.
Pease, H. F.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Pugh, D.
Pyne, J. D.
Ramsay, J.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, H. G.
Rendel, S.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robertson, H.
Robson, W. S.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Russell, E. R.
Rylands, P.

Salis-Schwabe, Col. G.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Saunders, W.
Seely, C.
Sellar, A. C.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheehy, D.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shirley, W. S.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Spensley, H.
Spicer, H.
Stack, J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Strong, R.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Taylor, F.
Thomas, A.
Tuite J.
Vanderbyl, P.
Verney, Captain E. H.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watson, T.
Wayman, T.
West, Colonel W. C.
Westlake, J.
Weston, J. D.
Wiggin, H.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. C.
Williams, P.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Wilson, J. (Durham)
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.
Yeo, A. F.

TELLERS.

Dillwyn, L. L.
Richard, H.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Allen, H. G.
Allsopp, hon. C.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Sir R.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Baily, L. R.
Baird, J.
Baker, L. J.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, G. W.
Bartley, G. C. T.

Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bethell, Commander
Bickersteth, R.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bourke, right hon. R.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Brassey, Sir T.

Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Bullard, H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, E.
Cohen, L. L.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cross, H. S.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
Dawson, R.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
Denison, E. W.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Duckham, T.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hon. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwardes-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, Adml. hon. F.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Egerton, hn. A. J. F.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Evelyn, W. J.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lt-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, rt. hn. Sir J.
Field, Captain E.
Finch, G. H.
Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.

Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Gregory, G. B.
Grenfell, W. H.
Grimston, Viscount
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Lord F. S.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hibbert, rt. hn. J. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hill, A. S.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Holmes, rt. hon. H.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir G.
Hutton, J. F.
Jackson, W. L.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Jones, P.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Ker, R. W. B.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Leighton, S.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Lloyd, W.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, J. M.
Macnaghten, E.

M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
March, Earl of
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Marton, Maj. G. B. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir H. H.
Pearce, W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Percy, Lord A. M.
Pitt-Lewis, G.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Ritchie, C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
Russell, Sir G.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Maj. E. J.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Selwin - Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sitwell, Sir G. R.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smith, D.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hn. Col. Sir F.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M.
Sturrock, P.
Talbot, J. G.
Temple, Sir R.
Tipping, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Valentine, C. J.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart
Wroughton, P.
Yorke, J. R.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Grey, A.
MacInnes, M.

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH (Bristol, W.): Before we take a division on this Motion, I think we may, in the first place, congratulate ourselves that we have defeated the attempt of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), in spite of the support of Her Majesty's Government. I was rather surprised, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), in which he deprecated the passing of abstract Resolutions which he did not feel himself in a position to carry out, that he and the few of his Colleagues who are present on the Treasury Bench should have followed the hon. Member for Swansea into the Division Lobby. But when I see among these Colleagues the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Denbighshire (Mr. Osborne Morgan), the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield (Mr. Mundella), who are known supporters of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea——

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA): I deny it.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH: Then I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having changed his opinions, because, if he refers to the Division List of 1870, he will find that in that year he supported the Motion of Mr. Watkin Williams. Seeing, however, the bias of most of the Colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman who are present, I can quite understand that he felt some difficulty in carrying out the pledge of opposing the hon. Member for Swansea, which, we understood, he had given to the House. But what I am now anxious to ask is, perhaps, a somewhat remarkable request after what has happened. I am going to ask that the House may have the benefit of the guidance of Her Majesty's Government. We have now another abstract Resolution before the House. It contains, to some extent, principles with which we agree, and which we are as anxious as the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) to carry out as early as possible—for it demands such reforms in the Church of England, including the Church of Wales, as may make that Church more efficient for its work. But I see something else besides reforms of that nature in the Motion of the hon. Member for Northumberland, for I think my hon. Friend has in his mind the establishment of that nondescript institution, a Church without dogma, which has been very well likened to a body without bones. There are hundreds of thousands of members of the Church of England who, however much they hate the idea of Disestablishment and Disendowment, would prefer even these evils to being made members of a Body which would not be a Church, but a National Institution for the teaching of all or no religion. Therefore, Sir, although we have voted with my hon. Friend the Member for Northumberland, in order to defeat the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea, it is now our intention to oppose the substantive Motion as you have put it from the Chair. The question I am anxious to ask is this—Whether we may on this occasion anticipate that right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench will, having divided against the Motion of the hon. Member for Northumberland, vote now in favour of it?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT): The right hon. Gentleman has taken a course not at all unusual—of asking advice from people which he has not the slightest intention of following. Considering the number of years the right hon. Gentleman has been a Member of this House, he has rather presumed upon the want of experience of those who have not sat so long in it, when he expresses surprise at the course I took in the last division. Anybody who knows what the usual course is, is aware that when a Member intends to vote against two Resolutions, one of which is an Amendment, he votes first of all against the Amendment, and then against the Resolution. I am bound to say it is a very astute proceeding on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, who is opposed to both the Amendment and the Resolution, to vote for a body without bones only for the purpose of breaking somebody else's bones. But that is not the ordinary proceeding. On the contrary, I took the ordinary and, I venture to say, the more straightforward course. ["Oh, oh!"] I do not say that as any reproach to the right hon. Gentleman. What I say is, that anybody who has sat here for any length of time knows perfectly well that if a Member is opposed to two propositions he votes against them both. ["Oh!"] The hon. Member who cries "Oh" has, I think, sat in the House about three weeks. It has certainly been the practice, according to my observation, for many years past. If I oppose two propositions I vote against them both, and I do not support one in order to defeat the other. I voted in the Lobby with my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) because I intended to oppose the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), and I intended afterwards to vote against the Motion of the hon. Member for Swansea, and I venture to say that is the usual course of proceeding. Disapproving, as I do, of the Motion of the hon. Member for Northumberland, I shall vote against it now that it has become the substantive Motion before the House; and the reason I give is that the Government are not prepared to undertake the reform of the Church in Wales any more than they are prepared to entertain at this moment the Disestablishment of the Church in Wales. I shall, therefore, vote against the Motion.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Now, Sir, that the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) has become a substantive Motion, I think it is of importance that the House should see the position in which it is placed. The Amendment has been used as a means of defeating the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn); and now I suppose hon. Gentlemen opposite, with perfect candour, will vote against it. What is it that the House is asked to do? It is to declare—

> "That the time has arrived for introducing without delay into the organization of the Established Church in Wales such reforms as will enable it to adapt itself more efficiently to the religious needs and wishes of the Welsh people."

Sir, that is the revolutionary proposal of my hon. Friend; but may I remind the House of the manner in which my hon. Friend's proposals have been received by the adherents of the Church of England? The other day Lord Halifax said that he and many others in the Church of England would a thousand times sooner have Disestablishment than these reforms which the hon. Member proposes. In a few days the House will have a proper opportunity of finally deciding the question of Disestablishment; and under the circumstances, therefore, I think the Government will do well to oppose the Motion now before the House.

MR. RAIKES (Cambridge University): I apprehend, Sir, that if the House, in order to avoid having two more divisions, consents to allow the words of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) to be added to the Main Question without a division, it will then be possible to take a division on the Main Question as amended?

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman has correctly interpreted the situation. If the Motion of the hon.

Member for Northumberland is negatived now the only proposal before us would be—

> "That as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers to only a small minority of the population."

The House should allow the words proposed to be added to be inserted, and then vote upon the whole as a substantive Motion.

Mr. ALBERT GREY (Northumberland, Tyneside): I only wish to make one observation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) pointed out in his speech that his only objection to the Resolution as amended by my Motion would be owing to the fact that it contained an objectionable preamble; but now I understand that the hostility of the Party opposite is owing to the fact that my Amendment makes a deliberate declaration that reform is wanted. Well, there is now no question of Disestablishment before the House. That question has been disposed of. The only question is whether the National Church Establishment shall be reformed or not; and there is no reason why any person who is in favour of one single iota of reform should not vote for this Amendment.

Mr. PULESTON (Devonport): I must protest against the remarks of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), because, in the speech in which he moved his Amendment, he took credit for having put before us a definite and distinct policy, and a scheme in all its details; and I apprehend that in voting for this Resolution we should be accepting the policy which he indicated in his speech. Therefore, I think the Opposition are justified in voting against the Amendment. I cannot tie myself to the policy indicated in the hon. Member's speech, although I yield to no man in my desire for the reform of the Church of Wales.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): I entirely disagree with what has fallen from the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston). The Amendment does not commit us to any particular form of policy; but it does commit us to the opinion that some reform should take place. I am not surprised at the attitude taken up by the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), because he is always opposed to the Church of England, and resists any reform by which she might be strengthened. It is, however, certain that sooner or later we shall have to choose between Disestablishment or reform, and I wish to impress on hon. Members opposite that there are many on this side of the House who have opposed Disestablishment in the hope that some reform will be undertaken by the Church of England. If the House resists reform now, they will have before long to face the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I wish to say, Sir, that I shall support the Motion of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), because it seems to me to be practically a question of an absolute vote of reform in the Church or no reform. Believing reform to be necessary, I shall support the Motion. I think the time has come when we, on the Opposition side of the House, should speak out freely and boldly in favour of reform, and that when we have the opportunity we should not shrink from doing here what we have pledged ourselves on the hustings to try and carry out.

Lord JOHN MANNERS (Leicestershire, E.): I merely rise to say, Sir, in regard to what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), that there is no objection on this side of the House to allowing the addition of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) to the Motion of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). A division can then be taken on the Motion as amended.

Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 251; Noes 152: Majority 99. — (Div. List, No. 25.)

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

Mr. PULESTON (Devonport): I wish to say but a very few words of explanation with regard to the vote I am about to give, and that I think I have a perfect right to do, notwithstanding the interruption of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Sir, I wish to state that I should have been one of the most willing followers of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey) in voting for the Amendment he proposes, were it not for the fact that the portion of the Motion of the hon. Member for Swansea which is anterior to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northumberland makes that course impossible for me to take.

Main Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 49; Noes 346: Majority 297.—(Div. List, No. 26.)

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 10*th March*, 1886.

The House met at Two of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Municipal Rates * [134]; Commissioners Clauses Act (1847) Amendment * [135]; Places of Worship Sites * [136].
First Reading—Marriages Validity * [137].
Second Reading—Public Health Acts (Improvement Expenses) [7]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday [27], *debate adjourned.*
Committee—Coal Mines * [92]—R.P.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS (IMPROVEMENT EXPENSES) BILL.—[Bill 7.]

(*Mr. Dodds, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. William Cook, Mr. Bullard.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. DODDS (Stockton), in rising to move the second reading of the Bill, said, it would be unnecessary to detain the House, because the Bill was circulated last Session, though no opportunity was found for passing it into law, and it met with no opposition. The provisions of the Bill were directed to alterations of important sections of the Public Health Act of 1875. That Act, as hon. Members were aware, contained the code of laws for regulating and managing important sanitary affairs throughout England and Wales, and had been found in most respects a most excellent measure. The Bill only proposed to deal with four of its sections—namely, the 3rd, the 150th, the 151st, and the 152nd. The Bill dealt most particularly with the 150th section, which it proposed to repeal, and then to re-enact in an amended form. In seeking to amend Sections 150 to 152 of of that Act, he desired not to depart materially from the purpose of the old Act, but merely to amend it on certain details which the experience of 10 years, and especially of recent years, had shown required amendment. Section 150 in the Act of 1875 had reference to plans, sections, and estimates of expenses in reference to private streets, where the expenses of paving, &c., were paid by owners, and not by the ratepayers at large. From time to time in our towns it became necessary that these private streets should be taken over by the Local Authorities, and henceforward supported by public funds; and hitherto, under the Act of 1875, it was the custom, where special works were required, first that plans and sections should be deposited in the surveyor's office, together with an estimate of expenses. But the owners of property affected, though they had this information, had no means of making their voice heard, should they object, until after the works were completed and they were called upon to pay their proportion of the expense. The Bill, in the first place, proposed that plans and sections, together with the estimate of expenses, with a proportional apportionment of expenses, should be prepared and deposited for public inspection, and that if owners desired to object in any way, either to the mode in which the works were to be carried out, or the character of the material, or the proposed proportional apportionment, they would have the chance of being heard by application to the magistrates of the locality, by whom the question would be entered into, and eventually, if the parties desired it, a reference could be made to the Local Government Board in London, who could, if they thought fit, send down an Inspector to inquire into the circumstances and decide between the contending parties, the expenses of that being borne by the party against whom the decision was given. By this measure, by inquiry in the first instance, instead of litigation afterwards, one great objection to the working of the Act of 1875 would be removed. Again, when notice was given under the Act to owners to level, or pave, or sewer the street of which they happened to be owners, they were allowed the option of carrying out the work themselves; but, in practice, it did not happen once in fifty times that an owner executed the work himself. Obviously, it would be inexpedient that individual owners should, in a street, say, of 50 houses belonging to 30 different owners, determine upon doing his sewers, paving, &c., himself, for in doing so he would soon find himself at issue with his neighbours on the opposite side. It was, in fact, next to impossible, unless the whole of the street was the property of one owner; the Local Authorities therefore had the power to repair the street, and apportion the expense among the owners, and the proportion was determined on the basis of the amount of frontage of each property abutting on the street. That would be perfectly fair, if the houses were all on the same principle; but many valuable properties had little frontages, and some properties derived very little advantage from paving and other works in the street. For instance, take a roadway leading up to extensive works and premises in the rear. In such a case it was hard on the other owners that a fair proportion of the cost of the road should not be paid by the owner of the works, however small his actual frontage. It was proposed, then, in the Bill to make a provisional apportionment after a survey, and that this should be deposited for examination, and subsequently the provisional apportionment would be the basis of the actual proportion of expenses to be borne by each owner. The old Act made provision for arbitration in the arrangement of expenses; but the clause had been found to be exceedingly unworkable, for the reason, perhaps, that out of 50 owners 49 might be satisfied; but one objection sent the case to arbitration. It was quite impossible that an arbitrator could deal finally with the matter unless he had all the parties before him; but the Bill would provide an inquiry in the first instance, not after expenses were incurred. Another important point of the Bill was to give greater facilities for recovering the amount expended, so that in such cases, not unusual, where a person has spent all his savings in the purchase of a house, and was not in a position to pay the expenses arising for paving, &c., all at once, the expenses would be allowed to remain on a charge of 5 per cent over a certain period. The Bill would be general in application, but would be found most useful in small boroughs; because large towns like Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Leeds, though all in favour of the Bill, would not be affected by the passing of the Bill, having an Act of Parliament of their own, in which they had incorporated as much of the Public Health Act as they thought necessary. But the Bill would be a great boon to small boroughs unable to go to the expense of having a local Act. Some objection had been raised to certain portions of the Bill; but they were only objective upon points of detail that might very well be met in Committee. One of them had been mentioned to him by his hon. Friend the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), who suggested an Amendment in relation to the dedication of new streets; and another suggested Amendment had reference to the borough of Croydon, the Corporation anticipating difficulties in connection with their local Act. He thought he could satisfactorily meet these objections in Committee. The Bill, as a whole, had been universally supported by Corporations throughout the country. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, that, having largely assisted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Basingstoke Division of Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) in the preparation of the Act of 1875, which was a work of enormous magnitude, he could not but regret the necessity of the present Bill, as the Act of 1875 had proved to be an excellent measure. He thought, however, the hon. Member for Stockton had made out a case for the amendment of the Act. In London there were bars and gates marking off private streets and public streets; but in provincial towns happily there were no such evidences of exclusion, and access to private streets was as free as to public thoroughfares. It was important, therefore, to facilitate in every way the improvement and maintenance of private streets.

He thought that in Committee the retrospective and penal character of the Bill might be somewhat modified. He hoped the hon. Member would agree to amend the Bill, so that those who had made streets would have the same benefits which they now enjoyed; and, further, that power would be given to every rural authority to adopt the Act if they desired to do so.

MR. CROMPTON (Staffordshire, Leek) said, he approved most heartily of the Bill, and of the way in which it dealt with the objects aimed at in it. At the present time the proportional payment for the making of a street depended upon the amount of frontage; so that a man, with a house and garden at the side, would have to pay a great deal more than a man with a larger house and garden at the back. One point had not been touched; but it was an important one. The liability to pay for the making of a new street was entirely thrown on one person, the person who received the rack rent. What that meant was, that the person who was in receipt of two-thirds of the payment had to pay for the whole of the expense of making the street. He hoped to see a clause introduced by which the liability to pay for the making of new streets should be thrown upon everybody who had any interest in the property, in proportion to that interest. The difficulty presented itself to the mind of the hon. Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell), who complained that power would be taken away from an owner who made a street for himself, and that owner would be prevented from making roads on his private property; but, really, it was not in question. The Act of 1875 and this Bill both referred to the case whether owners had chosen to dedicate a road to the public to make a highway. So long as it was not a highway the owner could deal with it in any way he liked. It was only when he made the road a highway, over which the public had a right to pass, that, by the provisions of the Bill, the Local Authority would have the power of saying how the work should be done. He did not profess to have mastered the whole of the sections; but, so far as he could see, the arrangement would be fair to owners, which the present law was not altogether. It was only when the street was dedicated by the owner to public use that the Local Authority took it into their hands, so he did not see that private rights were infringed. The second reading of the Bill should pass without much controversy. There were several clauses that would require careful looking into in Committee; but he had the fullest confidence that the Bill would emerge from Committee a valuable amendment of the Act of 1875.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT (Croydon) said, he did not offer any opposition to the Bill. The Bill had caused a certain amount of alarm in the minds of those Corporations which had their own private Acts on this subject; and he would suggest to the hon. Member (Mr. Dodds) to propose in Committee to amend Clause 18, and so make the Bill as much as possible a part of the Public Health Act. He thought the Corporations need not be under any alarm as to the Bill.

MR. DWYER GRAY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) said, it appeared to him that the Bill now before the House was a very useful and desirable one. He wished, however, to point out to the hon. Member (Mr. Dodds) who moved its second reading that at present its terms only extended to England. This he considered to be an obvious defect, but one about which there need be no difficulty in remedying. The self-same difficulties that arose in the administration of the Act of 1875 for England had arisen in the administration of the corresponding Act for Ireland of 1878; and he wished, therefore, to ask the hon. Member would he have any objection to such an Amendment as would extend the provisions of the Act to Ireland? This would not involve any difficulty—little more than a few verbal Amendments being necessary—so as to correct a state of things under which the same defects existed in Ireland as applied to the working of the Act in England. He was certainly not inclined to consent that they should wait for a series of years for an Amendment which the House now seemed to admit to be necessary.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.) said, that the objects and intentions of the Bill had been so fully explained that it was only necessary for him to state the opinions the Government had formed upon it. They considered the Bill an extremely useful one, and one that would carry out a much-desired amendment of the law. Further, it was a Bill that would be more to the advantage of owners than to the Corporations who were promoting the Bill, and would simplify procedure and make it more fair to all parties. In the first instance, it provided that in future no work should be undertaken until all the particulars had been properly advertised and brought to the notice of all concerned; and then all persons interested in the matter had the opportunity of making any objections they thought fit, and of being heard, and having their objections decided upon, before any expenses were incurred. At present the necessary expenses were incurred before those questions were debated and settled. The Bill also gave a larger discretion to Local Authorities to enable them to apportion the expense. Clearly the right principle was that it should be apportioned with some regard to the benefit conferred. At present it was apportioned arbitrarily, with regard only to frontage, and that was not in every case a proper standard. Those were the principal provisions of the Bill, which he thought would commend itself to the acceptance of the House. The hon. Member (Mr. Sidney Herbert), on behalf of the borough of Croydon, had expressed a hope that the Bill should not be allowed to interfere with the private powers of the Corporation of that town. As Member for Birmingham, he (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) stood in the same position as the hon. Member (Mr. Sidney Herbert). Birmingham had obtained a complete Code of Municipal Law, which included most of the Amendments that were proposed to be brought into the general law by this Bill; and that Code had been in operation for some years, and had given general satisfaction. He thought the provisions of the Bill were quite sufficient to exclude any possibility of those private Acts being interfered with; Clause 18 was a saving clause in that respect. There were some Amendments the objects of which were simply to make clearer some provisions of the Bill which the Government wished to introduce; and he should ask the Committee stage to be postponed for a fortnight to give time for the preparation of these Amendments. The hon. Member for St. Stephen's Green (Mr. Gray) asked that the Bill should be extended to Ireland; but he was afraid the Municipal Law of that country was so different from that of this country that any extension would be more difficult than might be imagined. He would, however, communicate with the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley); and if it were found that Amendments could be introduced to apply the Bill to Ireland, and such an extension appeared desirable to the Irish Members, the Government would be glad to meet their views.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) said, he was glad to have an opportunity of doing what he could to further the progress of the Bill. It was clearly right, in deciding upon expenditure, that the people who had to meet the expenditure should have a voice in the settlement of the matter. He was entirely of opinion with the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) that the present rough-and-ready method of apportioning expenses was not only crude, but sometimes extremely inequitable, and unjust. The method introduced by the hon. Member (Mr. Dodds) was obviously equitable and just. There were one or two slight weaknesses, however, in the Bill, which he would like to point out. It was true that in this Bill, as it at present stood, the owner appeared to have the right of giving his voice before any expenditure was incurred; but they all knew that estimates were frequently exceeded; and he thought that the owner should not only have a voice in the matter of the estimates, but also with regard to the expenses actually incurred. It had been suggested that rural authorities should be given power to take advantage of this Act; but he did not think that that would be a wise provision; at present there were ample facilities given to the rural authorities to get urban powers. He hoped that such Amendments would be made as would remove the weaknesses in the Bill. He was glad that the hon. Member for Stockton had had the opportunity this Session of introducing his Bill; and he trusted that he would successfully carry it through Committee.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., East) said, he desired to support the request of the hon. Member for St. Stephen's Green (Mr. Gray) to have the Bill extended to

Ireland. At the present moment, the Corporation with which he was connected—the Corporation of Cork—was suffering very much disability under the Public Health Act of 1878. Under that Act it was not possible to recover with ease and facility public money spent on private works for landlords who were unable or unwilling to carry out those works; and the Corporation was prevented from carrying out several extensive sanitary measures on account of this disability. He thought the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) would find that there was no difference between the law of England and Ireland in respect to this matter.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he thought the measure was one which would lead to useful and permanent results. The apportionment of expenses upon the person who drew the rack rent had been objected to; but, from a considerable experience of this question, he could say that there was no other practical way of charging these expenses.

Mr. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, he hoped that the principle of this Bill would be remembered when the question of the expense of making a park for any town was considered. He should like it to be provided that adjoining owners, who benefited very largely when a park was made, should contribute towards the expenses.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he quite agreed that the Bill contained many valuable provisions. He believed that as the law now stood a Local Authority could not make a public carriage way along a new road unless they also took the footpaths; and if they decided to make a carriage way through a street only partly built upon, the owner of the land was put to the very heavy expense of having to pave both sides of the thoroughfare long before that step was really wanted. What was wanted was a provision which would enable a public authority to declare a carriage way open as a highway through a street partly built upon without necessarily declaring the footpath parts of the highway at the same time.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 23rd March.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—[Bill 27.]

(*Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Isaac Wilson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the question of Sunday Closing had been so often before the House that he hoped he need not detain the House many minutes in introducing this measure. A Bill similar to this had been introduced by himself and one or two of his Parliamentary Friends for several years past, especially naming Earl Percy and Mr. John Tremayne; but it was only this year that they had had the chance of fairly bringing the measure under the notice of the House. He regretted the absence from that House of some hon. Gentlemen who had assisted the movement on previous occasions, and hoped the House would, at least, accept this Bill as an honest endeavour to settle a complicated, difficult, and much-vexed question. He felt that the House and the country were not prepared to go in absolutely for entire Sunday Closing; every Sunday Closing Bill was a matter of degree; that we were in England a beer-drinking people, especially so far as the South of England was concerned; and that it would not be judicious to run Sunday Closing so far as to prevent people having what was called dinner beer and supper beer. It would not be fair, whilst allowing the *bonâ fide* traveller who had travelled two or three miles from his home to get what he liked, and then to prohibit a man living close by, and who stayed at home, from going into the public-house to get the beer which he desired for himself and his family. That, however, was the effect of the various measures for Sunday Closing which had been passed or introduced into that House. He knew that the absolute Sunday Closing advocates did not agree with him on that point; but he thought that, generally speaking, they might feel certain that if they tried to drive legislation of that character beyond the wishes and wants of the people they would fall into other errors which were far worse than those they intended to put an end to. He could not think that it would be for the good of the working classes that, if they wanted beer on Sunday, they should be obliged to take home a stock of it on Saturday. The question of Sunday Closing was entirely a question of degree. Even his hon. Friend the Member for South Shields (Mr. J. C. Stevenson), who had worked so arduously, felt that dealing with the Metropolis was so difficult a question that he was prepared to leave it out of his Bill altogether. Personally, he (Sir Joseph Pease) had taken a great deal of pains to find out how far they could work in the Metropolitan district at all; and when the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was Home Secretary he received facilities from him, and was put into communication with persons who could help him to form a judgment. The conclusions he came to were embodied in this Bill, which, so far as the Metropolitan district was concerned, proposed only to curtail the hours of opening on Sunday evenings by two hours. At present they were open from 6 o'clock till 11 o'clock. It was held by those who were well qualified to judge that the last hour in London was the hour in which more harm was done by the public-houses being open than was done all the rest of the Sunday; and that if the hour of closing in London was altered from 11 to 10 great good would be done. London was a very difficult place to deal with. There were a great many people living in the Metropolis who had no other place on Sunday than the public-houses and refreshment houses in which to have their ordinary meals. Therefore, he had gone beyond the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords on Intemperance, who desired that the houses should remain closed in London all Sunday, except for the sale of liquor to be consumed off the premises. The main points of his Bill could be stated in a few words. It proposed to reduce the evening hours of opening in the Metropolitan district, so that the houses might be open only from 7 to 10, instead of 6 to 11. In populous places outside the Metropolitan district the hours were to be reduced to 7 to 9, instead of 6 to 10; and the houses were to be open only for the sale of beer, cider, perry, &c., for consumption off the premises, no spirits being allowed to be sold. In the country it was proposed that public-houses should not be opened at all on Sunday; but neither in town or country was it proposed to alter the present law as regarded the *bond fide* traveller, or as related to railway refreshment rooms. The alterations proposed by the Bill mainly affected the evening hours, except in the rural districts, where total Sunday Closing was proposed; but even as regarded these rural districts he was quite open to return the Bill to the form in which it was introduced some years ago, giving these districts also power to procure dinner and supper beer for consumption off the premises. As to London and populous places, he proposed to leave the mid-day hours of opening as at present—namely, 1 to 3 in London, and 12.30 to 2.30 in other towns. He had found it difficult to get at the real feeling of different districts with regard to those hours. Those were his proposals; but he was not wedded to any precise details, which he should be quite willing to discuss in Committee, with a view to arriving at the best and most satisfactory settlement of the question. The hon. Member for Essex (Mr. Herbert Gardner) had just told him he thought one hour of opening at dinner time and another hour at supper time were quite enough; but dinner time and supper time varied in different places, and therefore he had left the hours very much as they were at present, except late in the evening. His hon. Friend the Member for South Shields (Mr. J. C. Stevenson) was, he knew, desirous of entire Sunday Closing, and, of course, he was entitled to try to legislate on that basis. Indeed, if he thought that the House would back him, he might try to amend the present Bill in Committee in that direction; but he (Sir Joseph Pease) did not think that either the House or public opinion out-of-doors would be prepared for the entire closing of public licensed houses on Sunday. The hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Addison) had put down on the Notice Paper an intimation of his intention to oppose the second reading of the Bill; but he (Sir Joseph Pease) trusted that he would not persevere with that intention. He had no doubt that the House would be glad to hear what the hon. and learned Member had to say in opposition to legislation on this subject; but he begged them to recollect how long Sunday Closing had been a subject of discussion, and of agitation by public meetings and otherwise. The question of Sunday Closing had been taken up by the people of this country. He (Sir Joseph Pease) had attended a great many election meetings, and the question had always been put to the candidate, and generally answered affirmatively. The Judges had taken it up, and so had the magistrates and the Boards of Guardians; and he believed that there was no section of the Christian Church but had, in its collective capacity, passed resolutions in favour of Sunday Closing. There were points upon which the Bill might be amended in Committee, either by those who thought it did not go far enough, or by those who took the contrary view; but he hoped the House would give it a second reading, with the view of bringing the matter to a satisfactory and permanent conclusion, and so doing some good. Those who knew what the state of London was on a Sunday night, especially at the East End, would know that it was that last hour that was the desperate hour. He was not speaking without some knowledge of the matter, but from personal observation. Those hon. Members also who knew the state of the country towns on Sunday evenings, and the strength of public feeling throughout the country, must feel that such a judicious restriction of the hours as was proposed by this Bill was worthy of their support. He would conclude by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Joseph Pease.*)

Mr. J. C. STEVENSON (South Shields) said, that, having for some Sessions past taken charge of the Sunday Closing Bill, he thought that he might claim the indulgence of the House if he ventured to interpose at that early stage for the purpose of explaining his own position with regard to the Bill which his hon. Friend (Sir Joseph Pease) had introduced, and the second reading of which he had just moved. He (Mr. J. C. Stevenson) ventured to call that measure a compromise Bill, and he must at once say that he regarded it as falling very far short of what the necessities of the case demanded, or what public opinion throughout the country was prepared to accept. While, however, he said this, he must add that he had never expected that Sunday Closing, pure and simple, should be carried out everywhere all at once. He had, for instance, always been prepared to delay the full operation of the Bills he had introduced within the Metropolitan district. What might be done as to the Metropolis he did not then say. That might safely be left to the judgment of the large number of Metropolitan Members who had now been admitted to that House, and who would be in a position to explain their views in Committee on this Bill. But, whatever might be the case with respect to the Metropolis, he believed, as regards the rest of the country, that public opinion there was, at the present moment, fully ripe for a measure of total closing on the Sunday. As he had been unfortunate in balloting for his own Bill, and had had no opportunity of bringing it before the House during the present Session with any chance of taking the sense of hon. Members upon it, he should feel perfectly free to support the second reading of the Bill of the hon. Baronet. But, at the same time, he desired to say that in Committee he should endeavour to get rid of the unnecessary concessions, as he deemed them, which his hon. Friend had unfortunately introduced into it, with a view to make it a broader, a more comprehensive, and a more statesmanlike measure than it was as now presented to the House. The Bill would only give total Sunday Closing in the country villages. Elsewhere it would merely amount to a reduction of the hours for which public-houses were allowed to be open on Sundays, together with a certain modification in the nature of the business carried on in those houses on Sunday. Now, what he (Mr. J. C. Stevenson) contended was that his hon. Friend might have taken up a much stronger position than that, and that public opinion would have supported him in proposing a much stronger measure. The Bill before them would not, as it stood, liberate the hundreds of thousands of barmen and barmaids who now lose their day of rest, and the proper enjoyment of that day with their families. Those persons now worked longer hours than any other class of people, and therefore they, more than any others, required the Sunday rest of which they were now deprived. The great demand outside the House, as was evident from the Petitions which had been laid on the Table, was not for a measure like that. It was for total closing, and not for partial closing. This was clearly the result when the opinion of localities had been taken by canvassing. There was then the same large majority against the partial opening on Sunday as there was against the continuance of the present system. He admitted that they must not go in advance of public opinion; but, on the other hand, it would be a great mistake to misunderstand it, or to fall short of it. This compromise Bill would not settle the question. It would not satisfy the public, nor would it satisfy the trade, which it involved in new and complex regulations. It created new offences, and inflicted penalties for their violation. Within the Metropolis the Sunday trade was to remain the same in character as at present, only with shorter hours; but in the suburbs of the Metropolis, and in towns and populous places, spirits might not, under this Bill, be sold at all, and beer might only be sold for consumption off the premises. The public-house would be open, but a customer could not legally get a brandy flask filled, much less could he get a glass of spirits; and a regular customer, who got his daily pint of beer on Saturday and Monday, would be asked, when he called on Sunday, if he had brought a jug with him, and would be told that if he had not he must come back next day. He appealed to his hon. Friend to say whether the irritation caused by such restrictions as these would not render it impossible to enforce them? It would be possible to enforce times of closing; but, the house being open, he was sure that to enforce a change for Sunday only in the business must lead to continual evasion of the law. Such a Bill would not stop the agitation for Sunday Closing. His hon. Friend had not availed himself of the great advance which had taken place in public opinion on this subject of recent years. In 1883 there were 6,700 Petitions, with 1,800,000 signatures, all in favour of total closing. Those Petitioners would not be satisfied with such a weak and timid measure as that before them. He would urge the Government to support the second reading of the Bill. Temperance reformers, most of whom ardently supported the Liberal Government, were deeply disappointed that they gave no assistance in the last Parliament to this most pressing measure; and their disappointment would be deepened if the Government did not help temperance reforms now. He trusted that they would give his hon. Friend facilities for going into Committee on the Bill, which he trusted would then be made stronger than it was at present. But, be that as it might, he felt convinced that a full discussion in Committee must result in a much more efficient measure than the Bill as it now stood. Such a Bill as he desired, and as would be adequate to the occasion, might be passed before the month was out; and while they were waiting for the Government proposals as to Ireland they could not spend the time better than in dealing with this far too long delayed and pressing question.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne): Sir, I rise to move that this Bill be read a second time upon this day six months. The hon. Baronet who moved the second reading said it was an honest attempt to settle a difficult and complex question; but the hon. Gentleman who seconded him said it was nothing of the kind; that it would settle nothing; and that the only settlement he desired was to close public-houses on Sundays altogether. Then we are told by the hon. Baronet that public opinion is entirely in favour of such a measure as this. That is an assumption which I strongly deny. I say that such an opinion is created, fostered, and nursed by a small, energetic, pushing, and fanatical section of the community, who are in reality a very small minority in the country. If I were to appeal to the same experience as hon. Members opposite have appealed to—namely, that of public meetings, I would say that I, too, have been through an election; I have had to address public meetings; and I have been asked what my opinions were upon this matter. I have declared over and over again, to the great satisfaction of the electors of a borough that I may describe as very intelligent, that I was perfectly satisfied with the law as it is, and that expression of opinion seemed to be received with very general satisfaction by those whom I addressed. The fact is, there is no dissatisfaction, I make bold to say, in the community with the law as it stands. A small section are in favour of this Bill; a larger section are entirely opposed to the Bills that are being perpetually brought in to harass and annoy the licensed victuallers; and another large section are, perhaps, dubious on the point altogether. We must not forget that these hours of closing were all thoroughly discussed in 1872, when Mr. Bruce was Home Secretary. They were again further discussed in this House in 1874, and the present law is a compromise between the two Parties that then debated the matter; and I would appeal to all those who have a technical acquaintance with licensing matters whether, on the whole, it has not worked remarkably well? It is said that the religious bodies have, in their religious capacity, passed resolutions in favour of this Bill. Well, it is very hard to make an application of this kind to religious bodies without their passing such a Motion. They are told that intemperance is very much on the increase; that it is created altogether by the public-houses; that they must recognize that intemperance is a vice and a crime; and it follows that in their religious capacity they must pass such resolutions. But I ask whether the members of these religious bodies, and the great mass of working-class people in England, not in their religious capacity, but in their every day capacity, pass resolutions of this kind? Have any large body of working men, has any trades union, done so? I should like to know whether any large trades union, which may be fairly said to represent the feelings of large sections of the working classes, have ever passed a resolution in favour of restricting the liberty they now enjoy of the public-houses being opened during part of Sunday? As we are told by hon. Gentlemen opposite, this is only a first step towards something else. Now I should like to know in whose interest a Bill of this kind is brought forward? It is not in the interest of the cause of temperance, because all experience and statistics tell us that temperance has made enormous strides during the last few years. Some people attribute the progress to the depression of trade, some to the agency of temperance bodies, and a great part to the Salvation Army; but the fact is, and it cannot be disputed, that temperance under existing legislation has made enormous strides, and there really is no reasonable desire whatever to cause such a reaction as this Bill, if carried, would cause. Now as to the practical application of the Bill. In London, we are told by the hon. Member who moves the Bill, he desires to introduce a very thin end of the wedge, and to knock the last hour off the London time of opening. But the hon. Member told us at the same time that a vast number of people in London can only take their meals on Sunday at a public-house or refreshment-house. If that be so, and if these people have a desire to go into the country for a little change and wholesome recreation, when they come back to London hungry and thirsty, why in the world should they have the last hour taken away from them? I consider there is a great deal of real usefulness and necessity in that last hour. The hon. Member says that most of the evil which accrues from the opening of the public-houses in London takes place during the last hour. For my part, I have never seen any of those appearances of vice and abuse between 10 and 11 o'clock in the streets of London. I make bold to say that it really would be well if, instead of reading reports of meetings and lectures on this subject, we used our own eyesight, and if we did that I think a great many of the evils would be found to be imaginary. Then, again, it is impossible to say why Sunday drinking should be allowed in London and forbidden in the country. There is nothing that people in the country are more jealous of than the attempt to favour London at their expense. Some of the provisions of this Bill are really most impracticable. For instance, one of them is that the sale off the premises is to be allowed, but not consumption on the premises. Now, what would be the effect of that? A person comes in with his jug for beer, and when the publican is looking the other way he might drink part of the beer; but that would be an offence against the law, and might lead to a very serious fine. The *bonâ fide* traveller, however, who is on the premises, may do it. It should not be forgotten that a public-house is not merely a place where people obtain their liquor on Sunday; it is to a large number of people a place of recreation, a place of meeting, and also a place, to some extent, of social enjoyment. It is in reality the poor man's club, and why working men should be prohibited from going into it, except in this sneaking sort of way, I do not see. Another most extraordinary proposition is that in the country people should be allowed to buy beer on Sunday, but not spirits. I do not know how hon. Gentlemen from Ireland feel on that point, or whether they will urge that the Bill should also apply to Ireland. [An hon. MEMBER: They have got it in Ireland.] Yes, and it has led to an enormous increase in the consumption of spirits on Sunday. The fact is, none of these Bills which are brought in to alter the law affecting licensed victuallers are calculated to do any real good. The only way to bring about any real good, from the point of view of temperance advocates, would be, if it were possible, to bring in a Bill to prevent either the brewing of beer, or the distilling of spirits, or the importation of wine from abroad, or its manufacture in England. If hon. Members would go the entire length of the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. J. C. Stevenson), and endeavour to bring in a Bill of the kind, they would then be really promoting the cause of temperance. The whole question now is simply one of distribution by means of the public-house. But when you have annoyed the publicans as much as you can you will still have dealers of every kind who supply unlawful clubs and other places with liquor. What you propose to do is to inflict some sort of injury on those who are now under police control and who are limited as to their hours, to the great benefit of unlawful drinking of every kind. That would be the practical result of measures of that kind, and in saying this I am not taking at all an eccentric view of the case. I can remember that in the borough with which I am connected —not the borough which I represent—the inventor of teetotalism, Joseph Livesey, held precisely the same views I am advocating in this House—that all the proposals to in any way restrict or cripple the trade would be perfectly useless, that legislative interference was useless, and that it was to other agencies altogether that they must look for temperance reform. In addition to that we have to remember that by the side of those agencies there have grown up large agencies with offices, secretaries, and subscriptions, devoted entirely to legislative interference. I cannot help thinking that those are mischievous agencies, and they divert the energies of temperance reformers from their practical work. Legislative interference will not do any good whatever, and if it could be carried out to-morrow it would only lead to an increase of drinking in this country. But in addition to that, we ought to regard the freedom of the people of this country. Nobody, either on Sunday or week-day, is compelled to go into a public-house; and I should like to know by what right it is sought to interfere with the freedom of the person, to say not only that he should not go into a public-house, but also to fix his dinner and supper hours, and to tell him that he is free to drink such beer as he likes, but not whisky. I ask whether that is the sort of legislation that the English people—who like their freedom and their rights—are likely to submit to? I beg to move that this Bill be read this day six months.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to second the Amendment. The hon. Members who moved and seconded the Bill seem to have treated this question as one on which a large amount of public opinion was expressed at the General Election. I quite admit that there was a definite opinion expressed on the one side and on the other as to the question of the restrictions to be placed on the sale of intoxicating liquors; but so far as I know, in no constituency, in no part of the country, was any approval expressed of a measure such as this we are now considering. I think I might call the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. J. C. Stevenson) as a witness to that fact. He has told us that the measure we are now considering does not at all meet his view of the case, and that he only supports it as a stepping-stone to something of an entirely different character. But still I think those of us who believe that the opinion of the constituencies which they represent is not in favour of restrictive legislation may argue the question on the general ground whether it is desirable that the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday should be suppressed altogether. That question was brought under my notice on more than one occasion during the elections, and I expressed the opinion then which I have expressed here—that I do not believe these restrictive measures are the mode in which we ought to endeavour to bring about a better condition of things in this country at the present time, and that opinion, as far as I can gather, was adopted by a large proportion of those whom I addressed. I bebelieve that the experience of the past may guide us in coming to the conclusion that it is not by merely restricting or curtailing the hours that we are to advance the great cause of temperance in this country. I have the honour to represent a constituency (Preston) which has held a conspicuous place in temperance matters. I believe that the movement in favour of teetotalism originated there; but its supporters in that district never relied upon restrictive measures. The principle upon which they went was to educate the people into the belief that they could live happily and comfortably without making use of intoxicating liquors, and that, therefore, it was better that those who found they could not exercise the necessary degree of self-restraint should abstain altogether rather than incur the risk of excessive indulgence. Those are the principles which I desire to see adopted in this country. Notwithstanding my opposition to this Bill, I claim the right to be considered just as much an advocate of temperance as those who support it. I believe we may do a great deal even by legislation in support of the great cause of temperance. There is one direction in which some attempts will probably be made—and I hope they will be successful—during this Session to bring about an improvement, and that is the prevention of the adulteration of beer. I believe there is nothing more likely to cause the development of a depraved taste for the excessive indulgence in liquors than to be in the position of not being able to secure good liquors to satisfy a healthy appetite; and if we can do something by the passing of this Beer Adulteration Bill we shall have gone a long step in the way of making what we all desire to see—a sober as well as a free people. There is another important point. I do not think the law is at present strict enough in regard to the character of spirits that are sold. I think we ought to have some very strict regulations, not only to provide that adulterated spirits should never be sold under any circumstances, but that spirits should not be sold for drinking purposes until they have arrived at a proper degree of maturity. I think we might very fairly claim that no spirits ought to be sold until they have been a sufficient number of years in bond to enable the medical faculty to be able to certify that they are in a wholesome condition. I believe that at the present moment in many parts of the country, insidious and unwholesome drinks are sold in public-houses, grocers' shops, and other places, to the great detriment of a large number of men and women in this country. There is another thing in which I think a change would be desirable in the Bill. I think it would be well if places which are opened for the sale of refreshments, and which under Bills of this sort now have to be absolutely closed for all purposes at the hour when the sale of intoxicating drinks is prohibited, should be allowed to remain open for the sale of other refreshments. Temperance was promoted on the Continent by the café system. Hon. Members opposite have been rather shy in alluding to parts of the country in which Sunday Closing exists, and especially the Principality of Wales. The experiment has been going on there for years, and I should like hon. Members who lean to this mode of dealing with the question of intoxicating liquors and licensing, to give us before the close of this debate their candid opinion as to whether that Act has succeeded in Wales or not. Facts have been brought before us which tend to throw a considerable doubt upon its success. One of the places where the Act appears to have been a signal failure is the borough of Cardiff. I have a list of Boards of Guardians, Town Councils, and other bodies in various towns in Wales, which declare that the Act has been a total failure. Here let me endeavour to draw a distinction between the state of things in Wales and the state of things in Ireland. Ireland, as we know, is a spirit-drinking country; Wales, in common with England, is a beer-drinking country; and it may be desirable to put restrictions on the sale of intoxicating liquors where spirits are the national drink which could not be put where beer is the national drink. Those who drink beer like to have it fresh. We all know that the mass of the population have no facilities for keeping beer in their own houses, and it is inevitable that they should go to the public-house for it. I now come to the three great objections to this Bill. The first objection concerns that rank imposter, the *bonâ fide* traveller. I will go so far as to say that I never would vote for a Bill altering the Licensing Laws which left the *bonâ fide* traveller in his anomalous and absurd position. Another objection is the provision which deals with drinking clubs, and here I must go back to Wales again. It is not denied that a most fearful condition of things exist in reference to these clubs in Wales, the origin of which is to be traced to this very restriction of Sunday Closing. Not only do they exist in Wales. I am told that there are something like 90 drinking clubs in Manchester, and what would be the effect if we adopted this restriction? Would it not give every encouragement to these drinking clubs, where drinking would not go on under the control of the police as at present? My third objection to the Bill is the exclusion of railway refreshment-rooms. People in the towns are not to be allowed to carry on their business, but we are to give the Railway Companies the full privilege of carrying on this branch of their business. I want to know why it is so absolutely necessary for men who travel by rail to drink intoxicating liquors, and nobody else? I cannot imagine any reason for excluding railway refreshment-rooms from the restrictions of the Bill except one, and that is that there are always places where other refreshments besides intoxicating liquors are sold and consumed. But that is the case with many other places as well. I say it is a half-hearted measure, and does not satisfy its advocates on that side of the House. In conclusion, let me say this. I think this great subject ought not to be taken up by private individuals, but by the Government. I do not know whether any very distinct declarations of policy have been made by the Leaders of the Party opposite; but our Leader (the Marquess of Salisbury), in his speech at Newport, laid down the lines on which the question of licensing should be dealt with from his point of view, and I think those are lines which will be generally accepted, not only by one Party, but by both. It should be dealt with as part of the system of Local Government, which sooner or later must be brought into the country. I have pleasure in seconding the Amendment, because I believe the Bill will satisfy very few people.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Addison.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. LEICESTER (West Ham, S.) said, that hon. Members opposite were labouring under a great mistake in supposing that the Bill was not a popular one. He could only say, for himself, that his life had been passed in social contact with the working men of the Metropolis, and he was sent to that House by a very large popular democracy, and by what was more than any other in England a thorough working man's constituency, and on their behalf he gave his cordial support to the Bill. At every meeting they had had, that question was put to them, and they all voted for the Bill; and he might say that his hon. Colleague in the other part of the Division was also very well aware that the public sentiment was thoroughly in favour of the Sunday Closing of public-houses. When an hon. Member, like the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Addison), talked about Trades Unions not having agreed to any measure in support of it, he showed that he knew very little about Trades Unions. These questions were never brought before Trades Unions to be dealt with, because they were social questions. It must not be forgotten in debating this measure, although it really seemed to be so, that they had already got protection against the public-house by having Sunday Closing during half the day. Why should it not be granted for the whole of the day? The grounds upon which they secured what they already had were moral grounds, and he submitted that the reduction of a wrong could not make the remainder right. Working men claimed protection from the liquor traffic, for it inflicted taxation on those who ought not to be taxed. They wanted to prevent the evils of the system from falling upon them, and they could not have public-houses open on Sundays without forcing untold evils upon the country. That was his object in supporting the Bill; and, on that ground, he went in for Sunday Closing and every other kind of closing if he could get it; and if they left the question to the working men of England, they would very soon make short work of the whole liquor traffic. He would ask, when had a Trade Congress ever voted against a Sunday Closing Bill? Never; for they were all in favour of sobriety and shutting up the causes of inebriety, whereas hon. Members opposite would palliate, but would not remove the cause. His idea was, that if they wanted to get rid of the effect, they must get rid of the cause, and that cause was the opening of public-houses on the Sabbath-day. With regard to railway stations, he believed that refreshment-bars at railway stations were a thousand times worse than public-houses. He had seen them doing a roaring trade at half-past 12 on Saturday nights when the public-houses were all closed. ["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite need not vex their souls on that question, however, as his hon. Friend (Sir Joseph Pease) would be very glad in Committee to include them within the operation of the Bill. It had been said that Sunday Closing had not succeeded in Ireland; but he had sometimes been amused at watching, in the case of those who called themselves Nationalists and Loyalists, faces which betrayed the passion of the soul; he had watched their varied emotions, and however much they might differ on politics, they dared not differ with regard to Sunday Closing. On that question both Parties were found in the same Lobby. ["No, no!"] Ah! there was no mistake about it. The same thing would be found with regard to Wales. In the last Parliament there were 29 Welsh Members, of whom 28 were Liberals and one Conservative, and the 28 Liberals voted in favour of Sunday Closing, while the Conservative voted in favour of keeping public-houses open. With regard to Scotland, it would be high treason to say that the Scotch Members were not in favour of this measure, so that there was every evidence to prove that the people of this great country—and, thank God, it was a great country—were in favour of Sunday Closing, if Parliament would only give the people a chance of being sober by closing these places of temptation, by shutting up these man-traps, which somehow or other enticed a man to spend his wages, instead of being by his own fireside. It would put an end to a great deal of agitation of which hon. Members opposite complained, because agitation never thrived on full tables, only upon poteen. If they crippled the traffic, there would be more happy homes than at present, for they would bring peace and plenty to thousands of them, and many a poor child would have a dinner, when public-houses were closed, who was now deprived of it in consequence of their being open on the Sunday.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): Sir, the speech we have just heard, and another speech that was made earlier in the debate, show us what is the character and meaning of the Bill now before the House. The hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill (Sir Joseph Pease) told us it was a very moderate Bill indeed, and that it was, in fact, a compromise; but the hon. Member who has just spoken (Mr. Leicester) has declared very strongly in favour of the extreme measure of complete Sunday Closing. The hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. Stevenson) told us that when the Bill came into Committee very considerable modifications might be introduced into it; in fact, it appears, therefore, that we are to pass the second reading, and thus enable the hon. Member for Durham to insert the thin end of the wedge, and then, in Committee, hon. Members on the Government side of the House will take care to insert the thick end after it. I know that no one has a better right—indeed, we on this side of the House cannot venture to compare with the hon. Member for West Ham and the other Labour Representatives on that side, in their experience of the habits of working men—but I think they claim a little too much when they speak in this House as if they were the sole Representatives here of all classes of the working population. I have the honour to stand here myself, as one of the Representatives of the largest industrial constituency in England; and I say that I gained my seat there after speaking very frankly indeed upon this question, and refusing, if I were elected to the House, to have anything to do with measures for the introduction of Local Option or Sunday Closing. Now, I am very glad, so far, with regard to this Bill, that it does not proceed upon the lines of Local Option; because it seems to me to be one of the chief dangers of the time that Parliament may delegate too much power to Local Boards and Assemblies, and not have the courage of laying down true principles of legislation itself upon matters as they arise. If I might offer an illustration of the danger of such a policy, I would take what happened yesterday in this House in regard to the Manchester Canal. Suppose Parliament abandoned its control of Private Bill legislation, and that we had a Provincial Council for Lancashire to decide upon such measures, then if the Liverpool representatives had a majority upon the Council, as they might easily have, we might infer, from the tone of the speeches heard yesterday, how unmercifully they would use their power in order to deprive Manchester and the inland manufacturing districts of any access to the sea, except through the great port of Liverpool. That is an illustration of the dangers which may happen if Parliament should abandon to Local Bodies the powers of legislation which we now possess; and if mischief may be done in that way, may not even still greater mischief be done in the important department of the regulation of the social habits of the people? I would no more allow separate districts to determine what men should eat and drink, how they should be clothed, or at what hour they should go to bed, than I would revive in this country the old and condemned system of allowing each town to have its own octroi duties and settle what its system of taxation should be. So far, therefore, as I have before remarked, it is a good thing to have a measure brought before us which is not framed on the lines of Local Option. But then we come to the question of Sunday Closing. One of my hon. Friends (Mr. Tomlinson) has spoken of the declaration made by Lord Salisbury at Newport with regard to the changes necessary in the Licensing Laws. I had the pleasure of listening to the great speech delivered at Newport, in October, by our honoured Leader, and I was especially struck by the very cautious tone in which he spoke of this question of Sunday Closing, because he particularly called to our recollection what happened in this great Metropolis when Parliament, out of a desire to improve the habits of the people, passed in a hurry Lord Robert Grosvenor's Bill for Sunday Closing. Lord Salisbury reminded us that that Bill was repealed almost as hurriedly as it had been passed; and he said that, whatever was done in the way of Sunday Closing, the Metropolis must certainly be excepted, or you would have riots, and perhaps revolution. Knowing the marvellous intellectual resources of Lord Salisbury, I could not help thinking while I listened to that part of his speech, that he wished to convey to us, in an indirect and subtle manner, a suggestion that the principle of any legislation of this kind might easily be reduced to an absurdity; because if you once except the Metropolis from the operation of a measure of this kind, on the ground that if London were included you would have riots and revolution, see what a dangerous principle you immediately admit. You tell the inhabitants of all other towns in the Kingdom that, if they wish to be excepted from such legislation, all they have to do is to begin rioting and threatening to lead us to a revolution. If we were to pass a Bill excepting the Metropolis on that ground, we should be accepting a principle which is too much in favour with right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, that in these days we are to look for the true source of all wise and beneficent legislation, not in the plans of statesmen, but in the clamours and the riots of popular agitation. On that ground, I should object to any measure which would try to impose upon the whole country a law of Sunday Closing, and at the same time would except London. But now, let me turn, for a moment, to the provisions of the particular Bill before the House. If I might venture to describe it, so far as it affects this Metropolis, I should make bold to call it a Curfew Bill. It is a Bill which arbitrarily cuts off one hour at the beginning of Sunday opening and another hour at the end of the evening, so that the citizens of London who are accustomed to the existing hours would have to submit to them at a great inconvenience. The Bill, in effect, says that no Londoner should have anything to drink after 10 o'clock upon Sunday evening. What is that but saying that nobody shall be allowed to go about the streets of London after that hour? ["No, no!"] Well, practically, it amounts to that. ["No, no!"] We know that the habit of roaming about the streets of London at night has been, with many great men, from Dr. Johnson down to Charles Dickens, accepted as one of the greatest enjoyments of civilized life; and if that was the case with these great men, how much more must it be the case with the thousands and tens of thousands of London citizens who have not the varied means of enjoyment which so many of us possess? Yet they will all be deprived of this great pleasure. For do you not say that you will allow men to be out, if they like, after 10 o'clock at night on Sundays, but on no account whatever are they to get a glass of anything to drink after that hour? Allow me just briefly to notice one or two other clauses in this Bill. The framer of the Bill has laid it down that within the Metropolitan district, during certain hours, it shall be lawful for a man to drink spirits, say, as far as Hammersmith; but if he goes beyond that, and gets to Kew, he shall only be allowed to drink beer, porter, cider, or perry; and if he goes beyond that radius, then he shall not be allowed to drink anything at all. Can anybody imagine more petty, more absurd, more childish regulations than these?

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: At the time the man has got to Kew he is a *bonâ fide* traveller, and can get what he likes.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN: I am not speaking of *bonâ fide* travellers, but of residents within the districts. I perfectly appreciate the distinction as to *bonâ fide* travellers; but I say that nothing more childish or absurd than to attempt to pass such regulations —to dictate to men that they shall be allowed to drink spirits in one part of the Metropolis, beer in another, and then, if they live a little beyond it, they shall not have anything at all on Sundays—can well be conceived. This is the kind of Bill which is offered for our acceptance to-day; and I notice that the hon. Baronet the Member for Durham, who introduced it, was himself so little familiar with the provisions of the Bill that he actually did not know that it proposed to shut public-houses at 10 o'clock on Sunday evenings. That shows how little care the measure has received. I think with regard to all proposals for legislation of this kind the advocates of temperance would do well at present to let well alone. The country is making great progress in habits of moderation. I dare say many of us can remember the time, if we may trust the distinguished writers who adorned modern Athens some 20 or 30 years ago, that it was then impossible for a respectable citizen of Edinburgh to go to bed at night with credit to himself, or without almost incurring loss of caste, unless he had consumed a considerable number of glasses of whisky toddy before he went to bed. A very great change has occurred in the habits of the people, not only in Edinburgh, but all over the country; and it would be well if Members of this House, instead of trying to pass measures of this kind, were to trust to the social influences which have already done so much good to effect further improvement in the habits of the people; and I think this House would do well to pause before passing a Bill which affords an illustration of arbitrary, unequal, and vexatious legislation.

MR. SHIRLEY (Yorkshire, W. R., Doncaster) said, he felt bound to deny the assertion of the hon. Member (Mr. Maclean) that the working men were not in favour of this Bill. He had considerable experience of working men, and he said without hesitation that they were in favour of the closing of public-houses on Sunday. He could not say that the present Bill was a satisfactory one; he viewed it as being of the nature of a compromise; but, all the same, he intended to vote for it. He supported it on the principle that half-a-loaf was better than no bread; and if the Bill did not go as far as was necessary, it at least covered some of the ground.

MR. GREGORY (Sussex, East Grinstead) said, he thought the provisions of the Bill went too far in totally preventing the sale of beer in the rural districts on Sundays. There were many villages which were almost towns, and other similar places, where very respectable people were in the habit of having their beer with their Sunday dinner. Again, it proposed to preserve the rights of what was known as the *bonâ fide* traveller, and it was unfair that a healthy man, who walked three miles, should be supplied with drink as a *bonâ fide* traveller, while the weak man, who could not walk three miles, would be obliged to go without it. He quite agreed that there was more drinking at railway refreshment-bars on Sunday than in public-houses. It was desirable to have some alteration in the law—to have a further limit to the hours on Sunday; and he thought, with certain adaptations and modifications in Committee, especially having regard to the restriction of the sale of beer in the rural districts, the Bill would meet the exigencies of the case.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): I will follow the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, because he has indicated a technical difficulty in connection with the Bill, but, at the same time, has indicated a change as regards populous places which the Bill might be made to meet. Agreeing very much with what the hon. Gentleman has said, I will state to the House the view which the Government take of the Bill, and the course which they propose to adopt and advise the House to take regarding it. Putting aside technicalities, which in my judgment may be removed, ought to be removed, and could be removed without any serious difficulty, the Bill is, after all, of a simple character. It proposes that, in the Metropolis, no serious change shall be made in the time during which drink can be obtained, or in the manner under which it may be obtained. I quite agree that it would be perfectly impossible, even for those who hold strong views on the subject, to impose upon the Metropolis the drastic provisions of a Bill such as was hurriedly passed some years ago, and which had to be repealed with some ignominy on the earliest possible occasion. Therefore, so far as the Metropolis is concerned, the proposal of the Bill is not of a serious character. All it proposes is to cut off certain hours from the time within which drink of all kinds, both spirits and beer, can be obtained; and my own impression is that, constituted as we are now, that reduction is not an unreasonable one. The hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Maclean) said that because no drink is allowed to be obtained under this Bill after 10 o'clock at night, therefore we ought to enact that nobody should be allowed to roam about the streets after 10 o'clock. It would lead to a great many inconveniences if we laid that down as a settled principle. People do roam about the streets, either for good or for bad purposes, till very late, and if we laid down such a principle it would be impossible to apply legislation which would be of a reasonable character. So far, therefore, as the Metropolis is concerned, the proposal of the Bill is, I think, simple and not unreasonable. Then you come to the "populous places" outside the Metropolis proper; and in large towns the Bill proposes that people should be enabled to get beer at certain times on Sunday to take to their homes and to be consumed there; but, inasmuch as spirits are none the worse for being kept from Saturday to Monday, those who want to drink spirits on Sunday should get them on Saturday evening. That seems to me to be a not unreasonable proposal. The general principle that beer does deteriorate if you keep it 24 hours, but spirits do not, is sound in itself; but whether it is necessary to apply it in this particular case or not, I do not say. But the Bill goes further, and proposes in the rural districts proper, and not only there, but in towns of small size, that nobody should be allowed to get beer at all on Sunday. I must say that that is a somewhat extreme and unreasonable proposal. At any rate, if we are adopting tentative legislation on a question of this kind—legislation which ought not to run counter to the public opinion of the country—I think there would be a great deal of debate if in a large town you could get your beer on Sunday, but outside that town, in rural villages containing a small number of inhabitants, you were obliged to buy your beer on Saturday in order to drink it on Sunday. That is a point which my hon. Friend admits might be amended when the Bill is in Committee, and, speaking for the Government, I think certainly it ought to be amended in that respect in Committee. Now, let me tell the House what has been done on this subject within the last few years. In the early part of the Session of 1880 this question of buying drink on Sunday came before the House on a Motion of a very extensive character, prohibiting the sale of liquor on Sundays. The question was brought forward as a Motion on going into Committee of Supply, and a division was taken, in which the extreme view apparently received a certain majority. When the extreme view came up as a substantive Question, what happened? It was moved by my hon. Friend (Sir Joseph Pease) to the effect that, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient that the law which limits the hours of sale of intoxicating drinks on Sunday should be amended so as to apply as nearly as possible to the whole of that day, making provision for the sale of beer, porter, cider, or perry for consumption off the premises in the country, and for the requirements of the Metropolitan district such provisions as will be found needful to secure public co-operation in any alteration of the law. That is practically the Bill now before the House, with the single exception that it extends the power of obtaining beer on Sunday to be consumed off the premises to the whole instead of to certain parts of the country. It was held to be a very fair compromise, and passed the House unaltered. Now, that being the case, I think there is considerable ground for saying that the proposals in the present Bill, modified in the way I have suggested on what is the authority of Parliament, or at least of the House of Commons pronounced in rather a full House, and at the end of a debate which lasted two or three hours in 1880, is one well worthy the acceptance of the House on this occasion. But I should like also to say a few words as to another matter which has been referred to at some length by the hon. Member for Oldham, and as to which I think the House would do well to bear in mind the difficulties of the position, though I do not at all agree with the extreme view which the hon. Member took. The hon. Member had some difficulty to reconcile what Lord Salisbury said at Newport with the views he and others entertain and support. If I understand the opinion of Lord Salisbury, he treated the subject of general restrictions, and said that everything to do with the sale of liquor should be relegated to the Local Authorities which he proposed to set up, and amongst those restrictions was the sale of liquor on Sunday. Now, the hon. Gentleman did not, I think, quite successfully combat the view of Lord Salisbury. That view is the view which we hold, and which we have held for some time—the view, I mean, that these questions of the sale of liquor should to a very large extent be regulated by the future Local Authorities. I hope the House, whatever it does as to this Bill, will always bear that in mind, and if they pass, as I hope they will pass, this Bill, they will do so on the distinct understanding that they will reserve—when the new Local Authorities are created—to them the power of dealing, within certain limits, with this subject. Now that is the view we adopt, which we have advocated, and which we shall continue to advocate. But considering how doubtful it is when these future Local Authorities, the general principle of which is conceded by both sides of the House, will come into operation, I must say it seems to me to be wise to follow the Resolution of the House of Commons in 1880, and incorporate it in this Bill with the Amendments to which my hon. Friend has referred, and which I am prepared to support. Therefore, on that ground, I hope the House, as to present legislation, will adopt the Bill which is now before us. It is not, I need not say—certainly there is general agreement on that on both sides and among both Parties—a Party question; but it is a social question of some importance, and on which there is the authority of a distinct vote of this House; and, therefore, for the Government, I have to say that we shall support the second reading of the present Bill, and we shall do our best to introduce in Committee the Amendments suggested.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): As to the speech of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department, amongst the remarkable things in it, not the least remarkable and instructive part of it is the intimation he has given us as to the prospect we may entertain of the introduction of the Local Government Bill. Why is that measure to be relegated to the dim and distant future, and the House to be asked to deal in this piecemeal and perfunctory manner with the Liquor Question, which the right hon. Gentleman admits is part and parcel of it? I have always understood that the introduction of the Local Government Bill was one of the very cardinal points of the programme, not only on this side of the House, but on the other side, and yet no prospect is held out of this measure; and we are actually asked by the Government to pass, to-day, a Bill dealing with a most important social question affecting the whole country, and which, by common consent, cannot be adequately dealt with, except as part of a Local Government scheme. If the Government are of opinion that we ought at this time to pass this measure, I should, at all events, have expected that the right hon. Gentleman opposite should have given us some ground for thinking that the proposals he means the House to adopt would meet with general acceptation. There has been a great deal of experience lately in regard to Sunday Closing. It has been in operation for some time in Ireland and Wales; and, before we are asked by the responsible Government to apply that principle to the whole country, surely we might expect that he would have based upon those experiences some defence of the proposals he asks us to adopt; but we have not had a word from the right hon. Gentleman on that point. He has confined himself simply to saying that this Bill ought to pass, without giving us a single argument by which that opinion might be supported. Will this Bill, in the first place, satisfy public opinion on this question? I think we have had it conclusively proved, in the course of debate, that it will neither satisfy extreme temperance people, nor those who desire to see the law remain as it is. Now, the late Government considered that this question ought not to be dealt with by hard-and-fast legislation applied with iron uniformity to the whole country. We thought, and still think, that each district in the country should regulate its own legislation in this matter; for what might be applicable to one district would not be to another; and we thought, therefore, that we ought to leave to the districts themselves, under proper restrictions, the regulation of this question. Now, I perceive in the provisions of the Bill of my hon. Friend (Sir Joseph Pease) that he himself is also of opinion that the circumstances of different localities so far vary that the same legislative provisions are not equally applicable to all, because he has divided the country into three parts. In the country districts you may not get drunk at all on the Sunday; in populous places you may get drunk on beer, on the condition that it is bought and drunk off the premises; and in London you may get drunk on what liquor you please, both in the public-house and out of it. ["No, no!"] But the hon. Gentleman is of opinion that sobriety on the Sunday may be produced by shutting up the public-houses. That is the whole principle on which the Bill proceeds. Therefore he enforces complete sobriety in country places, partial sobriety in populous places, and does not enforce sobriety at all in London. According, therefore, to the hon. Gentleman's own views, different localities require different treatment; and if we carried out that principle to its logical conclusion, we should arrive at the conclusion adopted by the late Government —namely, that the localities themselves shall decide what are the principles on which they desire to regulate the liquor traffic. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) does not approve of the Bill as it stands, but says it can be amended in Committee; but I do not think the Government can ask us to accept the second reading of a Bill, with one of the main principles of which they cannot agree. I think we have a right to say that after the intimation I have given of the policy of the late Government, we are as anxious that this question should be settled on a fair basis as any Gentlemen who sit opposite. But we hold that it cannot be settled on a satisfactory basis, if we are to go on the lines laid down in this Bill. We hold that the Bill would make us lay down a hard-and-fast line for every locality, no matter what special circumstances may exist; and that some of the most important provisions of this Bill are such as ought not to be entertained by this House. Holding that opinion, we think we cannot support this Bill. We think the Government ought to lose no time in bringing forward the Local Government Bill, about which they have talked so much, and with regard to which it appears they intend to do so little. We thought when in Office, and we think now, that no final or rational settlement of the Liquor Question could be expected until the Local Government Bill was brought forward; and therefore we were specially anxious that that Bill should stand in the forefront of legislation. But we cannot see for the moment that any great public object will be attained by asking the House to pass a Bill which will be superseded and rendered absolutely nugatory directly the new Local Government Bill is passed. Let us not deal with this matter in a fragmentary fashion. Let us deal with it once and for all; and let us give the Local Authorities, under fair and proper restrictions, and with due regard to the legitimate interests of the great trade affected, power to deal with this question. Thus, and thus only, will you finally decide and place on a solid and satisfactory basis this question, which is attracting, and deservedly attracting, so much of the attention of the country.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): There is one thing the House has learned from the speech of my right hon. Friend (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and that is what was the policy of the late Government upon the Sunday Closing Question. He has laid it down, perfectly clearly, that their policy was to relegate the question entirely to each distinct locality to decide. But I have a very strong recollection that in the last Parliament there were large numbers of us who tried to uphold that truth. Sunday Closing Bills were brought in for Durham, Cornwall, and other parts of the Kingdom, and—I will not include the right hon. Gentleman among the number—but, at all events, his Friends and the Party of which he is such a distinguished ornament constantly and successfully objected to what was called a piecemeal mode of dealing with the question. They resisted, in every shape and form, the proposal that localities should decide; and they said it was a duty which Parliament itself ought to discharge by passing a general measure. The right hon. Gentleman has asked why we have not given the experience of Ireland, where this question has been fairly tested for a considerable number of years. But during the last Parliament, and certainly during the Chief Secretaryship of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan), measures were brought in for making perpetual Sunday Closing in Ireland, and extending it to the five towns exempted from the original operation of the Act, upon the ground that it was a success in Ireland. And I venture to say the Act has also been a success in Wales. ["No, no!"] I appeal to the Welsh Members as to whether it has not. I am prepared and content to take the verdict of the Welsh Members. But the point I wish to bring before the House is this—in all Bills of this kind one is not pledged to details. What the House is going to vote on is the principle of the Bill, and that is—ought the hours of opening of public-houses on Sunday to be reduced? The hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Addison), who moved the rejection of the Bill, seemed to have forgotten altogether that at present the Legislature restricted the opening of public-houses on Sundays. He argued against restricting the liberties of the individual; but if the Legislature has thought fit already to say that on Sunday public-houses shall only be open between 6 and 11, why should they not say they shall only be open between 7 and 10? You have conceded the principle already—to adopt the words of the hon. Member for West Ham (Mr. Leicester), who so ably represents the working men on this question —"in the interests of morality." You cannot deal with this question as you deal with other questions. We have before us an evil. Gentlemen say it is decreasing; but, at all events, one-half, if not three-fourths, of the misery, poverty, and crime of this country springs entirely from drink. We are endeavouring to resist this great curse; and I hope the House will not be misled by the argument that we are interfering with individual freedom, when it is the men on behalf of whom that appeal is made who really want their freedom protected. They want to be protected by this Bill. ["No, no!"] You say "No!" Let a working man get up in this House and contradict me. We want to prevent the spread of this evil; and we object to the intervention of the cry of individual liberty, when you have already conceded this principle, which is the principle upon which the whole Licensing Laws are based. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down says wait until the Local Government Bill is brought in. But no. We have a chance of putting on record that this House is of opinion that Sunday Closing in this country ought to be extended, and there is nothing whatever in this Bill which in any way interferes with the provisions of any Local Government Bill which may be brought in.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said, he would not detain the House more than a couple of minutes; but he thought it would be wrong that the debate on the Sunday Closing Bill should terminate without the voice of Ireland being heard upon that subject. As a Conservative Member, he therefore seized the opportunity of expressing his opinion that the Bill now before the House should be carried. There was no question with regard to which the people in the North of Ireland took a greater interest than this particular phase of the subject—namely, the closing of public-houses on Sunday. That, perhaps, interested them more than anything else in the temperance movement. The fact that Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford were not included in the Irish Sunday Closing Act was, he considered, a blot which ought to be removed as soon as possible. He regretted to hear so many voices raised against the Bill as had been from the side of the House on which he sat, Conservatives being as much in favour of temperance legislation as any other Party, and he protested against the course which some hon. Members had thought fit to pursue in that direction. He would consider it a crime if he did not protest against the idea so current in the country that temperance reform found support only on the other side—the Liberal side of the House. He had been asked to preside at a meeting of the Liverpool Conservative Temperance Association, of which all the members were Conservatives. He believed that the excessive use of alcohol was the crying curse of Christendom at the present time. National sins brought national judgment, and no national sin of their day cried more loudly for the anger of the Almighty than the drinking that was so prevalent. He urged with all the earnestness of which he was capable the second reading of the Bill.

MR. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, the argument of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury was not borne out by the Bill itself. The Home Secretary said, very fairly, that if this Bill were one for the total closing of public-houses on Sundays, the Government could not support it; but he asked the House to consent to the second reading, in order that that particular part of it should be struck out in Committee. He thought there was a great deal to be said, especially speaking for the Metropolis, in favour of shortening the hours, and if this were a Bill the principle of which was to shorten the hours, it would receive the pretty general approbation of both sides of the House. But what they had to look to was that there were two things proposed to be done. One—a small thing in the direction of temperance legislation—was to restrict the hours of sale on Sundays, and the other was the closing of public-houses entirely throughout the country districts. And what the Government asked the House to do was to vote for the second reading, in order that the small matter should be accepted and the stronger provisions cut up. The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had remarked that the principle of the Bill was that the hours should be reduced; but that he did not find, on examining the Bill, was its principle, because, at the very outset, what did they find in the title? "A Bill for Closing Public-Houses on Sundays, and for making Exception for the Sale of Beer during certain Hours in the Metropolitan District." That was the title; and he would ask the hon. Gentleman how he could contend, therefore, that the principle of the Bill was to restrict the hours, when that was merely the exception? He contended, therefore, that every Member who voted for the second reading of the Bill would vote for the principle of closing public-houses on Sundays. He was bound to say that, anxious as he was to take steps in the direction of temperance legislation, he was not prepared to support a Bill for the total closing of public-houses on Sundays. He recognized that that was a matter which was essentially one for localities. There had, undoubtedly, been an enormous increase of temperance owing to the efforts of the temperance party; but he was sure hon. Members would recognize that they must proceed with extreme caution in this matter. If they closed public-houses throughout the country, they must bear in mind that that act would not affect a single Member of that House; and, therefore, looking to that fact, they ought to be more than ever careful that any legislation on the subject could not be represented by any person in any quarter or in any shape or form as class legislation. He believed that evil was to be avoided by giving localities the power of dealing with the question themselves. There was a greater evil than that of Sunday drinking, and that was making it appear that that House legislated in any shape or form in the interest of particular classes of the community.

Mr. LLOYD (Wednesbury), who spoke amid continued interruption, said, that it was somewhat strange that no statistics had been quoted by the supporters of the Bill, to show that such an amount of drunkenness existed throughout the country as to necessitate the passing of this Bill. No figures whatever had been quoted.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE said, he would call the attention of the hon. Gentleman to the Parliamentary Returns.

Mr. LLOYD said, that the Parliamentary Returns were all very well; but they did not come down to date. What he was asking for were statistics which came up to that day. The hon. Member for West Ham (Mr. Leicester) had addressed the House upon the question, and had said that he represented the working classes upon it. Well, he (Mr. Lloyd) had taken a good deal of interest in the matter, and thought he was perfectly justified in saying that he as much represented the working classes as the hon. Member for West Ham. His (Mr. Lloyd's) contention was, that the measure was a class measure, and was directed against the liberty of the poor. That was its weak feature. If the hon. Member would go further, and say that both rich and poor should be treated alike, he would not mind following him; but when they said that a poor man should not, on a Sunday, be entitled to use a public-house which was virtually his club, and that the clubs of the rich were to remain open, he contended that the legislation was unequal, and that the Bill was meting out to the poor man a measure of justice which was not imposed upon the rich. He considered that legislation should be directed, if the sobriety of the nation was to be considered, rather to the question of the adulteration of beer, than to limiting the hours of its sale. He also believed, from inquiries he had made, that the amount of drunkenness alleged to exist in this country had been very much overstated. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] If hon. Members desired it he would move the adjournment of the debate. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] He would not move the adjournment, but would conclude by saying that if hon. Members desired to produce temperance in this country by Act of Parliament, they must introduce a Bill to prohibit the sale of alcohol altogether. Partial legislation, such as they were still proposing, would not be of much use.

Mr. MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth), rising amid interruption, said, he wished to make a few observations on the Bill. He yielded to no man in his desire to promote temperance, recognizing in drunkenness what had hitherto been a great curse to the country, and particularly to the working classes. But with respect to the Bill before the House, he objected to it *in toto*, because to his mind it was a most unfair Bill. He found that it dealt on altogether different lines with Metropolitan and with country constituencies. He stood there representing a country constituency, and he failed altogether to see why public-houses in country constituencies were to be closed entirely on Sunday while those in the Metropolis were to be left open. If it was conducive to virtue in the Metropolis that public-houses should be kept open on Sunday, it ought also to be conducive to virtue that they should be kept open in the country. He thought the subject would be more fairly dealt with in a comprehensive spirit, and that if some of them were to be made virtuous, he thought it better that they should all agree to become virtuous together. It was not merely the inconsistency of forcing people to be sober in the country, while they were allowed to get drunk in the Metropolis, but a greater question arose, whether the Bill did not savour of class legislation. Why should not the Government introduce a new measure on the subject? Why should not the Local Government Bill be framed on uniform principles as regarded the closing of public-houses? He would never consent to a measure of such irregular action as the present Bill, which would close some public-houses at one hour, and others at another. He had no less interest in promoting temperance than hon. Gentleman opposite; but he would not promote that interest by means of class legislation, and by dealing with the Metropolis and with the country on that question on different lines. He should be prepared, however, to give his most careful consideration to any measure the Government might think fit to introduce in reference to Local Government. He hoped the Government would introduce such a Bill, and that it would be based on sound and wise principles, in the interests not only of the working classes, but of the upper classes. He hoped also the Government would introduce a short measure for the closing of clubs. Why they should introduce a measure only for regulating drinking among the working classes, and not also for clubs, he could not understand. They wanted a measure which would have a uniform action throughout the country, and not measures which could only be productive of unlimited confusion.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

MUNICIPAL RATES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Joseph Cowen, Bill to make provision for the making, assessment, and collection of Municipal Rates, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Joseph Cowen, Mr. Dodds, and Mr. David Smith.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 134.]

COMMISSIONERS CLAUSES ACT (1847) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Warmington, Bill to amend "The Commissioners Clauses Act, 1847;" and for other purposes relating thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Warmington, Mr. Thomas Price, and Mr. Winter-botham.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 135.]

PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. John Ellis, Bill to facilitate the acquisition of Sites for Places of Religious Worship, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Burt, Mr. M'Arthur, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 136.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 11*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Government of India, *appointed.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Salmon Fisheries Amendment (Scotland)* (30); Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Continuance * (31).

BURMAH — ALLEGED DANGEROUS POSITION OF A GARRISON NEAR MANDALAY.—QUESTION.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK asked the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India, Whether he could give any information with respect to a paragraph which had appeared in the newspapers as to the peril of a beleaguered garrison near Mandalay?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (The Earl of KIMBERLEY): My noble Friend opposite probably refers to the Reuter telegram published in the newspapers. I have made some inquiries, and I find that the Viceroy has no reason to feel any serious anxiety on the subject.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

JOINT COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of KIMBERLEY), in rising to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to join with a Committee of the Commons to inquire into the operation of the following Acts of Parliament:—Statute 21st and 22nd Vict. chap. 106. An Act for the better Government of India (1858), and the Acts of Parliament amending the same. Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 67. The Indian Councils Act (1861), together with the statutory provisions amending the same, and those relating to the Executive Councils of the Governors of Madras and Bombay. Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 104 (1861). An Act for establishing High Courts of Judicature in India. Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 54 (1861). An Act to confirm certain appointments in India, and to amend the law concerning the civil service there. Statute 33rd Vict. chap. 3 (1870). An Act to make better provision for making laws and regulations in certain parts of India, and for certain other purposes relating thereto,"

said, that the Statutes to which reference was made regulated the system of our Indian Government. It was a great many years since any inquiry took place upon this subject. The last Committee which was appointed was in 1852. In that year the time for which the Charter had been granted to the East India Company had nearly run out, and Committees were appointed in both Houses of Parliament to consider whether the Charter should be renewed or not. The Committees sat for two Sessions, and published the very voluminous evidence they had taken; but they never made any general Report. Not long after that, as their Lordships were aware, the great Mutiny in India occurred, and the result was that the whole subject of the Government of India was taken into consideration by Parliament, and in 1858 a Statute was passed placing our Indian Empire under the direct rule of Her Majesty. The Act of 1858 was the principal Statute which would be inquired into by the Committee he now proposed. Upon the occasion of moving the appointment of the Committee in 1852, the late Earl of Derby, who was then Prime Minister, made a very long and interesting speech, in which he described the whole system of government in India, and pointed out the enormous magnitude of our Empire there, giving a great many details on the whole subject. Their Lordships, he was sure, would not expect him to follow the same course on this occasion. Times had greatly changed since 1852. In those days, owing to the difficulty of communication with India, the subject was much less understood than was the case now. There was now so much of constant interchange between this country and India of travellers, and such was the effect of the telegraphs and railways and newspaper correspondence, that we had become far more familiar with Indian questions than formerly. Certainly, the magnitude of our Empire had not decreased, nor the greatness of the burdens of the Government; and it was sufficent to establish that by merely alluding to the fact that, either directly or indirectly, under the sway of the Queen-Empress there were no less than 250,000,000 of people, or not far short, he believed, of a fifth of the whole human race. The statement of such figures was enough to show how great the burden of government must be, and how vast must be the Empire over which they ruled. He would now explain to the House the reason why Her Majesty's Government thought it desirable to follow the conclusions, arrived at by the late Government, that there should be an inquiry on this subject. As he had said, it was no less than 34 years since there had been any general inquiry. In that time vast changes had taken place in India; and he was told by those who knew India well that if the India of the present day were compared with it in the days of the late Earl of Ellenborough, the change which had taken place was greater than that which had occurred in this country in the same time. In one sense India had been immovable—that there were still existing ancient systems which were, no doubt, of very great stability; and, looking at these, it might be supposed that it was not operated upon by the changes going on around it, but remained a distinct world. That, however, he believed was a great mistake. The introduction of railways in India, which enabled the different parts of that country to communicate with each other, had alone made a great difference; and there could not be any doubt in the mind of anyone who had carefully and wisely observed the signs of the times that there were signs of movement such as had never been seen before. That, he thought, constituted a valid reason why they should carefully examine whether, after the lapse of all these years, any changes were necessary in the system then established. In saying this, he would guard himself against its being supposed that Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the present system had broken down, or that it was a bad system. On the contrary, Her Majesty's Government believed that the principles on which the Government of India were founded were sound, and that the experience which they had had of the working of that system was entirely in its favour. But it might be that there were various details with regard to which changes were desirable. That the system had been, on the whole, successful, was no inconsiderable achievement. In 1858 Parliament was greatly perplexed by the great problem then submitted to it. The Government of the day found extreme difficulty in carrying the measure through to the satisfaction of Parliament and of public opinion; and if they read the debates of that time they would see there was by no means an absolute and confident expectation that the system would be satisfactory which was then established. It was believed they had invented a good system; but still it had yet to be tried. But now experience had shown that it had worked, on the whole, smoothly and well, and he insisted the more upon this because they heard very often of complaints, sometimes just complaints, of defects in their administration. Fixing their minds on it as a whole, however, and not looking at particular points, he would maintain that, as a whole, the Administration of India, whether at home or in India, was one which gave them reason for pride. The Acts which he referred to in his Motion were the most important Acts by which the machinery of the Government was established. The first—the Act of 1858 — was the important Act which transferred the Government of India from the East India Company to the Crown. Upon that basis the whole of the structure rested; and in referring that Act to the Committee they were, no doubt, technically referring the foundation on which the Indian Government was established; but he apprehended that no one supposed they were about to refer to the Committee the question whether India was to be under the direct government of the Crown. But that Act did greatly more than transfer the Government of India to the Queen. It provided the whole machinery by which it was to be done; and without going on this occasion into details on the subject, he might say that some parts of the working of that machinery had been questioned, and it was quite reasonable that Parliament should investigate the subject, and should declare whether there should be any changes in that machinery or not. He did not anticipate that the strong accusations brought against it would be proved; but, at the same time, he admitted that after so many years it was possible that improvements might be made in the arrangements. Then the Acts amending the Acts of 1858 in various minor points were also referred to the Committee. The next Act was that which related to the Executive Councils of the Governors of Bombay and Madras. The 24 & 25 *Vict.* c. 104, established the Court of Judicature, and the next Statute mentioned regulated the whole appointments in the Covenanted Civil Service. The last Statute established what was known as the Statutory Civil Service—a special branch of the Service into which large numbers of Natives were admitted. And here he wished to observe that he was extremely anxious that it should not be supposed that, in specially mentioning the Act regulating the Civil Service in India, he was casting any reflection of any kind on the Service. He was quite certain that there was no portion of the Civil Service of Her Majesty which deserved better of their fellow-countrymen than the Civil Service of India. It was eminently patriotic and energetic. That it was better than the older Service he would not say, for it would be difficult to find a better Service; but that the present Civil Service came up to the high standard of the former Service could safely be asserted. At the same time, it was quite right that that Statute should be referred to the Committee. The other question to which he had alluded under the name of the Statutory Civil Service was a more difficult one. There could not be the least doubt that a great deal of discussion and some dissatisfaction had arisen from the regulations under which Natives were admitted to the Service. The age for admission was altered some years ago, and there had been during the last three or four years a strong agitation for a return to the former limits of age. The question of age bore on the admission of Natives to the Statutory Civil Service, which was established with a special view to meet the wants of the Natives. They were all agreed upon one point—namely, that full scope should be given to the admission of the Natives to Her Majesty's Service in that part of her Empire; but, at the same time, the particular arrangement by which that object should be secured was by no means easy to devise; and, looking to the difference of opinion on the matter, the labours of the Committee would be very wisely directed to that question. It might be asked if it was intended that this Committee should go into the whole of this vast subject which was being remitted to them. He admitted that from the reference of the Act of 1858 to them this might be inferred; but if the Committee went into the various branches of the administration of the Indian Empire—to its Revenue, its finance, its Army, its Judicature, its relations to Native States, its foreign relations, and, in short, all the whole administration which was controlled by that Act — then he would say that the Committee might find much useful occupation for itself, but no practical result could come from it. They would produce two or three enormous Blue Books which would lie upon the shelves unread; but no practical result would follow. His hope was that the Committee would have the wisdom and the discretion to direct itself to those particular points in which there was some immediate question involved, and which ought to be dealt with by Parliament—to those on which it was desirable there should be some inquiry with a view to legislation. If they did that, they would strengthen the hands of the Government; because it was exceedingly difficult for any Government to come to Parliament with Bills altering the Statutes regulating the Indian Administration unless they had behind them the recommendations of a strong Committee who had considered the whole matter. They proposed, on this occasion, a Joint Committee as more convenient than two Committees, and as more likely to lead to a practical result than was the case on former occasions.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to join with a Committee of the Commons to inquire into the operation of the following Acts of Parliament:—

"Statute 21st and 22nd Vict. chap. 106. An Act for the better Government of India (1858), and the Acts of Parliament amending the same:

"Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 67. The Indian Councils Act (1861), together with the statutory provisions amending the same, and those relating to the Executive Councils of the Governors of Madras and Bombay:

"Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 104. (1861). An Act for establishing High Courts of Judicature in India:

"Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 54. (1861). An Act to confirm certain appointments in India, and to amend the law concerning the civil service there:

"Statute 33rd Vict. chap. 3. (1870). An Act to make better provision for making laws and regulations in certain parts of India, and for certain other purposes relating thereto."—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, that he had no objection or opposition to offer to the proposal made by the noble Earl opposite. The subject had been referred to in the Queen's Speech, and it had been the great desire of the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) that this inquiry should be held at once. He was very glad to observe the temperate and moderate language which had been used by the noble Earl; and if any objection could be made to an injury of this sort it would be on the ground of the very vague and most inaccurate charges which had been thrown out by persons who had looked more to grievances of their own making than to those which really affected the people of India. The assumption of the Government of India by Her Majesty was not to be touched at all; they started from that foundation, with the view of seeing whether the system of government which had been carried on in India had been such as followed to their full consequences the Resolution of Parliament and the Proclamation of Her Majesty. Those inquiries would very naturally be made into the Civil Service including the Judicial Service, as affecting both the Natives and the English; but he quite agreed with the noble Earl that any Committee which sat upon this question should limit its inquiries to some distinct and tangible issues, or else they would involve themselves in inextricable difficulties, and would never come to any decision or conclusion at all. He believed that the system of administration in India had worked, on the whole, extremely well; that the Natives had little cause to complain of it, and that they were rapidly rising into positions for which they were fitted. It must be remembered that they were not dealing with one nation and one religion, but with several nations and different religions, and that they had to apply their legislation to the different parts of the country. He hoped that the Committee would apply themselves with temperance and sobriety to the great task which the noble Earl had proposed to impose upon them.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY asked whether the Reference to the Committee in regard to the High Courts of Judicature in India would be sufficiently wide to cover the question of establishing a Court of Appeal in that country for those cases concerning property, which many thought ought to be decided judicially, and not, as at present, administratively?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that he understood his noble Friend to allude to a certain class of cases where questions, which were partly of a judicial nature concerning the property of some privileged owners of land in India, were referred to the decision of the Government, rather than of the Courts. The question which his noble Friend had in his mind deserved some attention; and he saw no reason why the Committee, if they thought fit, should not inquire into that particular subject.

And, on March 16, the Lords following were named of the Committee:—

D. Norfolk.
D. Buckingham and Chandos.
M Ripon.
E. Derby.
E. Cowper.
E. Cadogan.
E. Kimberley.
E. Northbrook.
E. Lytton.
E. Iddesleigh.
V. Cranbrook.
L. Harris.
L. Elgin.
L. Napier.
L. Revelstoke.
L. Hobhouse.

And a message sent to the Commons to acquaint them that this House has appointed a Committee of sixteen Lords to join with a Committee of the Commons to consider the operation of the Act for the better government of India (1858), and certain other Acts relating to India; and to request that the Commons will be pleased to appoint an equal number of Members to be joined with the Members of this House.

NAVAL CONSTRUCTION.

QUESTION.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked, Whether it would be possible for the First Lord of the Admiralty, following the example of his immediate Predecessor in Office, to take an opportunity of explaining in that House the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with reference to naval construction?

THE FIRST LORD (The Marquess of RIPON) said that, the course adopted by the noble Viscount being somewhat unusual, he must ask him to give Notice of his Question.

SALMON FISHERIES AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the law relating to the salmon fisheries in Scotland — Was *presented* by The Marquess of Huntly; read 1ª. (No. 30.)

House adjourned at Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 11*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Commons, *appointed* and *nominated*.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 1 to 15—R.P.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading* — Felixstowe Railway and Dock.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Railway and Canal Traffic [138].

Second Reading—Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2) [76].

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment* [60].

Committee—Report—Trees (Ireland) * [30].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

—o—

FELIXSTOWE RAILWAY AND DOCK BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.): I rise to move, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon this day six months. The object of the Bill is to enable the Felixstowe Railway and Dock Company to run steam vessels between Felixstowe and certain ports on the Continent. One reason why I oppose the Bill is that it is not really what it pretends to be, but that it is an endeavour to obtain for the Great Eastern Railway Company powers which Parliament have already refused to confer upon that Company directly. The Felixstowe Company propose to charter, hire, and maintain steam vessels for the conveyance of passengers and goods between their dock pier and works at Felixstowe and Amsterdam, Dunkerque, Bremerhaven, Hamburgh, Altona, and Cuxhaven, or any other port on the River Elbe. The Great Eastern Company have obtained powers to run to Harwich, and from Harwich to Rotterdam and Antwerp, which powers they are now using; and one of my contentions, in opposing the present Bill, is that they do use those powers in a manner inimical to the general interests of the community. For instance, they are making use of their railway monopoly to carry goods by this route at such rates as render it impossible for any other lines to compete with them. Perhaps I may be allowed to give one or two figures to show the use which the Great Eastern Railway Company are making of the powers they possess of carrying goods by means of steam vessels. They are now carrying goods from Harwich to Antwerp and Rotterdam at the same rates as the steamers trading from Hull and other ports; but in order to do this they have to carry goods from the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire at low and unprofitable rates. For instance, I will take the cases of Manchester and Leeds. The distance from Manchester to Hull is 90 miles, while the distance from Manchester to Harwich is 229 miles, and yet the charge is the same in both cases—namely, 20*s.* a-ton — that is to say, that the Great Eastern Railway Company make use of their powers to carry goods by a line of steamers which entails their being carried for four times the distance than would be the case if the more convenient port of Hull were employed. At Leeds the same thing happens. The distance from Leeds to Hull is 50 miles, whereas the distance from Leeds to Harwich is 211 miles, or more than four times the distance, and in both cases the charge for railway carriage is 18*s.* 6*d.* a-ton. If Parliament is to continue to give facilities for the exercise of a railway monopoly of this character, the only effect will be to enable the Great Eastern Company to crush out private enterprize in regard to shipping, and to practically inflict great injury upon the manufacturing interests of the country. This Felixstowe Railway is a railway only 13 miles in length. It begins at a small village, and ends somewhere on the sea shore, at a place which is, perhaps, not generally known, but which is called Felixstowe. One of the reasons of the Company for seeking these powers is that when the dock is constructed there will be a great depth of water—about 23 feet—below the ordinary tides; but, at the same time, they are asking for powers to run steamers to places on the Continent that are confined to a limited draught of water; and consequently the increased depth they propose to give, and which they set out as an advantage, will be, to the steamers which will have to run, of no advantage whatever. The traders, however, are already fully supplied by the General Steam Navigation Company, who are petitioning against this Bill. Not only are the General Steam Shipowners' Association Petitioners against it, but there are Petitions from the Corporation of Hull, and also from the Hull Chamber of Commerce and Shipping. Now, Sir, Hamburgh is one of the ports to which this little railway asks to be allowed to run steamers. But there are aleady to Hamburgh from London some 10 steamers running per week, and 12 steamers a week from the ports of Hull, Goole, and Grimsby. There are also steamers running already from Harwich, which is the port from which this little railway proposes to carry on their trade. In point of fact, not only is the existing trade amply and satisfactorily served, but, in fact, there are at present more steamers running than there is profitable employment for. If this were a genuine Bill—genuine in this way—that it is precisely what it represents itself to be, my impression is that, judging from the Bill itself and the clauses which it contains, it would be looked upon as simply the measure which the Great Eastern Railway Company introduced in 1869, and which was refused by this House, which declined to give the Company the powers then asked for of running steamers to these Continental ports. They are now making use of this small railway of 13 miles in length to endeavour to obtain the powers which Parliament have already refused to grant to them. It may be looked upon as a somewhat extraordinary course that I should oppose this Bill upon the second reading; but I do so as a matter of principle. It appears to me scarcely right that any Company, especially such a small Company as the Felixstowe Railway Company, should introduce a Bill of this nature into the House of Commons; and one object I have is to save the expense of time and money which will be involved, if the Bill is sent to a Committee, in establishing that the object of the Bill is not what it pretends to be. I am glad to see the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) in his place. The noble Lord is one of the Directors of the Great Eastern Railway Company, and he will probably be able to throw some light upon the subject, and to inform the House whether my surmise is correct that this Bill is simply intended to be made use of by the Great Eastern Railway Company, and is, in reality, to enable them to exercise powers which Parliament has already refused to grant to them directly? I would say, further, that this is really a national question. The Great Eastern Railway Company are now running steamers from Harwich to certain ports under powers obtained from Parliament; and I wish the noble Lord to explain to the House whether these steamers are running at such a profit that it is desirable in the national interests to extend these powers to such great monopolists as Railway Companies, and by that means to crush out the existing private shipping enterprize—that private enterprize which has done so much to extend the maritime supremacy of England, and without which England would not have occupied her present position. I am satisfied that if this principle of giving exceptional powers to Railway Companies had been adopted in the past the trade of the country would never have been developed as it has been. I will not further trouble the House. I will only add that, as the whole question of railway management is about to be brought before Parliament, this is certainly not the time when it can be considered desirable to ask the House to confer upon a Railway Company such powers as those now asked for. I therefore beg to move that the Bill be read a second time on this day six months.

MR. SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second the Amendment?

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I beg to second the Amendment moved by my hon. Friend, and in doing so I wish to say a few words upon the principle involved in the Bill, rather than upon any question affecting any arrangements between the Felixstowe Railway Company and the Great Eastern Railway Company. This Bill appears to me to involve a very considerable amount of principle; and I am sorry that there is no Representative of the Board of Trade on the Front Bench to explain what the views of the Board are in reference to the question and the principle we are asked to adopt on this occasion. The Bill proposes to give to the Felixstowe Railway Company the power of running steam vessels to a variety of ports named in the Bill, and to charge such reasonable rates or sums as they shall think fit. Now, that places enormous power in the hands of this Railway Company. Suppose that, in the course of the new railway legislation Parliament is about to adopt, we come to the conclusion that foreign cattle must be taken, on its arrival at the port of debarkation, at the same rates as are charged on home-bred cattle, this Bill, if it is passed, will enable the Felixstowe Railway Company to convey cattle for nothing, in order to equalize the dues upon foreign and English cattle, so far as the railway charges are concerned. Many of the Railway Companies possess at this moment the power of running steam vessels to Continental ports. The London, Brighton, and South Coast Company have, I believe, power to run vessels from Newhaven to French ports; the London and North Western Company from Holyhead to Kingstown, Dublin, and other parts of the Irish Coast, and other Railway Companies possess similar powers. Then, how far is this principle to be carried? If you are going to allow the Great Eastern Company or the Felixstowe Company to run steam vessels to all parts of the Continent, you cannot refuse the same privilege to the North Eastern Company and to other Companies which at the present moment have no power to run steam vessels, or to employ them, except in their own river and dock service. It certainly seems to me that if this doctrine is to go forward it must go forward at full length. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) seemed to think the other night that we had come upon a new Free Trade era, and that every facility should be afforded for conducting the trade of the country upon the lowest possible rates, and without restrictions as to capital. If that is so, then this Bill ought to be passed; but if the principle is good in this particular instance it ought to be good all over the country. These are the reasons which have induced me to second the Amendment moved by my hon. Friend the Member for Hull. I was anxious to have the opportunity of addressing the House, in order that I might call attention to the important principle involved in the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Charles Wilson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby): I merely wish to say a word in regard to the reference which has been made by the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) to the Great Eastern Railway — namely, that that Company, with which I am connected, has nothing whatever to do with the Bill. It is neither for nor against it; and, therefore, the allusions made to that Company by the hon. Member for Hull have been made under an entire misapprehension. I have not read the Bill myself; but I understand that Clauses 4 and 5 refer to the Great Eastern Company; but they only relate to arrangements which may hereafter be made for traffic agreements, or for the participation by the Great Eastern Company in the joint exercise of some of the powers sought for under the Bill. I do not know with what object those provisions have been inserted in the Bill; but I do know that the Great Eastern Company has had nothing whatever to do with the matter.

MR. QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): I am unwilling, as a new Member, to intrude myself upon the House; but the extraordinary attempt which has been made upon this side of the House to stop the further progress of this Bill has induced me, as a resident in the locality which is served by the Felixstowe Railway, and one who is, therefore, naturally acquainted with it from the commencement of the undertaking, without having any personal interest in it, to rise and say a few words in answer to the arguments which have been brought forward by the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) and the hon. Baronet the Member for Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), who have moved and seconded the Amendment for the rejection of the Bill. Now, this railway is altogether an exceptional one. It has been made almost entirely with private capital; it has held out no inducements whatever for the investment of capital. It is now completed on contracts entered into with private capital; and all that the Company ask is that, now the railway has been completed and the docks made, they should be permitted to enjoy those facilities for which they have been made, and for which the docks have been constructed. And who is it, and what is it, that seeks to interfere with the development of legitimate enterprize? It is certain vested interests. Similar vested interests have invariably sought to interfere with every new undertaking brought forward in this House on former occasions. I think that the House has expressed a strong opinion against any decided attempt to interfere with an important commercial undertaking; and I trust that to-day the House will be equally prompt to discountenance any attempt to prevent a Bill of this kind—a *bonâ fide* genuine Bill—from going before a Select Committee. The hon. Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) has tried to throw some doubt upon the genuineness of the Bill; but I do not think that he succeeded. It is simply a Bill to enable the Company to hire and employ steam vessels, to make charges for the conveyance of traffic, and to make agreements with the Great Eastern Railway Company and the Steam Navigation Company for the interchange, collection, and delivery of traffic. There are also one or two minor powers contained in the Bill. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) has already answered one question which I intended to answer—namely, that the Great Eastern Railway Company have nothing to do with the Bill; and there are no powers sought for under the Bill which would confer upon the Great Eastern Company any advantages they would not be able to obtain for themselves. I am in a position to say that this is a genuine Bill of the Felixstowe Railway Company; and I do trust that the House will enable those who have *bonâ fide* invested their money in the untertaking to enjoy such reasonable facilities as they ask for in the Bill. I would further submit that this is not the place where the arguments and reasons which have been adduced by the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) and the hon. Member for Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) can be properly discussed. I have always understood—and if in ignorance I make a mistake I hope the House will pardon me—that a Select Committee of this

House was the proper tribunal for considering points of this character—points which simply affect the question of competition and rival Companies. It is only before a Committee that the merits of the Bill can be fairly argued, and the arguments both in favour and against it can be thoroughly threshed out. Under these circumstances, I trust that these attempts to hinder and obstruct the progress of an honest, *bonâ fide* industrial enterprize will meet with that disapprobation which it merits at the hands of the House.

MR. KING (Hull, Central): I also, as a new Member, venture to ask for the indulgence of the House while I offer a few remarks in opposition to this Bill, not only upon general grounds, but also upon the ground of the special interests involved and the special injury which may be inflicted upon the Port of Hull, and even upon the Port of London, if the powers asked for by the Felixstowe Railway Company in the provisions of this Bill receive the sanction of Parliament. We have been asked to accept the statement that the Great Eastern Railway Company have no interest in the promotion of the Bill; but I think it would be difficult to convince the House that that Company are not very materially interested in it, and that they are not, at any rate, watching it with interested affection, in the hope that they may be able to obtain, under the provisions contained in the measure, powers which they had formerly sought unsuccessfully to obtain from this House. That such is the position of the Great Eastern Company in reference to this Bill appears to me to be absolutely beyond argument. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) says that the Great Eastern Company are not interested in the Bill. Now, let me take Clause 5, which provides that the Company, on the one hand, and the Great Eastern Company on the other, may, from time to time, make and carry into effect, alter, and rescind, agreements and contracts for participation by the Great Eastern Company in the exercise jointly with the Company of all or some of the powers conferred by the Act upon the Company and the Great Eastern Company, and shall have, and may exercise, all the necessary powers to participate in the exercise of the powers conferred by the Act upon the Company—that is, the Felixstowe Railway and Dock Company—by the Bill now sought to be read a second time. And what are the powers in question. They are powers to run steam vessels from Felixstowe to Amsterdam, Dunkerque, Bremerhaven, Hamburgh, Altona, Cuxhaven, and any other port or place on the River Elbe. In 1869, as my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) has reminded the House, the Great Eastern Company sought powers from Parliament to enable them to run steam vessels from Harwich to the Elbe; but the House very properly refused to grant them. Felixstowe and Harwich are practically the same thing; the little river, the Orwell, alone divides them; and, consequently, this Bill, if passed, will confer upon the Great Eastern Company powers which they previously sought to obtain, and which, if this Bill passes, will be obtained by the Company in a most circuitous, unfair, indirect, and underhand manner.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby): I rise to Order. I have stated distinctly that the Great Eastern Company have nothing to do with this Bill; and I therefore call upon the hon. Member to withdraw the statement he has just made.

MR. KING (Hull, Central): I withdraw the statement with the greatest pleasure; but I certainly wish that the Bill had been drawn in a better manner, so that the public might have been able to understand who are really promoting it. What is it that the promoters say on the back of the Bill? They say—

> "A Bill to enable the Felixstowe Railway and Dock Company to run steam vessels between Felixstowe and certain foreign ports, and for other purposes."

Now, I have made a special effort to find out who the shareholders of this Company are. I went to the ordinary channels of information; but I found that although the list of every other Limited Liability Company is allowed to be inspected at Somerset House, on the payment of a small fee, that in the case of Railway Companies there is no such right. Therefore, I can only form a judgment as to the real persons who are promoting the Bill; but, seeing who is to be benefited by it, I say, unhesitatingly, that the only people who can have an interest in the Bill are the Great Eastern Railway Company. [*Cries of* "No!" *and* "Order!"] I unreservedly withdraw any hint that they may have a pecuniary interest in the promotion of the Bill at this moment; but only let the Bill go through Committee and receive the sanction of Parliament, and it will soon be seen that the Great Eastern Company will manifest a lively interest in it. The Felixstowe Company own 13½ miles of railway, upon which £288,000 has been spent; and they have raised by share capital and debentures a sum of £174,000. Where the other £114,000 has come from I should like to know very much, and I think it is very probable that the Chairman or one of the Directors of the Great Eastern Company might throw some light upon the matter. From what has been said the House are to believe that it has been raised by private enterprize, so that I am prepared to admit that my opposition to the Bill on this point has somewhat fallen to the ground. After what has passed I feel bound to acknowledge that the Great Eastern Company have not that interest in promoting the Bill which I believed them to have when I first looked at the Bill; but the result is exactly the same. They already work the line for 65 per cent of the gross receipts, and now it is proposed to concede to the Company the right of running steam-vessels from Felixstowe to certain foreign ports on the Elbe. Everyone knows that it would be absolutely impossible for a little Company like this to work steam vessels from Felixstowe to the Elbe. This is one of the most out-of-the-way spots in the world, and there are already 10 steamers a-week from London to the Elbe, four from Grimsby, four from Goole, 12 from Hull, two from Newcastle, and two from Sunderland; and whatever claims the trade with the Elbe may have for the consideration of the public, it certainly cannot be said that it is inadequately supplied with shipping accommodation. In fact, there are lines of steam vessels trading there already weekly, fortnightly, and monthly; so that, quite apart from the question of principle which has been raised, and which I, for one, am very glad to see raised, at a time when the subject of railway legislation is attracting special attention—quite apart from the principle whether the Railway Companies should be allowed to own steam vessels or not—I think it would be a most unbusinesslike proceeding for the House to admit that the Great Eastern Company have no interest in the matter. It certainly would be most unbusinesslike to allow a Company who have already spent £114,000 more than they have been able to raise by share capital or debentures to embark upon a course which must entail the raising of a still further amount of capital, and must, in the end, result in ruin and disaster.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): I hope my hon. Friend the Member for West Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) will not think that I am discourteous if I make a very brief reply. In respect to the general question—namely, the conferring of powers upon Railway Companies to run steam vessels, I think it is somewhat late in the day to raise an objection now, seeing that several of the existing Companies do run steamers of their own. I do not know whether the Great Western Company still run their own vessels, or whether they have been stopped; but I believe that the London and South-Western Company do, and the London, Brighton, and South Coast. The South-Eastern, the London, Chatham, and Dover run to Calais, and the Great Eastern to Antwerp and Rotterdam. Therefore, the principle of allowing steam vessels to be run in connection with railways has already been sanctioned. My hon. Friend raises a special objection that the Bill is virtually promoted by the Great Eastern Railway; but that allegation has been repudiated by the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton), and I think we may trust the Committee on Standing Orders to see that no clauses are inserted in the Bill which would be in contravention of the Standing Orders of the House, and that no clauses would be sanctioned which would enable the Railway Company promoting the Bill to enter into improper agreements with any other Railway Company. If such clauses do exist in the Bill they will inevitably be struck out in Committee. Other points have been raised in the course of the debate, such as the question of competition; but if there is any serious question of competition the opponents of the Bill will be allowed to argue it befor the Committee, and submit evidence upon the whole question. All of the matters which have been referred to in the discussion are matters which cannot be considered by the House as a whole, but must go to a Committee. It is most undesirable that any Private Bill should be discussed in the House except upon general principles; and the kind of objection which has been raised to the present Bill is precisely that which should be considered by a Select Committee. For these reasons I hope that the House will consent to read the Bill a second time.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): I only wish to say one word. It seems to me that this railway is in this dilemma. It either belongs to the Great Eastern Railway Company or it does not. Of course, I accept the statement of my noble Friend the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) that the Great Eastern Company have nothing to do with the promotion of the present Bill; but then we are placed on this horn of the dilemma. If these powers are given to the Felixstowe Company, how do they propose to establish and work the steam vessels they seek power to run? The other horn of the dilemma is, whether they would not be compelled to call the Great Eastern Company in to their assistance? If they have nothing to do with the Great Eastern Company, how is it that we find that Company working this small line of 13½ miles in length? I defy the Great Eastern Company to get rid of both horns of the dilemma.

MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge): Felixstowe and the whole of this railway line are in the division I have the honour to represent. The original Act constituting the Company who are promoting this Bill was passed in 1875, and by it the Company was authorized to construct a railway from the Great Eastern line at Westerfield to Felixstowe with a pier at the last named place, and it was incorporated by the name of the Felixstowe Railway and Pier Company. In 1879 another Act was passed, which authorized the construction of a dock and other works at Felixstowe, and the name of the Company was changed to the Felixstowe Railway and Dock Company. The railway has now been constructed for some time, and the dock is nearly finished; and the natural complement of the work is that the Company should have power to enter into contracts for the hire of steam vessels for carrying on trade from the dock and railway to Continental ports. That is the request now made to the House, and it is not an unusual request to make. In fact, the enterprize of the Company would be entirely frustrated, and it would be much more likely to come to the grief which my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) predicted for it if these powers are denied to the Company than if they are granted to it. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have expressed a doubt as to where the money is to come from. Now, most of the line passes through the single estate of a man of very large wealth, who is deeply interested in what is now going forward, both in connection with the railway and the dock. There is no fear, therefore, of the enterprize coming to grief. The statement that this Company is, by some manœuvre or false pretence, really acting on behalf of the Great Eastern Railway Company, has been most distinctly denied by the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton). I am also authorized to say, on behalf of the Felixstowe Company, that they have no connection whatever with the Great Eastern Company, except that the existing line is now worked by that Company on a lease which terminates in the present year. So far from the Felixstowe Company being made use of as a cat's-paw by the Great Eastern Company, it is in view of the possibility of having to enter into competition with the Great Eastern that the Felixstowe Company desires to obtain the powers of appearing before the Railway Commissioners, which the passing of the present Bill will confer upon it. As a new Member, I am not well acquainted with the usual mode of proceeding in regard to Railway Bills; but I am told that it is not customary to oppose a Bill on the second reading unless it raises some new principle. This Bill does nothing of the kind. It is simply to empower the Felixstowe Company to enter into arrangements for the hire of steam vessels, and similar powers have been constantly conferred upon Railway Companies. I think it would be altogether unjust of this

House, sitting here in the interests of the public, were it to interpose difficulties in the way of extending trade and commerce, for the interest of the public certainly lies in increasing the facilities for carrying on the operations of trade. I have no wish to impute motives; but I cannot help thinking that the speech which we have heard from the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. C. Wilson) affords an indication that the fear in the minds of the opponents of the Bill is that a competition may arise in regard to the trade of the Port of Hull which they will find it difficult to meet. But we have all of us, in this country, in every kind of business, to face competition; and I would respectfully submit that it is no part of the duty of this House to put difficulties in the way even of the fullest and most severe competition. I hope that the House will adhere to the course it has hitherto pursued in regard to a Bill of this nature, and that it will allow the Bill to pass a second reading and be carried to a Select Committee, notwithstanding the interested opposition which, in a somewhat unusual manner, has been directed against it.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth): As a Director of the Great Eastern Railway, I rise to corroborate the statement of my noble Friend the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) that the Great Eastern Company have nothing whatever to do with the Bill now before the House. It is quite true that for some years the Great Eastern Company has worked the Felixstowe Railway, which was constructed through the influence of Colonel Tomline. It runs in great part through the estate of that gentleman, and is also connected with the basin at Felixstowe; and the promoters of this Bill now ask apparently for powers under which they may be able to establish a sea service by steam vessels between Felixstowe and certain ports on the Elbe. So far as we—the Great Eastern Company—are concerned, we consider Felixstowe to be on the wrong side of the water. Our establishments are on the Harwich side, and we do not think that Felixstowe is properly situated for such traffic. We have nothing, I repeat, to do with the present Bill; and if the question comes to a division we do not intend to vote for it.

Mr. Everett

Mr. H. ROBERTSON (Merioneth): I shall be very brief in the remarks I propose to make, and I make them not as a new Member, but as an old Member; and I must confess that it is somewhat irregular, if not almost an act of impropriety, to discuss a question of this kind on the second reading of a Private Bill. The proper course is to refer it to a Select Committee, which is the only tribunal by which its merits can be fairly considered. The Standing Orders of the House prescribe that due notice shall be given to all parties whose interests are affected by the provisions of any Private Bill in order that they may get a fair hearing. Instead of providing a fair hearing, are we now, upon an *ex parte* statement, to shut the door of justice? What is the case that is sought to be made out againt the promoters of the Bill? It is contended that we are not to give shipping facilities to a small Railway Company owning a line of only 13½ miles in length, because by so doing we may prejudicially interfere with and disarrange the trade now carried on in the Ports of London and Hull. The hon. Member for Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), who seconded the Amendment for the rejection of the Bill, is more interested, I presume, in the fortunes of the North Eastern Railway; and he seems to fear that some injury may be done to the great railway monopolies if this little Company is to have the power of chartering steam vessels in order to compete with them. I can quite understand that the North-Eastern Railway do not wish to be interfered with; and, so far as the Great Eastern Railway is concerned, we have been given to understand that Felixstowe form a better port than Harwich. [Sir Henry Tyler: No.] I am told that there is a much greater depth of water; but still that is a matter of fact, which can be inquired into by a Select Committee, and any injury any traders or others may sustain by competition is also a fair subject for the investigation of the Committee. Certainly these are not matters which ought to influence the House in coming to a decision upon the second reading.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

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ARMY (INDIA)—ROYAL WARRANTS—INSPECTORS OF ARMY SCHOOLS.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT (Croydon) (for Viscount LEWISHAM) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Why the increase of pay and allowances, sanctioned by the Royal Warrant of 25th June 1881, has been withheld from Inspectors of Army Schools in India on their promotion to the rank of Captain, while the higher rates have been authorised by special circular, dated 10th November 1882, for issue to Quarter-masters and Riding-masters; whether an Inspector of Army Schools was promoted Captain while serving in India, and did not obtain any of the pecuniary benefits allowed by the Royal Warrant, owing to no provision for their issue having been made by the officials in India; and, whether, if he had been serving in England, he would have received such pecuniary benefits, and if he will issue directions for this officer's case to be specially considered in India, with a view to the extra pay and Indian allowances being issued to him for the period he served in India as Inspector of Army Schools with rank of Captain, viz. from 14th February 1884 to 12th July 1884?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The clauses of Royal Warrants which affect "full pay and allowances or other pecuniary benefit" are expressly excluded from applying to India, unless special effect is given to them by the Secretary of State for India in Council. Shortly after the issue of the Warrant referred to, the question whether this special effect should be given to those of its clauses which affected the pay of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Army Schools was carefully considered by the Government of India; and it was decided, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State in Council, that the Regulations regarding the Indian pay and allowances of School Inspectors should remain in force. The clause of the Royal Warrant which gave the officer referred to the relative rank of captain applies in India as elsewhere; but it has not been the practice to regulate the rates of Indian pay and allowances by the relative Army rank conferred on officers of non-combatant Army Departments. The pay of these officers is fixed at consolidated rates in round sums, and is governed solely by length of service.

POST OFFICE—THE METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY—TRANSMISSION OF METEOROLOGICAL REPORTS.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will be good enough to arrange with the Meteorological Council of the Royal Society, for the transmission daily to the General Post Office, of weather forecasts; if he will then cause so much of such forecasts to be telegraphed daily to every Postal Telegraph Station in the United Kingdom as is applicable to the district in which the station is situated; and, if he will further issue instructions, that such forecasts shall be posted up daily, in a conspicuous position outside the several stations, so as to be available for general information in the respective localities?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): This matter of forecasts of the weather by Postal Telegraph was very carefully considered by Mr. Fawcett, who, on several occasions, in reply to Questions in this House, explained that it was not possible for the Post Office to distribute weather forecasts, either gratuitously or otherwise; because, if the Post Office became a purveyor of news, it would be acting in opposition to the understanding under which the Telegraph Acts were passed. It was contemplated that the Post Office should confine itself to the transmission of telegrams. Mr. Fawcett pointed out, at the same time, that the desired object might easily be secured, because the Meteorological Office is willing to supply the forecasts at a nominal charge to anyone who is willing to pay the expense of telegraphing, which need scarcely be more than 6*d*. for each message. If the persons interested in forecasts in each town or district jointly subscribed, the expense to each would be inconsiderable. To the exhibition of forecasts at the local post offices there is no objection, provided space is available, if the persons to whom the telegrams are addressed desire them to be so exhibited instead of being delivered.

THE TRUCK ACTS—INFRINGEMENT IN SOUTH WALES.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in May 1885, three convictions were obtained, on the prosecution of the Treasury, against the Rhymney Iron Company, for the infringement of the Truck Act; whether the convictions were appealed against and affirmed, with costs, in December 1885; whether the said Company had been previously convicted for similar offences; whether, pending the appeal, the Rhymney Company kept their truck shop open; whether any other prosecution has since been commenced against the said Company; and, whether he will learn if the Rhymney Company still keep their truck shop open in defiance of the law?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Childers) (Edinburgh, S.): Yes, Sir; two convictions were obtained on the prosecution of the Treasury against the Rhymney Iron Company in May of last year, and the convictions were affirmed, with costs, in December last. I have no information as to any previous conviction having been obtained against this Company. With regard to the latter part of the hon. Member's Question, I have to say that owing to statements that have been made to me recently, to the effect that the Truck Act is still being violated by this Company, though under an altered system, the Inspector of Factories has been instructed to endeavour to procure, and is at the present time engaged in procuring, evidence to be submitted to the Solicitor of the Treasury, who will decide whether the evidence will be sufficient to justify a prosecution.

PUBLIC HEALTH—M. PASTEUR'S TREATMENT OF HYDROPHOBIA.

Sir HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the success said to have attended Pasteur's treatment for hydrophobia by inoculation, he will consider the propriety of appointing a Committee, consisting of about six persons eminent in medicine and science, who shall be instructed to communicate with M. Vulpian and the other members of the Committee of the French Academy of Sciences as to the exact position of the question; whether, in the event of such an inquiry seeming to them to be satisfactory, he would authorise this Committee to obtain the best investigation this Country affords as to the reliability of Pasteur's method, and to advise as to its applicability to this Country; whether the Government would provide such Committee with funds for the necessary investigations, the Committee itself being unpaid; and, whether he would inquire if such investigations might be carried out in the Brown Institution, under the guidance of the Committee, and with the cooperation of the chief medical officer and of the officials of the Brown Institution?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.): Sir, my attention has been called to the reported discovery by M. Pasteur of a cure for hydrophobia. The recognized eminence of M. Pasteur as a scientific investigator, and the great interest and importance which attach to the subject of his recent inquiries, seem to me to justify a careful and impartial examination of the results obtained. At present, the information on the matter in the possession of my Department is too vague and incomplete to afford materials for a full appreciation of M. Pasteur's process. I will consider how such an inquiry can be most satisfactorily conducted; and I will confer with my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer with reference to the question of the expense. I shall be glad to communicate privately with my hon. Friend, and hope to be able to arrange for such an investigation as may enable a just estimate to be formed as to the reliability of M. Pasteur's method, and its applicability to this country.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would have any objection to place himself in communication with the Foreign Office, with a view of obtaining from them copies of any official statements which had been made upon the subject?

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: I will endeavour to obtain the assistance of the Foreign Office, in order that we may place at the disposal of the Committee which may be appointed all the information in our power.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) ACT—PAYMENT OF CLERKS OF UNIONS.

MR. A. BLAINE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state by what principle the Local Government Board were guided in distributing the £15,000 voted by Parliament, that in almost every case the clerks of unions received a sum equal to, if not greater, than the total amount paid to the collectors in each union combined, having due regard to the fact that the greater part of the work was performed by the rate collectors, and that the 73rd section of the Act of 1850 insured a further remuneration to clerks of unions always paid them, whilst heretofore rate collectors had none, though having performed the duty; whether in the Armagh Union the clerk received £44, in addition to the remuneration of the Act of 1850, whilst eight collectors received £49 amongst them; whether in the Lurgan Union the clerk received £99, and remuneration under the Act of 1850, whilst three collectors received £90; and, whether in the distribution of the additional £2,000 voted by Parliament the inequalities will as far as possible be adjusted?

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman to include in his answer to my hon. Friend, whether he considers it just to the ratepayers to require them to supplement a Government grant insufficient for the services rendered; and, whether he will consider the propriety of having a further sum provided to discharge the amounts still remaining due to the rate collectors?

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) also asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that Clerks of Unions were the only officers whose duties obliged them to provide assistants whom they had to pay out of their own salary; and, whether the additional work thrown on them by the late Act had not obliged them in each Union to employ such assistance to a very great extent?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): In reply to the Question on the Paper, the principle adopted by the Local Government Board in the distribution of £15,000 for registration work was explained to the House by my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury some nights ago. It is true that the Clerks of Unions usually receive sums about equal to the amount paid to the collectors; but this seems only fair, as they have to deal with all the names on the Registry from the districts of the collectors. As my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury mentioned, collectors have in many cases received further remuneration for their work from the poor rates. The additional £2,000 voted by Parliament was for the payment of assistants to Clerks of the Peace, and no part of that money could be applied for other purposes. That, I think, meets the Question of the hon. Member. In reply to the other Questions, I must remind hon. Members that this was, after all, settled in the last Parliament, and it would be difficult now for us to overhaul the decision come to by Parliament after the passing of the Registration Act. I am informed that the average cost per head was considerably greater in Ireland than it was in Great Britain.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT, 1876—JURISDICTION OF COUNTY COURT JUDGES.

MR. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness) asked Mr. Attorney General, In consequence of very conflicting opinions and diverse decisions of county court and other judges, relating to their jurisdiction, in cases of dispute between members and persons claiming on their behalf against Friendly Societies; and, whether, under the 22nd section of "The Friendly Societies Act, 1876," and under their own rules, duly certified in conformity with the same, power is given to settle these without appeal to courts of law?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL), in reply, said, the Question called attention to the fact that there was a difference of opinion amongst County Court Judges and other Judges; and he would point out that if he were to answer the Question it would involve him in a condemnation on one side or other of those judicial opinions, and possibly of both. He could not usurp a judicial function which in no sense belonged to him.

FRANCE—ARREST OF MESSRS. WEYMAN NEAR OLORON.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the arrest of Mr. Stanley Weyman and his brother, at Aramitz, on December 14th, 1885, while in possession of Foreign Office Passports; and, whether the French Government have offered any and what explanation of the conduct of the gendarmes on that occasion?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The arrest of these gentlemen was brought to the knowledge of the Embassy at Paris by Her Majesty's Consul at Bordeaux on the 20th of December last, and on the 23rd of that month a strong representation on the subject was addressed to the French Government by Her Majesty's Minister at Paris. On the 1st of January the two commanding officers of the gendarmes of the Pau district called on the British Vice Consul at Pau, and expressed their regret that a misunderstanding should have led to the arrest of Messrs. Weyman. A reply was received by Sir John Walsham from the French Government on the 20th of February. It mentioned the apology made by the officers of the gendarmerie, and stated that the brigadier who had effected the arrest had been punished by eight days' confinement. No formal apology has been tendered on the part of the French Government, who have expressed their opinion that under the circumstances the conduct of the gendarme was excusable. Her Majesty's Government do not share this opinion; but before addressing any further representation on the subject to the French Government they await Mr. Weyman's answer to a letter addressed to him on the 27th ultimo by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, communicating the substance of the reply of the French Government.

SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—FOURTH INSTALMENT OF SEED RATE—POSTPONEMENT OF PAYMENTS.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can now state whether he will, in consequence of the present depression, permit such unions as may apply for delay to postpone the payment of the fourth instalment of the Seed Rate for another year?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the hon. and gallant Gentleman was so long delayed a reply to this Question, which involves matters of considerable importance. The Irish Government have had this matter for some time under their consideration. The loan stood on the 5th of last month thus — the amount advanced was £598,306, and of that £536,255 was repaid. This left a debt outstanding of £62,051, and of this there are amounts recovered in hand which leave the balance not actually recovered not more than from £35,000 to £37,000. These figures show that the loans so far have been admirably paid; and there is no doubt that the Boards of Guardians have generally made every effort to collect the outstanding rate. Nevertheless, in some instances, the instalments are overdue. In such cases the Act empowers the Local Government Board to impound the poor rates to the extent of the deficiencies. In view, however, of the exceptional distress prevailing in the country, and of the fact that such an inroad on the resources of the Unions might seriously embarrass the Boards of Guardians concerned, we have come to the conclusion that this impounding of the rates is a step not to be resorted to at present. The Treasury have, therefore, agreed to the following arrangement:—They will authorize the Commissioners of Public Works to accept the sums already collected by the Boards of Guardians as seed rate, and now in their hands, if paid over on or before the 1st of May next; and, further, not to press until the month of April, 1887, for the payment of the amount of seed rate which may now be uncollected and due to the Guardians by the purchasers of seed.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is a fact that the non-payment of this seed rate will interfere with the right of these people to vote at elections; and, also, when it comes due, it will be recovered as a charge against the individual, or against the Union?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I think that these are points which very obviously require that Notice should be given.

EGYPTIAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN EXPEDITIONS—THE WAR CONTRACTS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether any steps have yet been taken to bring home responsibility to the contractors, brokers, or officials through whom bad hay, flour, biscuits, or other supplies were despatched to recent Egyptian or South African Expeditions; whether any case for the recovery of the price of articles not up to contract standard has been submitted to the Law Officers of the Crown; whether any opinion has been given that in any case grounds for an action existed; and, whether, in any case, any compromise has been offered; and, if so, what?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL (Mr. WOODALL) (Hanley): There is no reason to suppose that the flour shipped in 1882 was not perfectly sound and good when it left this country; and there is no imputation whatever against the brokers through whom it was purchased. The reasons for its subsequent deterioration are now tolerably well known; but they could not have been foreseen when the Expedition was despatched. The opinion of the Law Officers has been obtained with regard to the contract for the hay complained of; but in the present stage it will be inconvenient to make any statement. I am not aware that it has ever been alleged that bad supplies of any kind were sent to the later Expeditions to the Nile, to Suakin, or to Bechuanaland. On the contrary, it is admitted that they were perfect in quality, and ample in quantity. Owing to the unexampled difficulties of the Nile route, and to the fact that to meet a military necessity the whaler packages had been made exceptionally light, there was some loss of supplies; but the military opinion is that the loss was due to the rough usage the cases were necessarily subjected to, rather than to defects in the packages.

MR. BRADLAUGH.

MR. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked Mr. Attorney General, If he can give any information to the House as to what proceedings are or will be taken in the Law Courts on the question of the legality of the junior Member for Northampton sitting and voting in this House, and to state when a decision is likely to be arrived at?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.), in reply, said, that, the hon. Member having been kind enough to explain that the Question referred to the sitting and voting of the hon. Member for Northampton during the present Parliament, he had to state that there was no intention on the part of the Government of taking any steps in the matter.

NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS (IRELAND)—GRATUITY TO A DECEASED TEACHER'S REPRESENTATIVES — CASE OF R. O'FLYNN, NEWPORT, CO. MAYO.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the retiring gratuity of fifty pounds, recommended to be granted to the late Robert O'Flynn, National School Teacher, Newport, county Mayo, will be handed over to his widow?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I am informed that, according to the Report of the Registrar of Deaths, Mr. O'Flynn, whose widow is referred to in this Question, died a bachelor. The Law Officers of the Crown are of opinion that in the case of the death of a teacher before the Warrant granting the gratuity is completed there is no power to pay the amount to the personal representatives of the deceased teacher.

INLAND REVENUE—DOG LICENCES.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will consider the hardship of dog licences having to be paid by drovers in the exercise of their calling; and, if he will classify these persons with others engaged in agriculture, who pay no licence duty, and give them exemption?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): When the Dog Licence was raised from 5*s.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* (41 & 42 *Vict.* c. 15, s. 17), the exemptions were at the same time increased to such an extent that the amount of revenue collected under the increased duty is less than when the licence was only 5*s.* In these circumstances, the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not intend to recommend any extension of exemptions.

TRADE STATISTICS.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will consider the desirability of giving more complete figures with regard to quantities in the trade statistics of the United Kingdom, so that more accurate conclusions may be arrived at than can be obtained from figures of value only?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside) (who replied) said: The Board of Trade are anxious to give the quantities as well as values of articles imported and exported, and they will endeavour to do so as far as practicable. There are great difficulties in the way, owing to the miscellaneous character of the trade of the United Kingdom, and the objection of merchants to declaring particulars which they can only ascertain with difficulty themselves.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—CAPPA PIER.

MR. JORDAN (Clare, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the reason for the delay in vesting the Cappa (Kilrush) Pier, in the Town Commissioners of Kilrush, West Clare, under the Shannon Act of last year; and, if steps will be taken to hasten the action of the Irish Board of Works in this matter?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the Board of Works had been in correspondence with the Town Commissioners of Kilrush about the Cappa Pier, and they were now awaiting a reply from the Commissioners to their last communication. There would be no delay in the matter.

ENFIELD SMALL ARMS FACTORY—DISCHARGE OF GOVERNMENT WORKMEN.

MR. KITCHING (Essex, Maldon) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the notice posted in the Enfield Small Arms Factory, announcing the intended reduction in the number of men employed there, stated that the step was rendered necessary "owing to the great reduction in the Estimates by the present Government;" and, if so, whether that is the usual form in which to make such announcements; and, in what manner it is ascertained which men shall be discharged when Government establishments are reduced?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the notice referred to was quite unusual in form; and the Superintendent, Colonel Arbuthnot, has expressed to me his regret that he issued it. I may add that the passage quoted by my hon. Friend is not accurate, because no Estimates for Army Services were left to me by my Predecessor, and, therefore, I could not reduce them. I have, however, already stated to the House that we do not intend to maintain a programme based on the recent rate of manufacture. There are certain definite rules regarding service, &c., according to which men are selected when discharges are necessary, and these have been found to work well.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—THE WRECK OF THE "LESLIE."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the heroic conduct of several of the Islanders of Innistrahull, off the Coast of Donegal, on the occasion of the wreck of the schooner *Leslie*, of Glasgow, on Friday night last, the crew of which they rescued at the imminent peril of their own lives; and, whether he will consider the propriety of some recognition of their services?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): My attention has been called to the wreck of the *Leslie* on Friday last. I have caused inquiry to be instituted into the case, in order to ascertain the nature of the services rendered by the Islanders, with a view to deciding whether it is one in which some recognition should be given. I have not got the particulars.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether this was not the third crew rescued lately by those Islanders?

MR. MUNDELLA said, he was not aware of the circumstances.

METROPOLIS—WORK FOR THE UNEMPLOYED—NEW POLICE STATION AT HOLLOWAY.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can expedite the clearing of the ground and the excavations for the new police station in Upper Holloway, with a view of finding work for the unemployed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I beg to state that the purchase of this site cannot be completed till the 31st instant. No time will then be lost in commencing the work. The hon. Member will be glad to hear that the building of two new police stations has been commenced during the past fortnight, and a third (at North Fulham) will be commenced in a few days.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — BOARD SCHOOLS—INFANT SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, in view of the diminished attendance in infant schools necessarily caused by the exceptional severity of the weather, he will consider the equity of making some allowance in the matter of average attendance to those managers of schools to whom, without any fault of their own, considerable loss is now threatened?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): No provision exists in the Code by which the Department is empowered to make allowance for diminished attendance; but Her Majesty's Inspectors have instructions, at their inspection, to take carefully into account all exceptional circumstances which may put the school into an unfavourable position.

LAW AND JUSTICE—DURHAM QUARTER SESSIONS—INEQUALITY OF SENTENCES.

MR. T. FRY (Darlington) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the unequal sentences passed upon two men, at different quarter sessions at Durham for the crime of sheep stealing at Darlington on October 4th 1885; the originator of the theft, an ex-policeman named Adams, previously convicted, who absconded (but was afterwards apprehended), receiving only two months' imprisonment from January 4th 1886, whilst his accomplice Barron, long out of work, and who confessed at the time to the part he had taken, was sentenced to ten months on October 21st 1885; and, if he will take steps to rectify this unequal punishment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): The fact of the inequality of these two sentences is a thing much to be regretted. I have most carefully gone into all the facts, and have come to the opinion not that Barron's sentence was too severe, but that Adams's sentence, owing to a miscarriage of justice, was far too light. I should not feel justified, for the sake of reducing what is undeniably an inequality of punishment, in recommending a remission of the severer sentence. I have communicated with the Chairman of Quarter Sessions with regard to the two cases.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—BRITISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS ABROAD.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any objection to laying upon the Table the Papers referred to in the following extract from Lord Randolph Churchill's speech at Manchester on the 3rd instant:—

> "Lord Salisbury, setting aside altogether a Treasury Minute of Mr. Childers, which, to a great extent, cramped the efforts of our agents Abroad for fostering and encouraging British enterprise, sent special instructions to our agents Abroad that they were, on every occasion, to lose no opportunity of assisting British commerce, either in the person of individuals or in the form of co-operative effort;"

and, whether this statement is correct?

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked, whether the attention of the hon. Gentleman had been drawn to a statement made by a correspondent at Constantinople in *The Times* of that day to the following effect:—

> "Ever and always the English Representative here sternly and indignantly refuses to give his support to any British subject's demand for a concession . . . . so much so that the English applicant frequently obtains his end through a foreign Representative, instead of his own, or more frequently is left out in the cold;"

and, whether this was the case?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): I think that the hon. Member can hardly expect me to answer, without Notice, Questions referring to a matter which only appeared in this morning's paper. I would also beg to remind the hon. Member that our Representative, Sir Edward Thornton, has only been at Constantinople for the last fortnight. With regard to the Question of the hon. Baronet, I will take this opportunity of answering a similar Question which my noble Friend the Member for Stratford-upon-Avon Division (Lord William Compton) has put on the Paper. A diligent search has been made; but no trace can be found in the Treasury of the Minute referred to in the speech quoted by the hon. Baronet and the noble Lord. Should such a Minute ever be discovered, I see no objection to its being laid upon the Table; but I fear that I must damp the hopes of hon. Members by reminding them that, as Her Majesty's Agents abroad are entirely under the orders of the Foreign Office, it is hard to see how any such Minute can ever have emanated from the Treasury. With the exception of the Instructions sent to Her Majesty's Representatives in China and Japan—

> "To support British commercial interests where foreign Representatives interfered to their detriment,"

and which were referred to in the letter addressed by the Foreign Office to the London Chamber of Commerce on February 22, no Instructions whatever would appear to have been given by the Marquess of Salisbury to our Agents abroad relating to the promotion of British commerce. As to the steps which are being now taken by Her Majesty's present Government, I need only refer to the answer which I gave last Monday on this subject.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): In reference to the answer of the hon. Gentleman to the Question of the hon. Baronet, I wish, with the indulgence of the House, on behalf of my noble Friend who is unable to be here this evening, to state that he made the statement with regard to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers) on what he believed to be reliable authority, and he is confident that he can, if necessary, justify the substance.

IRELAND—THE MAGISTRACY—THE ENNISTYMON MAGISTRATES.

Mr. JORDAN (Clare, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 19th November last, the constabulary at Ennistymon, county Clare, having arrested for drunkenness a man named Michael Cunningham, found upon him a loaded revolver, for which he had no licence; whether, after repeated adjournments, a prosecution instituted by the local Excise officer against Cunningham, for carrying the weapon without an Excise licence, was dismissed on the 24th ultimo, the presiding Justices, Mr. H. V. M'Namara and Mr. Thomas Lucas, explaining their decision by the statement that the case was peculiar, and that there was a point of Law involved as to which they could procure no direction from the authorities in Dublin; whether the same Justices have in several recent cases inflicted penalties upon poor farmers and herdsmen for having weapons required for the care of their farms and sheep, and did not in any such case apply for or await direction from Dublin Castle; what steps will be taken to apply the Law in the case of the bailiff Cunningham; and, whether the conduct of the Justices will be taken into consideration?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, the facts were as stated in the first two paragraphs of the Question, except Cunningham had a licence under the Peace Preservation Act. The point of law occurred at the first hearing of the case, and was raised by the Resident Magistrate. The matter was referred to Dublin; but, as there was no person there to give an opinion, the magistrates at last acted on their own view and dismissed the case. The Inland Revenue informed him that it was their intention to appeal in the case to the Quarter Sessions; but, owing to some irregularity, the appeal had to be withdrawn. Since then four persons had been fined at the same Petty Sessions for breaches of the Gun Licences Act; but the Bench on those occasions was not constituted as in the case referred to in the Question.

CHARITABLE BEQUESTS (IRELAND)—THE EATON BEQUEST.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can say when the rights of the claimants to the Eaton Bequest, in abeyance since 1876, will be inquired into and decided on; and, would he have any objection to give a Return of the several sums, left for charitable or industrial purposes, now locked up in the Court of Chancery in Ireland, showing the name of the testator, the date of death, the object of each bequest, and the amount, principal and interest, of the several sums so bequeathed, at the present time?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am advised that it is not possible to name any specific time at which the claim or claims to the Eaton Bequest will be disposed of. The Crown and Treasury Solicitor is at present inquiring into them, and he has been requested to expedite the matter. There are no materials for giving the Return mentioned in the Question, nor any staff available for the purpose. There is a list published in the Accountant General's Office which gives a statement of the names and particulars of suits in which funds are lying dormant. But the particular object of each fund or portion of it—where there is any such—devoted to charitable or industrial purposes could only be ascertained by unravelling the history of each suit from the papers connected with it, and these papers are not under the control of the Court officials.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — RURAL LETTER CARRIERS — THE BALLINGLEN AND MOYNE POSTMAN.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether a sum of only seven shillings a week is paid to the postman for the daily carriage of letters and parcels post between Ballinglen and Moyne, the distance travelled on foot being four statute miles each way, and for a similar service for three days between Moyne and Aughavanna three shillings and sixpence for five statute miles journey each way; whether he is aware that the mountainous and exposed character of the roads makes the duty, especially in winter, very severe; and, will he bring the matter under the notice of the postmaster at Dublin, with a view of having this man adequately remunerated?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the facts were as stated in the Question, and he would lay the facts before the Postmaster General, in order to obtain for the man larger payment.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—ELECTRIC COMMUNICATION IN THIS HOUSE.

MR. BUXTON (Essex, Walthamstow) asked the honourable Member for Staffordshire (North Western Division) as a Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will consider the advisability of establishing electrical or telephonic signals to the Library, Reading Room, and other parts of the House, whereby Members may be informed of the business under discussion, and of the name of the Member addressing the House?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.), in reply, said, the First Commissioner of Works would consider the proposal of the hon. Member, which was one of some magnitude, in consultation with the officers of the House.

PUBLIC MEETINGS (IRELAND)—SPEECH OF MR. W. H. H. LYONS.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the attention of the Irish Executive has been given to a Report in *The Belfast Evening Telegraph* of the 20th ultimo, of a speech delivered the previous evening, at a meeting in the Orange Hall Dundrod, by Mr. W. H. H. Lyons, described in the report as "D.G.M." of Antrim, who presided over the meeting; whether the following passage in the speech has been considered:—

> "In the case of any rising in Ireland he would certainly recommend the loyal minority in the North to lay their hands on every priest in this part of the country as hostages, and let it be known that if a hair of the head of any Protestant in the South and West were touched they would make quick work of them, bishops and all. (Loud cheers);"

whether Mr. Lyons is engaged in the public service as cess collector for the baronies of Upper Belfast and Upper Masscreene; and, what action will be taken in regard to him?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I cannot say whether this is a correct report of Mr. Lyons's observations, because this paper is not taken in at the Castle. In any case, whether the report be correct or not, in the capacity of cess collector, Mr. Lyons is a servant of the Grand Jury, and the Government have no control over him.

Mr. SEXTON: As Grand Juries make suggestions to the Government, would not the Government make a suggestion to the Grand Jury in this matter?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: It does not follow that because the Grand Juries make suggestions to the Government that the Government should make suggestions to the Grand Jury.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—INTIMIDATION.

Captain M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that a Mr. M'Garigle, general merchant, hotel proprietor, and court-house keeper in Tulla, county Clare, has been boycotted by order of the local branch of the National League; whether Mr. M'Garigle was appointed to take charge of the court-house in 1883, on the resignation of a Mr. Colbourne who went off to America; whether Colbourne returned, after an absence of more than twelve months, and, if M'Garigle was not forthwith called upon to appear before the National League to answer a charge of "situation grabbing;" whether M'Garigle has entered into securities with the Grand Jury for a period of two years, and if his general business has been entirely ruined, whilst he and his family are subject to daily insult and annoyance; and, if the authorities will take any action to protect a public official and loyal subject of the Crown under such circumstances?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): My attention was called to this case some considerable time ago, and the facts of it were pretty much as stated in the Question. I laid the case before my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland, and he advised that there was no evidence of an actual breach of the law. I am glad to say that according to the last report which reached me there has been an improvement in the public feeling towards Mr. M'Garigle. He is receiving all necessary aid and protection.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that Colbourne lost his situation because he was incarcerated under the Coercion Act?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Yes; I believe that is so.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): Is it a fact that Mr. M'Garigle was summoned before the Tulla Branch of the National League as alleged in the Question?

[No reply.]

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT (IRELAND)—VETERINARY PORTAL INSPECTORS.

Mr. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Government will take into consideration the disadvantages in regard to salary, increment of salary, retiring allowance, dismissal without adequate notice, and the disallowance of the privilege of private practice under which the veterinary surgeons constituting the staff of veterinary portal inspectors in Ireland are placed, as compared with the veterinary surgeons employed by the English Privy Council; and, whether the Irish Government will take any steps to amend the unequal treatment of these public servants in Ireland and England?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The salaries of Veterinary Portal Inspectors in England and Ireland necessarily vary in accordance with the size and business of the ports at which they are engaged. In respect to the other matters mentioned in the Question, I find that the Inspectors in both countries are treated on very similar lines, except that in England somewhat longer notice is given for the termination of an engagement, and there is a limited permission to engage in private practice. I think it is worthy of consideration whether the services in both countries might not be advantageously assimilated in these respects.

TITHE RENT-CHARGES (IRELAND)—EXTENSION OF TIME FOR PAYMENT BY LANDLORDS.

Mr. R. POWER (Waterford) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he would take into consideration to afford relief, by extension of time for the payment of tithe rent-charge in Ireland, to persons who could show that they had not received the rents due for the gales in which tithe rent-charge was now claimed, or to accept payment thereof pro rata on the rent actually received?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The Land Commissioners do, in fact, extend time for payment to all payers of tithe rent-charge who satisfy them that they have not received their rents, and that they are not postponing their rent-charge—which is the first charge on the land except Crown and quit rent—to puisne charges. Other cases are examined on their merits, and such relief is given as the Commissioners think is required by the circumstances of the case; and I think that it is not desirable to alter the present system.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—TEELIN PIER.

MR. KELLY (Donegal, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How much money has been expended by Board of Works in connection with Teelin Pier, county Donegal, since it was first tendered to or handed over to the Grand Jury as a finished work?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, that £125 had been spent in completing the approaches to Teelin Pier, County Donegal, and £35 in removing stones; but nothing had been spent on the pier itself since its completion.

ARMY—GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, What quantity of work is now being performed for the War Department on the Continent; what contracts are running; what is the total of those contracts in money and materials; and, what proportions remain to be completed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I cannot give this information to-day, and its preparation would involve a good deal of detailed calculation. If the hon. Member thinks a good public purpose will be served I am ready to order the preparation of the information he asks for; but I must request a few days' Notice.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS 1883 AND 1885—APPEALS TO PRIVY COUNCIL AGAINST SCHEMES.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in case of an appeal to the Irish Privy Council against an improvement scheme sanctioned by the Irish Local Government Board, under authority of the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, 1883 and 1885, the success of the appeal in regard to the merits of any portion of an improvement scheme leads to the rejection of the whole?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, the success of an appeal in regard to the merits of any portion of an improvement scheme did not necessarily lead to the rejection of the whole scheme. The Lord Lieutenant in Council might confirm the whole scheme, or might disallow it, or amend and modify it under terms and conditions set forth in the Order in Council.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—ACCOMMODATION OF MEMBERS—LOCKERS.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is aware that many Irish Members are without lockers for the accommodation of their Parliamentary Papers; and, whether he could provide an increase of lockers equal to the number of Members of the House?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.) (who replied) said, he was happy to say that steps would be taken to provide the additional lockers.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has yet had under his consideration the Memorial of the Civil Service Writers, presented to the Treasury in August last, supported by the signatures of 120 Members of Parliament; and, if so, whether he can state to the House the nature of his decision thereon?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.) (who replied): The Civil Service Writers' Memorial is before the Treasury. Its subject-matter, together with similar general questions affecting the Civil Service as a whole, is receiving our careful consideration, and I hope it will be possible before very long to announce the conclusions arrived at.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE LISTOWEL SCHOOLS.

Mr. STACK (Kerry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland are aware that a sum of £1,800 has been expended at Listowel, county Kerry, under the direction of a local Committee, in the erection of schools, to enable the Presentation Nuns to meet the necessities of the town and district in regard to education conducted by the nuns under the system of the National Board; and, whether the Commissioners will apply their rules as to grants for the erection of school houses so as to enable the Committee to clear off a debt of £1,000 incurred by the erection of the schools in question?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, the Commissioners of National Education informed him that under these rules they had no power to make a grant to pay off a debt incurred in the erection of a school.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked who made the rules?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he could not say whether the Commissioners made their own rules or whether they were made for them.

ARMY—DEFERRED PENSIONS—CASE OF JAMES BRADY.

Mr. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that James Brady, of Lisagavan, Kingscourt, county Cavan, served seven years in the Army, six of which was in India during the mutiny of 1857 and 1858, received a medal for same, got sixpence a-day pension for three years, with a penny per day for good conduct; whether he is now unable to work, being over fifty years old and in delicate health; and, whether this man will get the pension of sevenpence per day for the remainder of his days?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) (Leeds, W.) (who replied) said: There is nothing to take this case out of the usual course by which the man will be allowed a pension of 4*d.* a day from the time he reaches the age of 50 years, which will be in April, 1887. He should then apply for his deferred pension.

Mr. O'HANLON said, he had not been able to hear the answer, and he would have to put the Question on the Paper again.

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE repeated the answer he had previously given.

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—THE SCINDE, PUNJAUB, AND DELHI RAILWAY.

Mr. E. R. RUSSELL (Glasgow, Bridgeton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, When the Bill is to be brought in to enable the Secretary of State to issue India 3½ per cent. stock to the shareholders of the Scinde, Punjaub, and Delhi Railway; and, whether it is not important to shareholders, many of them trustees, that the Bill should become law by the 1st of May in order that dividends may be paid on the 30th June?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Secretary of State already has the power to issue India 3½ per Cent Stock in redemption of the annuities created in purchase of the Scinde, Punjaub, and Delhi Railway. This power is given under Section 2 of the Act 44 & 45 *Vict.* c. 53, as modified by Part 2 of Section 25 of the Act 48 & 49 *Vict.* c. 25.

SOUTH AFRICA—AFFAIRS OF BASUTOLAND.

Mr. LEAKE (Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has read the Letter, dated 15th July 1885, addressed by Sir Hercules Robinson to the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, and inclosing Correspondence extending over the years 1884 and 1885, between the High Commissioner of the Cape Colony, the President of the Orange Free State, the Resident Commissioner in Basutoland, the Attorney General of the Cape Colony, and Mr. Van der Wath, on the subject of a horse forcibly taken from Van der Wath so far back as the month of November 1883 by one Bereng Letsea, and claimed as his own beast which had been lost, whereas it had been bought out of a district pound in the Orange Free State by Van der Wath; whether any reply was sent to the Letter of Sir Hercules Robinson by the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, to whom he had referred the matter for instructions, or has been sent by the present Secretary of State; whether this horse case, which the the High Authorities of Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, and Basutoland had not been able to settle on the spot, has been settled by the interposition of the late or the present Secretary of State for the Colonies; and, whether he can suggest any less complicated and dilatory method of administering the affairs of Basutoland than would appear to exist at present?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): (Denbighshire, E.): I have read the letter of Sir Hercules Robinson, inclosing correspondence extending over the years 1884 and 1885, on the subject of the horse forcibly taken from Van der Wath so far back as November, 1883, by one Bereng Letsea, which does not seem to have been a very valuable animal, as his outside price was only £10 *5s.* No reply to this letter was sent by the late or present Secretary of State for the Colonies; but no doubt the case formed one of the subjects of discussion at the interview which took place between Sir Hercules Robinson and the President of the Orange Free State at Bloemfontein last November, and as the matter has not been mentioned in any subsequent despatch, I am in hopes that it has been settled without the interposition of the late or present Secretary of State. But Sir Hercules Robinson is about to visit England very shortly, and if my hon. Friend thinks it worth while to pursue the matter further, I may be able, after communicating with him, to throw some further light upon the subject. With regard to the last part of the Question, no doubt the difficulties of administering a country like Basutoland are great; but I cannot suggest any better mode of dealing with such matters as those to which the Question refers than to leave them to be settled by Colonel Clarke, the Resident Commissioner in Basutoland, who has discharged his duties with ability and tact, and to the entire satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government.

COMMONS AND OPEN SPACES (METROPOLIS)—A RECREATION GROUND FOR FULHAM.

MR. FISHER (Fulham) asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether a piece of land situated by the river in Fulham was presented and conveyed to the Board by the late Bishop of London for the purposes of a recreation ground; whether any offer has been made to the Board of any money for the purpose of providing labour for the laying out of that land as a recreation ground; and, whether the Board, in view of the large numbers of the unemployed in Fulham, will at once take steps to avail itself of any offer which may have been made or in any case will undertake to carry out this work of public utility?

THE CHAIRMAN (Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG) (Middlesex, Hornsey): In reply to the hon. Member, I beg to state that no such piece of land was presented and conveyed to the Metropolitan Board by the late Bishop of London. A little more than two years ago the Bishop offered to the Fulham District Board the meadow adjacent to his Palace at Fulham, and the District Board asked the Metropolitan Board to accept the land and lay out and maintain it as an open space. The Board went to see the locality twice, and gave careful consideration to the matter; but, in addition to the expense of laying out, it would have been necessary to expend a large sum in protecting the land from overflow of the river, and it was not considered expedient to comply with the request of the District Board. With regard to the second part of the Question, an offer was recently made to the Board by the Committee of the Mansion House Relief Fund of a sum of money to be devoted to certain works, among which was named the laying out of a public garden at Fulham on the ground referred to. The Board, however, were unable to accept this offer, not being in possession of any land at Fulham which could be devoted to the purpose, and I am afraid they are not in a position to come to any other conclusion.

EVICTION OF PITMEN (DURHAM).

MR. A. E. PEASE (York) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether there is any truth in the account published in *The New-*

castle Daily Chronicle of March 5th, of several pitmen with their families being evicted from their cottages at the village of South Medomsley, in Durham, during the snowstorm of Tuesday last; whether it is a fact that the bailiffs were assisted in carrying out the evictions by the county police; and, whether, in the event of the account being a corect one, Her Majesty's Government can take any action to prevent the recurrence of such incidents?

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring) asked whether it was true that the police, in assisting the bailiffs, used insulting language to the people, and brutal conduct to many of them, and caused serious damage to the furniture of those evicted by pitching it out in the snow?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): I must have Notice of this last Question. It is impossible for me to have information on the subject. In reply to my hon. Friend (Mr. A. E. Pease), I have to say that the accounts which have been published do not give all the material facts of the case. The men have been on strike for upwards of three months; and I am informed that they had ample time, after the usual legal notices, to remove their families and furniture to houses provided for them within five minutes' walk. As a matter of fact, the warrants, which were issued on the 4th of February, were not executed until one day before the statutory time expired; and the Police Authorities report to me that the men had been advised to remove peaceably, but that their chief representative declined, declaring that "they were determined to put the county to all the expense and trouble they could." Under these circumstances, it is no doubt unfortunate that the last day was a stormy one; but the fault was clearly with the miners. The police constables were present to preserve order, but no complaint was made as to their conduct, and they appear to me to have behaved well. My hon. Friend is aware that I have no authority over county and borough police, still less over bailiffs executing a civil process.

MR. WILSON gave Notice that he should, on the first opportunity, call the attention of the House to the proceedings in question.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked whether there was any truth in the allegation that one of the men who was removing the goods became disgusted with the work, and declared that he could not proceed with it any longer, and that he was prevented from leaving the house by the police until the arrival of Inspector Oliver?

MR. CHILDERS repeated that he had no authority over county or borough police. All he could do was to apply to the Chief Constable for information. He suggested that the hon. Member should give Notice of the Question?

CURRENCY, &c.—THE APPRECIATION OF GOLD.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it is within the scope of the Royal Commission on Trade Depression to inquire how far recent economic and agricultural disturbances may have been caused or aggravated by appreciation of gold, due to increased demand for that metal for currency purposes in Europe and America; and, if he can say whether they have yet applied themselves to that branch of the subject?

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked whether the depreciation of silver would also be inquired into by the Royal Commissioners?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside), in reply, said, he was informed by the Earl of Iddesleigh, the Chairman of the Royal Commission, that the subject to which the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) referred was within the scope of their inquiry, and that they were applying themselves to that branch of the subject. With regard to the second Question, he asked the hon. Member to give Notice.

NAVY—H.M.S. "BENBOW."

MR. LEICESTER (West Ham, S.) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If it is true that arrangements are being made to remove H.M.S. *Benbow* from Victoria Docks to a Government dockyard for completion; and, if so, as a large number of men are at the present time engaged on the vessel, which cannot be ready for sea in less than 12 to 18 months, and considering that great distress already prevails in the east of London, whether he could allow the work to be completed in the Victoria Docks?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Hibbert) (Oldham): I have to say that, in accordance with the contract, the *Benbow* will be delivered and removed to Chatham in the course of next summer. The work then remaining to be done in connection with the armament and equipment of the ships is of a character practically necessitating her completion in a Government Dockyard, provision for the cost of which has been made in the Dockyard Vote of 1886-7. Another large armourclad, the *Sanspareil*, is building for the Admiralty by the same contractors, and is now reaching a stage of progress affording employment to a large number of men.

TRADE AND COMMERCE — COMMERCIAL INTERCOURSE WITH SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the negotiations with the Spanish Government, with the view of obtaining fair treatment in respect of duties for British exports to that country or to the Spanish West Indies, are making such progress as to make it probable that further Papers on the subject will be shortly laid before Parliament; whether any negotiations are pending with the Government of the United States of America with reference to the difference between that Government and the Government of Her Majesty in the interpretation put upon the Most Favoured Nation Clause in the Commercial Treaty between the two countries; and, whether, in default of agreement, Her Majesty's Government will endeavour to secure such a modification of the existing Treaty as will make it capable of being understood in the same sense by both parties to it?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): Immediately after the present Government came into Office, Sir Clare Ford, Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid, was instructed to take steps with a view to the removal of the impediments existing to British trade with Spain; but no such progress has been made as to render it probable that further Papers on the subject will be shortly laid on the Table. I may add that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that any arrangement to be made ought not to be of a merely transient nature, and they believe that this is also the view of the commercial community in Great Britain. A Resolution to this effect was lately received by the Foreign Office from the Association of Chambers of Commerce. With regard to the hon. Member's Question as to negotiations with the United States, there is no disagreement with respect to the meaning of the existing Treaty which relates to trade between the British Possessions in Europe and the United States. The United States Government, however, are unwilling to extend its stipulations to the British West Indies; but Her Majesty's Government are expecting a further communication from Washington in reply to Earl Granville's despatch to Sir L. West of February 12th, 1885, which the hon. Member will find on page 20 of Commercial, No. 4, 1885.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—SCULPTURES AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked the honourable Member for North-West Stafford, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, Whether it is the fact, as stated by Mr. Newton, in a lecture lately delivered by him at the Royal Institution, that there are in the British Museum—

> "A number of sculptures which have been buried in a cellar since the year 1852, which are defaced or begrimed with dirt, and utterly useless to anybody;"

whether these sculptures are of great value and archæological interest both on account of their intrinsic merit and of the inscriptions upon them; whether Her Majesty's Government contemplate proposing alterations or extensions at the Museum in order to allow of the proper exhibition of these ancient works of art; and, whether, in case no such alterations or extensions are to be proposed, consideration will be given to the question whether any of these objects could be sent for exhibition to provincial museums?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (who replied) said: The Newton Collection of sculptures are placed in a large basement room, imperfectly lighted; but they are kept in good condition, and are periodically washed by experienced masons. They were originally arranged for exhibition; but the room was found unsuitable for the admission of general visitors, and the light on one side has lately been intercepted by new buildings. They are examined by students, accompanied by a Museum attendant. A great part of these sculptures are known from engravings in the work entitled *Museum Marvels*, published by the Trustees, and they have been copied for publication by German Institutions. They form an essential part of the Museum Collection, and ought not to be separated from it. Proposed additions to the Museum buildings to provide for the proper exhibition of the antiquities in the basement have for same time been under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. TOMLINSON asked was not the room in which the sculptures were so dark as to render artificial light necessary?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: Basement rooms are generally imperfectly lighted.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES)—LEGISLATION.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill for promoting intermediate education in Wales; and, if so, whether the Confiscatory Clauses of last year's Bill will be omitted in deference to the wishes of the Principality?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.) (who replied) said, the question was so intimately mixed up with the Educational Endowment Act of 1869 and the Amending Acts now under consideration of a Select Committee that the Government were unable to promise that a Bill would be introduced this Session until they knew what changes might be recommended by the Committee. In those circumstances, he could not say in what respect the Bill to be introduced would differ from that of last year.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE—PENSIONS—SIR EDMUND HENDERSON AND MR. WALKER.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the pensions which he has recommended for Sir Edmund Henderson and other retiring officials of the Metropolitan Police, are pensions to which they are strictly entitled under the rules of the service, on the ground of age, service, &c. and have not been awarded or specially increased on account of their recent services?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): The pensions to be awarded to Sir Edmund Henderson and Mr. Walker, the only other officer who has retired, will come strictly within the Rules of the Service. Mr. Walker's pension, coming wholly out of the Metropolitan Police Fund, has been already sanctioned by me. Sir Edmund Henderson's pension, coming partly and chiefly from the Imperial Fund and partly from the Police Fund, is still the subject of consideration with the Treasury.

LAW AND JUSTICE (BANKRUPTCY)—ESTATE OF DR. FORBES WINSLOW.

MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been drawn to an application, made on the 19th February, before Mr. Justice Cave, by the trustee of the estate of Dr. Forbes Winslow, bankrupt, for an order directing the landlord of the bankrupt to deliver up to him certain cheque books, letters, counterfoils, and documents essential in order to enable the trustee properly to investigate the debtor's affairs, which were held by the said landlord under an agreement reserving to him "the ordinary rights of the landlord;" whether the application was made under Rule 259 of the Bankruptcy Rules 1883, which provides that no person shall, as against the trustee, be entitled to withhold possession of the books of accounts belonging to the debtor, or to set up any lien upon them; whether Mr. Justice Cave decided that cheque books, counterfoils, letters, and similar documents were not within the Rule, although they might furnish materials for making up an account, and that the Rule must be construed strictly; and, whether he is prepared so to amend the Law relating to distraint as to make it impossible to take away not only a non-trader's account papers, but the tools and instruments of a man's trade or profession, and the necessary furniture of his home?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): It is not within the functions of the Board of Trade to deal generally with the Law of Distraint; but in any future amendment of the Bankruptcy Act I shall be prepared to consider whether, for the purpose of bankruptcy, any such amendment as that suggested is desirable.

METROPOLIS—DWELLINGS OF THE WORKING CLASSES—INQUIRY AT ST. JAMES AND ST. JOHN, CLERKENWELL.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received the Report of the Inspector who held the inquiry, suggested by the Mansion House Council on the Dwellings of the People, into the immediate sanitary requirements of the parish of St. James and St. John Clerkenwell as far back as November 1885, and whether he will lay the same before Parliament; and, if he has not yet received the Report, whether, in view of the importance attaching to the inquiry, he will give instructions to the Inspector for its immediate presentation?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.), in reply, said, the Report of the Inspector who held the inquiry suggested by the Mansion House Committee into the dwellings of the people had been received, and would in all probability, when he had read it himself, be laid on the Table.

POST OFFICE—PROVISIONAL APPOINTMENTS.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether "provisional" appointments have been made in the major and minor establishments of the Post Office; and, if so, whether they are made under the condition that, on the ratification of a provisional appointment, service shall account for the full appointment from the date of the making of the provisional appointment?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): Provisional appointments have been made to the major and minor establishments of the Post Office, in connection with the introduction of the 6*d*. rate for telegrams. The services of the officers so appointed will count from the date of their provisional appointment in those cases in which the appointments are made permanent.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE KEEPER OF THE VICTORIA TOWER.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Who is the keeper of that part of the Royal Palace of Westminster which is known by the name of the Victoria Tower?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the Victoria Tower, Westminster, was under the control of the Deputy Lord Great Chamberlain.

METROPOLITAN POLICE COURTS—FINES AND PENALTIES.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) (for Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether all fines and penalties imposed in courts of justice within the Metropolitan limits, which in other places go to the treasury of the county or borough in aid of local rates, are paid into the National Exchequer; and, whether he can state what was the amount of those fines during the year 1885?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): The general principle is that the fund which bears the expenses in connection with the Courts receives the fines which are imposed. In London, as the salaries of the police magistrates and the expenses of providing and maintaining the Courts are borne by the Exchequer, all the fines imposed with the exception of a few, go to the Exchequer. The amount paid to the Exchequer for the year 1885 was £10,981.

POST OFFICE—TRANSMISSION OF PRINTED MATTER AT ELECTIONS.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether complaints have been made to the Post Office authorities as to the charge of one penny upon wrappers enclosing poll cards and circulars at Parliamentary elections; and, whether, considering the statutory limitations now placed upon the expenses of Parliamentary elections, the Post Office will consider some modification of their order, and admit of these circulars being transmitted for one halfpenny?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, this was not the case with his own election circulars, and it was only a matter that required a little consideration on the part of the candidate and his agents. The question had been considered by the Post Office, when it was found the regular charge could not be altered.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH, &c. STATION AT TORY ISLAND.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury have received several representations from Ireland, England, and Scotland, urging the desirability of establishing a telegraph and signal station on Tory Island, off the coast of Donegal; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to give effect to the same?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): Several representations have been made from time to time for the establishment of a telegraph and signal station on Tory Island. The Post Office has no monopoly of the business of signalling ships, which is altogether outside the action of the Telegraphs Act. It is a business which is mostly undertaken by the Committee of Lloyds. Some time ago that Committee made an offer to establish a signal and telegraph station on Tory Island, and the Postmaster General expressed his readiness to grant a licence upon nominal terms for establishing telegraph communication with the main land; but the Lloyds Committee, owing to difficulties in the way of laying and maintaining the cable, did not proceed with the work. I do not think that I can hold out any hope that the Government will undertake to establish a telegraph and signal station on Tory Island.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—ZANZIBAR DELIMITATION COMMISSION.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can give the House any information as to the progress made by the Zanzibar Delimitation Commission?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The Commission has been at work since the 10th of December, when its first meeting was held; but as it was then agreed that its proceedings should be kept secret, I am unable at present to give any further information.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—ANNEXATIONS IN ZANZIBAR.

MR. HUTTON (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Consul at Zanzibar has communicated any information relative to further annexations made by Europeans since November 1885, on the Zanzibar Coast or in Eastern Africa; and, when further Correspondence with Her Majesty's Government on this subject will be presented to Parliament?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): No European Government has assumed the protectorate of any territory since the date named by the hon. Member, and it is understood that no annexations will be made while the Delimitation Commission is sitting. It is not proposed to present further Correspondence until after the Commission has finished its work.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—THE SLAVE TRADE BLUE BOOK.

MR. HUTTON (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When communication and information relating to commerce, received from Her Majesty's Consuls at Zanzibar and on the Mozambique Coast during the past twelve months, will be presented to Parliament?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The Slave Trade Blue Book about to be laid on the Table will contain all the information on commercial subjects which has been received from Zanzibar. No information has been received from Mozambique, the Consul having been granted leave to recover his health.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—AGED COUPLES IN WORKHOUSES.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the extent to which sec. 23, 10 and 11 Vic. c. 109, by which it is provided that married persons, being both above sixty years of age, shall not be compelled to live apart in workhouses, has been allowed to remain a dead letter, he will urge upon the Boards of Guardians the necessity for complying with the requirements of the Act?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.): Last November my Predecessor at the Local Government Board sent a Circular to Boards of Guardians on this subject. I am informed that in a good number of cases in which provision has been made, as suggested in the Question, the aged couples prefer not to live together. But if my hon. Friend has any evidence as to any particular case he has in view in which such provision has been refused, I will take care that special representation be made to the Board of Guardians.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BOARDS OF GUARDIANS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the First Lord of the Treasury's Letter to Lord de Vesci, inviting information and expressions of opinion on certain Irish public questions, Whether he is aware that Count de la Poer, Chairman of the Clonmel Board of Guardians, Mr. William Malcolmson, Chairman of the Carrick-on-Suir Board of Guardians, and other chairmen of boards of guardians in Ireland, have prevented the boards over which they preside from responding to the invitation of the Prime Minister, by refusing to allow any Resolution to be moved on the subjects referred to in the Prime Minister's Letter; whether such Resolutions have been moved and carried at many meetings of Irish boards of guardians, and also at meetings of town councils, grand juries, and other public bodies; whether Count de la Poer and Mr. William Malcolmson have also refused, at meetings of their respective boards, to allow guardians representing the interests of tenant farmers to offer a Resolution on the injury done to the agricultural class by the sale of butterine as butter; and, what steps will be taken to secure that no chairman shall prevent the board over which he presides from affording information requested by the head of the Government, or from dealing with questions regarded as concerning the interest of the ratepayers?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that the Chairmen of the Boards mentioned in the Question declined to put certain resolutions to their Boards. I do not know whether other Chairmen have acted similarly; but, of course, I am aware that other Boards of Guardians and public bodies have adopted similar resolutions. The Local Government Board are not informed as to what happened with respect to the resolution on the injury done to the agricultural class by the sale of butterine as butter. There is no power in the Local Government Board to compel Chairmen to put resolutions of the kind, nor do I think it would be advisable to seek such powers. Whatever action is advisable would appear to me to be in the hands of the Boards themselves.

METROPOLIS—WORK FOR THE UNEMPLOYED—THE NEW STREET FROM GREAT DOVER STREET, BOROUGH.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.) asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether, in view of the want of employment in South London, there is any immediate prospect of the proposed new street from Great Dover Street, Borough, through to Tabard Street, and the buildings for the re-housing of the working classes in connection therewith being proceeded with?

THE CHAIRMAN (Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG) (Middlesex, Hornsey): I beg to inform the hon. Member that the Board hopes to commence the clearance of the remainder of the houses acquired for the new street within a month of the present date. A contract will be entered into immediately afterwards for the construction of the street itself. When this work is completed artizans' buildings will be commenced upon the land to be devoted to that purpose.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARD AND MASON ISLAND PIERS, CO. GALWAY.

Mr. SHEEHY (Galway, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Is it a fact that a gentleman has been appointed by the Board of Works to pay the wages, &c. on the piers being built at Ard and Mason Island (Galway) who lives a distance of twelve or fourteen miles from the works, and who has to be paid car hire and travelling expenses each time he goes to and from the works; and, if so, how much travelling expenses are paid to him each time; if another paymaster under the Board, who is paying the wages at another work in the same locality, lives within a mile or two of Ard and Mason, whose travelling expenses would be comparatively trifling if he had been appointed to pay at these works; if the gentleman who pays at the Ard and Mason works is obliged to drive past the very door of the other paymaster when going to Ard and returning; and, if any satisfactory explanation can be given why the Piers and Harbours money should be so unnecessarily expended?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the facts stated in the first part of the Question were substantially correct. The extra expense involved in the present arrangement amounted to about £2 out of a total estimate of £1,670. The Commissioners of Public Works, after careful consideration of the case, decided in their discretion to employ the present paymaster, who was already performing other duties which did not require his whole time.

JAMAICA—FEVER AT PORT ROYAL.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) (for Sir Thomas Brassey) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether an epidemic of yellow fever has recently visited Port Royal, and what number of cases have been reported from H.M.S. *Urgent;* and, whether any facilities exist for removing men in the Naval Service from Port Royal to a sanatarium or hill station, similar to that occupied by the Military at Newcastle, Jamaica?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Hibbert) (Oldham): I regret to have to say that since October, 1885, 19 cases of yellow fever have been admitted into Jamaica Hospital from the *Urgent*, of which number four have terminated fatally. Besides these, an officer who was on board waiting to join the *Wye* was attacked and died. There has been one other case—from the *Tyne.* There is no "sanatarium or hill station" attached to Jamaica Hospital; nor is it thought by our medical advisers that any such establishment is necessary for such cases of infectious disease, as Port Royal is so swept by the sea breezes that it is considered more healthy than a hill station. I am informed that troops with yellow fever are not moved to the hill station occupied by the military at Newcastle, Jamaica, as suggested in the Question.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) --LOAN FOR BUILDING—CASE OF JOHN M'NAMARA, BRAWNEY, CO. WESTMEATH.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether John M'Namara, who resides at Golden Island, in the barony of Brawney, county Westmeath, applied to the Board of Works in July last for a loan for the purpose of erecting a house on a tenant's holding; whether his rent was paid, and all necessary notices served, and formalities required completed, and the security offered believed to be ample; whether the tenant and his family are at present located in a dilapidated and almost ruinous hovel on the holding; and, whether the Board granted the loan?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.) (who replied) said, an application for a loan of £50 was made in July, 1884. Subsequently delay had arisen owing to disputes as to rent and sureties, and an appeal was brought forward by the landlord against the rent fixed by the Land Commissioners. Until the appeal, which was still pending, was settled the matter could not be proceeded with.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, with a view to the greater usefulness of the Post Office Savings Bank, he would undertake to bring in a Bill, during the present Session, to extend the limit of amount that can be legally deposited therein within any current year, and also to extend the limit of amount that may stand to the credit of any depositor in the said Post Office Savings Bank?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.) (who replied) said, that the Postmaster General was not at present able to give any undertaking in regard to this matter. A proposal of this kind was introduced into the last Parliament, and he might remind the hon. Member that it was strongly opposed on both sides of the House. The subject would, however, receive his consideration.

BRITISH MUSEUM—DISMISSAL OF WILLIAM BRIGHTWELL.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked the honourable Member for Staffordshire (North Western Division), as a Junior Lord of the Treasury, If he could state what were the acts of insubordination alleged as a cause of William Brightwell's dismissal from his employment as a gardener at the British Museum; what were the dates of such acts; whether any complaints in regard to idleness or insubordination had been made against him before he gave evidence at Bow Street Police Court; what was the evidence of the alleged idleness assigned as the cause of his dismissal; and, will he lay the evidence on both cases before the House?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.), in reply, said, that there had been complaints with regard to Brightwell before he had given evidence at Bow Street Police Court. The Earl of Morley had considered the case, and fully indorsed the decision of his Predecessor at the Office of First Commissioner of Works.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked whether William Brightwell was not several weeks out of employment after his arbitrary dismissal, and whether employment was not given to him out of compassion at the House of Commons at the instance of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals?

MR. LEVESON GOWER said, Brightwell was now employed at the House of Commons, and might have been so employed immediately on his dismissal from the British Museum if he had chosen. The interval between his dismissal and employment at the House of Commons was due to no fault of the authorities. He was now employed at a lower rate of remuneration. The matter had been thoroughly investigated by the First Commissioner of Works, and upon that investigation he took his stand. He must ask the House to take it from him that no partiality of any kind whatever had been brought to the consideration of this question.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (SCOTLAND)—DUES AT GIRVAN HARBOUR.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the condition of the harbour of Girvan, in Ayrshire, and to the complaints of fishermen that heavy dues are exacted from them under the Provisional Order granted for the construction of the harbour; the original condition being that a depth of four feet would be maintained at low water, whereas the depth at low water does not now exceed two feet, that portions of the quay have fallen in, and that the harbour is in an unsafe condition; and, if he would take immediate steps to inquire into the case, and have the defects complained of remedied?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside), in reply, said, that the complaint to which the hon. Member referred had only lately been brought under his notice, and he had given instructions to have it inquired into.

THE MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL.

MR. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that the Board of Trade Report on the Manchester Ship Canal Bill states that—

> "The conditions contained in Clause 3 of the present Bill are in accordance with Standing Order 167;"

and, whether it is intended to extend in future Standing Order 167, which is explicitly confined to Railway, Tramway, and Subway Companies, to other Bills?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside), in reply, said, he was aware that the Report of the Board of Trade stated, and with perfect accuracy, that the conditions contained in Clause 3 of the Manchester Ship Canal Bill were in accordance with those contained in Standing Order 167. He had no intention of proposing to extend the Standing Order to other Bills.

MR. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in consequence of the decision of the House on the Second Reading of the Bill authorising the Manchester Ship Canal Company to pay interest out of capital, he intends to take steps to amend Standing Order No. 167, so that it may apply to Companies other than Railway, Tramway, or Subway Companies; and, if so, whether Standing Order No. 156 will still hold good, or whether he intends to amend the Joint Stock Companies' Acts, so as to abrogate the rule that no dividend shall be payable except out of the profits arising from the business of the Company?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside), in reply, said, he had already stated that he did not propose to extend Standing Order 167 to other Bills. Standing Order 156 would still hold good, inasmuch as it did not appear to him to have any bearing upon the question. He had no intention of amending the Joint Stock Companies Act, so as to abrogate the rule that no dividends should be payable except out of the profits arising out of the business of the Company.

ENFIELD SMALL ARMS FACTORY—DISMISSAL OF WORKMEN.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE (Middlesex, Enfield) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true, as stated in a telegram exhibited in this House yesterday, that—

> "Notwithstanding recent telegrams from War Office, sixty viewers and ninety workmen were discharged from the barrel department of the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield today;"

and, whether there is any foundation for the rumour, which the same telegram says is prevalent there, that one thousand hands in similar small batches will shortly be discharged?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): In answer to my noble Friend, I am unaware of the existence of the telegram referred to, and I do not know how such a telegram came to be exhibited in the House. No discharges have taken place at Enfield, and none are at present contemplated. On inquiry, I find that a few men have been temporarily put out of work in consequence of the part of the manufacturing process in which they were engaged being for the moment too far in advance of the rest. This may be the origin of the report.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—POLLING ARRANGEMENTS.

SIR HENRY MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Lincolnshire, Brigg) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that at the last general election some voters were prevented from exercising the franchise, and very many others were put to most serious inconvenience by the very long distances they had to walk to the poll; and, whether he intends to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to the appointment of polling places in counties?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) (who replied) said: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that I am not aware that any complaints have reached the Home Office with regard to the inconvenient arrangement of the polling districts during the last election. The polling districts in counties are fixed by Courts of Quarter Sessions; and they are the authority to whom any representations should be addressed. I can say nothing now as to any intention to legislate on the subject.

ST. JOHN AND ST. JAMES, CLERKENWELL.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Middlesex House of Detention and the Middlesex House of Correction, both situate in the parish of St. John and St. James, Clerkenwell, and occupying an area of about eleven acres, are no longer wanted for the purposes of prisons; and, if so, whether the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury will, in accordance with Clause 3 of "The Houses of the Working Classes Act, 1885," recommend Her Majesty, without further delay, to sell and convey that site, or any part or parts thereof, to the Metropolitan Board of Works, at a fair market price, for the purposes of the said Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) (who replied) said, he had answered an identical Question the other day. He was now considering what was the best means of disposing of the sites under the Act of Parliament, and no unnecessary delay would be allowed to take place.

ARMY—SURPLUS STORES—THE PLANT OF THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Schedule of railway plant, stores, and other material purchased for the Suakin and Berber railway now lying at Woolwich and other places; if he can state approximately its cost; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to dispose of it; and, if so, how, and when?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I should have no objection to present a Return of the Suakin and Berber railway plant, now lying at Woolwich and other places, if the hon. Member moves for it; but he will know, from his own experience at the Treasury, that the interest in and value of these voluminous and detailed Returns are rarely proportioned to the great cost and trouble their preparation entails. The approximate cost of these materials has been £320,000; and it is proposed to use them as opportunity occurs in constructing any railways that may be required for military or War Department purposes.

BOARD OF TRADE—REPORT OF THE LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINANTS COMMITTEE.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON (Liverpool, West Derby) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Report of the Trinity House, on the experiments made at South Foreland, to ascertain the best illuminant for lighthouses has been objected to by shipping authorities, harbour boards, and others, on the ground that its conclusions are seriously erroneous, and that the experiments were not fairly made; and, whether the Board of Trade, in view of the correspondence which has taken place between that Board and such shipping and other authorities, will refer the report for examination to some competent scientific gentlemen quite independent of the Trinity House, and will submit their observations thereon to the House?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): The only person who has, so far as I know, objected to the Trinity House Report, on the ground that its conclusions are seriously erroneous, and that the experiments were not fairly made, is Mr. J. R. Wigham, the well-known gas engineer and manufacturer, of Dublin. Applications —five in all—have been received from certain harbour authorities and shipowners asking for inquiry into Mr. Wigham's statements, but expressing no opinion as to the conclusions arrived at, or the manner in which the experiments were conducted. I have to-day received a Report, which I have not yet been able to read, from Mr. A. G. Vernon Harcourt, F.R.S., who, at the request of the Board of Trade, was present at many of the experiments, and who is a competent scientific authority, and quite independent of the Trinity House. I also expect Reports from the representatives of some Foreign Governments who attended the experiments. Until these Reports are considered, I am not in a position to come to any final decision upon the points at issue between Mr. Wigham and the Trinity House. The Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses advise me that they concur in the conclusions of the Trinity House Report; and their engineers, who have had several opportunities of witnessing them, report that, in their opinion, the experiments have been conducted in a spirit of the most perfect fairness and impartiality to all parties.

NAVY—REDUCTION OF DOCKYARD EMPLOYES.

In reply to Mr. PULESTON (Devonport),

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT) (Oldham) said, that there was no intention of making any reduction.

SCARCITY OF EMPLOYMENT—THE RETURN.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR inquired, Whether the Returns relating to the prevalence of distress would be in the hands of Members in time for the discussion of the Motion of the hon. Member for East Leeds (Mr. Dawson)?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.), in reply, said that the Return had already been laid on the Table "in dummy." The greater part of the information had been for some time in the printer's hands; but he was still waiting for some important replies. He hoped, in the course of a day or two, to be enabled to place the whole of the information in the possession of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £31,997, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I have given Notice of an Amendment to this Vote, and I do not know whether the Vote itself is not capable of a still larger reduction than that which I am about to propose. The Committee will see that the Vote is divided into three heads—for palaces in the occupation of Her Majesty, palaces partly in the occupation of Her Majesty, and palaces not in the occupation of Her Majesty. Now, in regard to the first head—namely, the palaces in the occupation of Her Majesty, they may be looked upon as national monuments, and therefore ought to be maintained, although, with respect to Buckingham Palace, I do not see why there should be a large Estimate for maintaining it, seeing that it is generally empty. I do not find, however, that there is any Estimate for Buckingham Palace, although there is one for the Royal Mews at Pimlico. I do not know what is in that Royal Mews; but I suppose it is horses, and that it contains those cream-coloured horses which only come out when Parliament meets and there is a Conservative Government in Office. The item which appears in the Estimate for the Royal Mews at Pimlico certainly appears to be a large sum. The next item is for Windsor Home Park, and the sum put down for that is £1,020. Now, I presume that this Home Park produces something; but there is no statement in regard to what it produces. Surely it goes to somebody, and I would ask to whom? It seems to me quite ridiculous that we should have to pay for maintaining the Home Park, and that the results of the expenditure upon the Home Park should not go into the Public Treasury. Then there is a sum in regard to Windsor Royal Kitchen Gardens. [An hon. Member: No.] An hon. Gentleman says "No;" but here is an item for the cost—£217. I am not aware that the country gets anything in return from these Windsor Kitchen Gardens. If people have vegetable gardens, let them pay for them. Then there is a sum of £341 for Frogmore House and Grounds. They cannot be said to be in the personal occupation of Her Majesty, and I think there must be some mistake about that. The same remark applies to White Lodge, Richmond Park. I should like to know whether Her Majesty ever goes there, and what portion of the year she spends there? Next we come to the palaces partly in the occupation of Her Majesty. St. James's Palace is one of them, and as there are State rooms there, I suppose we must allow that item. I come next to the palaces not in the occupation of Her Majesty; and the first item is an additional Vote for St. James's Palace, for the residence of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cambridge, for Clarence House, and for other residences of Members of the Royal Family. That Estimate amounts to £1,622. I find, further, that the Vote includes items for rent. I certainly do not know why rent should be paid for portions of the Royal Palaces; but there is an item here of rent—£440, and another item of £212, and two items for fuel, gas, and water—£3,678 and £290. Of course, Clarence House is technically regarded as part of St. James's Palace. But the House has provided for the Duke of Edinburgh, who has £25,000 a-year; and it seems to me that when the House has given him £25,000 per annum, and provided him with a house, it is perfectly preposterous that he should call upon us to keep the house in repair, and pay his gas and water rates. The next item is for Kensington Palace. The same remarks apply to that. One of the Royal Family lives there, and there is a charge of £218 for fuel and water, making the total Estimate for Kensington Palace £1,034. The next item is Hampton Court Palace; and I think we ought to allow that, because it is more of a National Palace than anything else, and possesses picture galleries which are thrown open to the public. The next item is Kew Palace and Kew Buildings at Kew Green, and Kew Royal Observatory. I make no objection to those items; but the next is an item for Hampton Court Stud House. I have more than once asked Questions with regard to that establishment. I presume that a stud is productive, and if we have to pay for it, I think we ought to have some foals there. Where do the foals go? Nobody has ever yet been able to give me a reason why we should keep up that stud-house, or explained what benefit we derive from keeping it up. We do not get a foal; and nobody who understood business would have a stud of that sort. We have to keep the stud and maintain the building, and yet we derive no benefit whatever from it. The next item I make no objection to—namely, Military Knights' Houses, Windsor Castle. It is only right to allow that. But now I come to an item for Pembroke Lodge, Thatched House, and East Sheen Cottage, Richmond Park, Bushey House Gardens and Stables, Upper Lodge and Paddocks, Hawthorne Lodge and Hawthorne Cottage, Waylands, and the Park Carpenters' Cottages in Bushey Park. Now, I do not know who lives in these houses; but they are all provided for under the head of Royal Palaces. At any rate, I do not see the necessity for keeping up these Palaces merely for the pleasure of spending large sums of money upon maintaining them. I suppose that certain persons are allowed to live in them; but I do not know who they are. It is only reasonable that with a Monarchy we should have a Palace in London, and another in the country. But why keep up a number of Palaces which are not in the occupation of Her Majesty, or even of Her Majesty's Family, for which we are called upon, year after year, to vote considerable sums of money? Let them be sold or let; but do not let us waste our money in keeping them up. I have no doubt my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury will be able to explain the reasons for keeping up these Palaces; but, in the meantime, I beg to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £8,274. That will include the items for those portions of St. James's Palace not occupied by Her Majesty, but used as residences by the Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke of Edinburgh, Kensington Palace, Kew Palace, Hampton Court Stud House, Windsor Kitchen Gardens, &c. So far as Kew Gardens are concerned, I have often been to Kew, but I never saw the Palace; but it is a red brick house, I am told.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £23,723, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Maintenance and Repair of Royal Palaces."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.): My hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) asks what is the reason why we should maintain these establishments? Now, the reason why we should maintain them is, that an arrangement was made, upon Her Majesty's accession to the Throne, by which a considerable reduction of the Civil List was effected on the understanding that the Palaces and Pleasure Grounds belonging to the Sovereign were to be maintained and kept up at the cost of the nation. I see that the Civil List was reduced, first of all, from £1,750,000 to £510,000, and then, in 1838-9, it was still further reduced to £339,000. As far as I can see, we have really no option in the matter, because we have entered into an undertaking to maintain these Royal Palaces. With regard to the particular items to which my hon. Friend has called attention, the first is the Royal Mews at Pimlico. Now, I do not know whether my hon. Friend is aware that the building in question is of great size, and that it necessarily involves a great deal of expenditure to keep it up. He asks if it is used for horses? Of course, from its title, he must know that it is used for horses. There are no less than 100 horses employed in the Royal service, lodged there, and there are also 230 persons quartered in the building. I do not think, therefore, that the Vote for the Royal Mews can be looked upon as excessive. Then, in regard to the Kitchen Gardens at Windsor, I do not know whether my hon. Friend objects to the maintenance of these Royal Kitchen Gardens, or to the sum proposed for that purpose.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I object to their maintenance altogether, as a rule.

Mr. LEVESON GOWER: Well, the Gardens in question come within the grounds of the Royal Palaces which were undertaken to be provided for by the arrangement of the Civil List, to which I have already referred. They supply the Royal Palaces, to which they are attached, with fruit and vegetables. Then, with regard to St. James's Palace, my hon. Friend objects to that part of the Vote which is required for the maintenance of portions of the Palace occupied by the Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke of Edinburgh. With regard to Clarence House, I wish to point out that the Duke of Edinburgh has spent a considerable sum of money from his own private resources in improving and repairing this residence. I have no doubt that that is a circumstance the Committee will take into consideration in coming to a decision on the matter. Then, with regard to Hampton Court Stud House, the hon. Member seems to think that a stud house is a source of profit to the owners of it. There are many hon. Members, however, who will agree with me when I say that an establishment of this kind is not always a profitable one to maintain. This establishment is under the management of the Master of the Horse; and as the hon. Member is anxious to know what becomes of the foals which are reared there, I promise, for the information of the hon. Member and in order to satisfy his curiosity, to make inquiry, so that it may be seen what is done with these animals. In reference to the objection raised with respect to Frogmore, I have to inform the hon. Member that it is used for the reception of Her Majesty's guests when Windsor Castle is full. The other residences referred to come under the head of "Grace and Favour Residences"—that is to say, houses as to which Her Majesty may exercise the right of allowing to be occupied by some Member of the Royal Family.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): There appears to be some slight misconception, either in my own mind or in that of the hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the Committee. I understand him to say that the Civil List was reduced very much on the accession of Her Majesty to the Throne. I have gone into this question over and over again; and I have now to point out that the reduction mentioned was purely fictive, and was obtained by omitting items which were formerly included in those going to make up the Civil List and transferring them to other places where they appear in the accounts. Not only has there been no reduction at all, but there has been an absolute increase. This fact was illustrated by the speech of the hon. Member for North-West Staffordshire (Mr. Leveson Gower) who has just sat down. The Civil List is now put down at £385,000; but that result can only be arrived at by omitting a large number of items, amounting to several hundred thousand pounds, which were formerly included in the Civil List. At first the Civil List included the whole Civil List expenses of the country. At present it includes the allowance to Her Majesty; but the other costs of Her Majesty and of the Royal Family, which were formerly included in it, are now separated from it, so that the Civil List stands at a higher figure now than it has ever done since the Revolution of 1688, with the exception of one extravagant period during the Reign of George III.

Mr. RYLANDS (Burnley): I agree entirely with the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Staffordshire (Mr. Leveson Gower) as to the condition under which Her Majesty's Civil List was settled. I am quite aware that these Palaces in the occupation of Her Majesty, and others not in her occupation, are charges which fall upon the public Exchequer under an Act of Parliament. I, therefore, agree that the Committee are not in a position to repudiate the obligations which were incurred at the time the Civil List was settled. An idea prevails, however, and I think a very proper idea, that it might be well that another opportunity should be taken—I hope the day may still be long distant on the demise of the Crown—of reconsidering, in a new Civil List, the conditions under which the present Civil List was settled. I think it would be open to the Parliament of that day to make new arrangements which, without being detrimental to the Sovereign, may be of great advantage to the taxpayers of this country. My complaint is not exactly upon the ground taken up by my hon. Friend who has moved the reduction of the Vote (Mr. Labouchere); but it has reference to the excessive charges always incurred in the maintenance of Royal Palaces and buildings in the occupation of individuals who contribute nothing to meet the expenses of their maintenance, but who, through a Department of the State, come to the House of Commons and ask for payment from the taxpayers. I would ask hon. Members whether, on looking through the columns giving the details of the Vote for the ordinary maintenance and repair of these buildings, they have not been struck by the fact that private buildings in the country never cost anything like the amount of expenditure incurred in the ordinary maintenance, nor would public buildings involve such an extravagant outlay if the persons enjoying the buildings had to pay for the repairs themselves. I remember, in a former discussion upon this matter, that an eminent authority upon such questions said most distinctly that great mansions belonging to the nobility never cost anything like the amount expended in the maintenance of the Royal Palaces; and he pointed out that the money voted by the House for these purposes was altogether excessive. I do not know whether my hon. Friend who defends this Vote has really any control over the expenditure in these matters; and I should like to know whether there is any hon. Gentleman upon the Treasury Bench who is prepared to get up and say to the Committee that he accepts the responsibility of this expenditure? Can the Treasury justify the expenditure, or will they tell us that they have secured a proper control over it? I should certainly like to see some hon. Gentleman get up and take this responsibility upon himself. My hon. Friend the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) alluded to the Royal Mews at Pimlico. The amount asked for the maintenance of the Royal Mews is £1,220 for ordinary repairs and maintenance. Now, that seems to me to be a preposterous sum. The hon. Gentleman told us—what is, no doubt, the fact—that these Royal Mews are not only places for keeping horses in, but that they are really a private rabbit warren, in which a large number of persons live. I think it is altogether wrong that the House of Commons should be called upon, year after year, to vote large sums of money for the maintenance of the Royal Mews. Therefore, if my hon. Friend goes to a division upon the rejection of this Vote I shall support him, simply on the ground that I believe this large sum for the maintenance and repair of this building is an excessive sum; and I have no hesitation in saying that if proper pressure were brought to bear upon the Government we should have the expenditure reduced. My hon. Friend who defends the Vote represents, I presume, the First Commissioner of Works. Now, I venture to maintain that the First Commissioner of Works ought to be in this House. The policy of putting the First Commissioner of Works, as head of one of the great spending Departments, in a House which does not control the Expenditure of the country, is altogether contrary to the course which should be pursued by a Government anxious to promote economy. I see the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) in his place; he was First Commissioner of Works under the late Government, and I challenge him to give the explanation I am now asking for. However economical the House of Commons may feel inclined to be, if we are to have the heads of the great spending Departments in the House of Lords, where the taxpayers are not represented at all, we shall never have any real control over the expenditure. I have no desire to carry the matter further; but although I take other grounds than those of my hon. Friend for supporting the reduction of the Vote, if my hon. Friend presses his Motion to a division I shall certainly go with him, as a protest against what

I believe to be an unnecessary expenditure.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 125; Noes 240: Majority 115.—(Div. List, No. 27.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I wish to ask a question in regard to one item in this Vote—namely, the item for fuel, gas, and water on page 3. The sum put down for that service is £3,678, as compared with a total amount last year of £3,858, and showing an apparent saving of £180. Now, as a matter of fact, the year before last this item figured as £1,981, and the expenditure, as shown by the last Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, amounted to £1,842; so that the present Estimate is almost precisely double the actual expenditure of two years ago. When I come to examine the items set forth in subsequent pages in the Estimate, I find that the item for Windsor Castle was last year only £470, but is raised now, without any explanation, to £1,083, or something like 250 per cent, and another item for Hampton Court Palace, which was last year £373, has now suddenly jumped up to £1,262; being between three and four times as much as last year. The difference between these two items is very considerable, and so startling that before the Vote is passed I hope the hon. Gentleman in charge of it will give some explanation to the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin): Does the hon. Member move to reduce the Vote?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I do not wish to take that course if any reasonable explanation can be given.

The LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. Leveson Gower) (Stafford, N.W.): I must remind the hon. Member (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that the charge for fuel, gas, and water constantly varies, and that must necessarily be the case. To some extent the variation may be attributed to the varying cost of the materials, although, no doubt, more gas and fuel may have been used, and more money expended, in one year than in another. I would, however, remind the hon. Member that this sub-head shows a reduction of £180 upon the Estimate of last year, and endeavours will be made to reduce the amount still further. Efforts have already been made to increase the sources of the supply of water, and I am happy to say that in some instances it has been found possible to do so. I am sure that every endeavour will be made to improve our resources in that respect.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I am sure that the hon. Gentleman has done his best to vindicate the Vote; but I am simply asking him for an explanation in regard to extraordinary charges contained in it—namely, the charge for Windsor Castle, which was last year £470, and is now £1,033, and the charges for Hampton Court Palace, which were last year £373, and are now £1,262. Now, allowing the Board of Works the utmost latitude which the most generous Treasury could possibly sanction, I do think that such a remarkable increase for these two services require some special explanation. So far from the Vote being reduced, although the figures are as the hon. Member has stated, yet they do not quite tally with the Estimates of last year; because, although the sum last year was put down at £3,358, the sum expended was really only £2,250, so that, instead of there being a diminution of £180 this year, there is really an increase over the Estimates of last year by £1,488.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): My hon. Friend is quite correct in saying that there has been an increase during the past two years. The expenditure in 1880 was about £2,000; in 1881, £1,800; in 1882, £1,900; in 1883, £2,000; and last year, £2,250. It will be seen, therefore, that the sum has constantly varied. But this year the additional expenditure, I am informed, is in connection with Hampton Court Palace, and it has been occasioned by the improvements in the supply of gas; and in making better provision against fire by securing a more abundant supply of water it has been found necessary to construct large tanks.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: What is the explanation in regard to the increase in connection with Windsor Castle?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I can offer no explanation upon that point; but it seems to me that the whole Vote for Windsor Castle is less this year than last.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): There are some small items here which, although they do not amount to a great deal, require, I think, a little explanation. I refer to the items for rent. It is difficult to understand how £10, in the shape of rent, has to be paid for Windsor Castle; £25 for Windsor Home Park, and other sums of the same character in regard to the other Palaces and Pleasure Grounds. I would, therefore, venture to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury to give the Committee some explanation in reference to these items in the Vote. There are some other items of rent which come on later in the Estimates, and probably the explanation given in reference to these items will afford some explanation as to those which still remain.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY: I have no doubt that the Members of Her Majesty's Government who have defended the Vote have given all the explanation which they are able to give, or of which they are possessed; but I hardly think that hon. Members will be satisfied with the explanation given, and I think the replies we have got have proved very conclusively how useless it is for the Committee to discuss the Estimates in the form in which they are now presented to us. If we call in question some particularly glaring instances of extravagance, some outlay which hon. Members cannot understand, the Secretary to the Treasury makes the best explanation he can, and says he will inquire into the matter; but nothing more is ever heard of the subject after the Vote is passed. We had a signal example of that in the annual Question put by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) respecting the foals reared at the Hampton Court Stud. I believe there are some foals, because I have seen notices of the sale of them in the newspapers. I would point out to the Committee how much more advantageous it would be if there were a Select Committee of this House sitting in one of the rooms upstairs who would call before them the heads of Departments, and all who are responsible for the spending of money, so that they might be able to give some satisfactory explanation of the different items of public Expenditure included in the Votes. If no satisfactory explanation of the Expenditure were forthcoming, then the Committee of Supply could, with confidence, disallow the Vote. At the present moment hon. Members are very much in the dark. There is a strong desire on the part of the Committee to give full effect to principles of economy in the Expenditure of the country; but when we question a particular item, and point out its extravagance, the Secretary to the Treasury and his assistants can give us no explanation. What we have been experiencing during the last half-hour forms a conclusive proof of the inability of the Committee to discuss the Votes which are brought before them, and shows the necessity of having a Select Committee appointed by the House to examine the Estimates beforehand with power to call the head of every Department before them.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): Perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite the late First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) will come to the assistance of the Government, and be able to give the information asked for. The right hon. Gentleman, who has always performed in a satisfactory manner all the work he has undertaken in the House, may have better information in regard to the items included in this Vote than hon. Gentlemen now upon the Treasury Bench have yet had time to attain. But there is another suggestion I would also make, and that is that it would be well if in some things a Liberal Government would take a leaf out of the book of their Conservative opponents. Some years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith) was Secretary to the Treasury, he made a statement on going into Committee of Supply. In introducing the Estimates the right hon. Gentleman made a long and general statement, pointing out the difference and variations made in the Estimates for the year; and I have no hesitation in saying that the explanations which the right hon. Gentleman gave were most useful to the Committee, and tended materially to shorten the discussion of the Estimates in Committee. A Liberal Government had never adopted that plan; but, in my opinion, it is the right and proper plan to pursue, and it is the plan adopted in every other country with which I am acquainted. It is an invariable practice in other countries to explain the Civil Service Estimates; and I venture to hope that before another year comes round, if Her Majesty's Government are still in Office, the Secretary to the Treasury will undertake to make a statement to the Committee. It would be an economy of time, because the Committee would at once have pointed out to them all the heads of Expenditure on which there is any variation, and the Committee would be able to do their work more thoroughly than they can do now. As to the appointment of a Committee to go through the Estimates beforehand——

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: The question raised by the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) is altogether apart from this Vote, and it would not be regular to pursue it further.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID: Then I will do no more than express a hope that the matter will be considered by Her Majesty's Government; and I trust that my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) will be able to give an explanation in regard to these Estimates, if Her Majesty's Government are unable to do so.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I had no time to rise before the hon. Member rose himself, immediately after the hon. Gentleman the Member for Forfarshire (Mr. J. W. Barclay) sat down, or else I intended to rise at once to give an explanation, as far as I could, of the points to which attention has been called. The explanation of the term "rent" referred to by the hon. Member for North St. Pancras (Mr. T. H. Bolton) is a very simple one. These are old quit-rents, and the items appear in the Estimates year after year. There is no question as to the liability of the country to pay them. With regard to the general question, I can only express my entire agreement with the hon. Member for Forfarshire and the hon. Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid). So long as the present slovenly, haphazard, inconclusive, unsatisfactory, extravagant, and foolish system is adopted, I can only do my best in answering such questions as may be put to me. I hope the House will discover some better mode of dealing with the Estimates; and, for my own part, I should be very glad to make such a general statement as that which has been referred to as having been made some years ago by the right hon. Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith), when he was Secretary to the Treasury.

MR. PLUNKET (Dublin University): In answer to the challenge of my hon. Friend the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid), I must confess that I do not bear in my recollection all the items which were brought under my notice when I was First Commissioner of Works, and which I was required to consider in their preliminary stages before they were ready to be submitted to the House. If the hon. Member could only see the piles upon piles of Papers in the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Works connected with these Estimates, he would, I am sure, excuse me from bearing the whole of them in my memory. These piles of Papers are sent up to the Treasury along with our request that investigation should be made, especially when there is any increase proposed in any particular Vote, or even when there is a proposal for a reduction. The Treasury, I need scarcely say, applies a very strict and severe scrutiny to any proposal for an increase, although they are always ready to take immediate advantage of any opportunity for effecting a reduction. I can only say that while I was in the Office of Works all the Estimates that were sent up to the Treasury were most closely, and even most severely scrutinized; and I regret that it is not in my power to enter into details in regard to every item which may now be subjected to the criticism of the Committee.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): Perhaps the Committee will allow me to explain. I had no desire to cast any reproach against my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury; but what I meant to say was that the Secretary to the Treasury, having the work of the Office of Works thrown upon him suddenly, and in addition to his own, could hardly be expected to know the details of the work of the Department as well as my right hon. and learned Friend opposite, who was in Office at the time the Estimates were prepared. I appealed to my right hon. and learned Friend, because I believed that he was in the best position to give information to the Committee; but, in doing so, I had no desire to reproach my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury, who does his work so ably and so admirably.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £1,625, Marlborough House.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £112,619, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I am afraid I shall have to ask the Committee to divide twice on this Vote for the convenience of the Metropolitan Members, because they are exceedingly ready to suggest and support economy in the Estimates when it does not specially affect their constituents; but on this particular point they may be inclined to support the Treasury, seeing that the general public are bound to pay for the maintenance of Parks which ought to be paid for out of the rates contributed by the inhabitants of London. I will take the liberty, in the first place, of moving a reduction of the Vote by the sum equivalent to the amount now charged upon the Treasury for the maintenance of certain public Parks in London—that sum being £50,403. I deduct from the sum inserted in the Estimates for these Parks a sum of £6,000, which was agreed to in the last Parliament, for the erection of a statue to the late Duke of Wellington at Hyde Park Corner. This is a very old question, which has been frequently raised in this House in the last Parliament. The justice of charging the cost of the London Parks on the Treasury was never admitted by hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Ministerial Bench. What those Gentlemen always said was, that they were going to bring in a Bill for the proper government of London, and that, when they did so, these charges would be done away with, or altered in some way or other. However, they never succeeded in passing the Bill, and I do not know that the Government are going to bring in a London Government Bill just now; and, therefore, I do not see why we should wait until we are in a condition to pass that Bill. We know that there are Parks all over the country, and that the inhabitants of most of our great towns pay for their own Parks; and I see no reason why the inhabitants of the whole country — England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales—should pay for the maintenance of such Parks as those at Kennington and Battersea. It is sometimes asserted that although the country ought not to pay for maintaining Kennington, Victoria, and Battersea Parks, they ought, nevertheless, to pay for Hyde Park, St. James's Park, The Green Park, and other Parks which, in some mysterious way, are said to be National Parks. Now, I do not know, even taking Hyde Park, that it is a National Park. I know perfectly well that if this House were to say that the Business of Parliament should be taken away from London, and some other town should be made the Metropolis of the country, that whatever place was selected as the Metropolis would, as a *quid pro quo*, be most ready to undertake the maintenance of its own Parks. The fact that this is the Metropolis attracts a large number of persons to London, and the inhabitants of London get an immense benefit from being the source of attraction. I have said that this is a subject which has often been discussed in this House; and I think I may appeal to Conservative Members, as well as to hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, that they ought to register at once, in the new Parliament, a protest against these continuous demands on the Treasury for what ought to be paid by London itself.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £62,216, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I must say that I am rather disappointed at the appearance of this Vote in the Estimates of the present year. We have heard in former times most useful disquisitions on this subject from the lips of the hon. Gentleman who is now Secretary to the Treasury. When the hon. Gentleman occupied a position of greater freedom and lesser responsibility, there was no person who so often inculcated the sound and useful lesson that London should bear its own expenses. Only last year, I believe, the hon. Member expressed his regret that he had not yet succeeded in impressing his Colleagues with his own economical views; and if the reading of *Hansard* could have any effect in convincing them, there would be no more convincing arguments even than those of the hon. Gentleman himself. The other night we had this question raised upon the Crofters' Bill, and we heard the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan), and other Members of the Government, lay down, with great emphasis, the important principle that, even for the purpose of carrying out recommendations of Royal Commissions, it would be unfair to tax the inhabitants of Dorsetshire and Devonshire for the expenses of benefits to be conferred upon Aberdeen and the Highlands of Scotland. Then, I think that, at all events, if that sound economic doctrine is to be adopted in connection with Scotland, we ought to know that it will be equally applied in the case of London; and if it is held unjust to tax London and the Midland Counties for the benefit of the Scotch crofters, then I beg to protest against the whisky and the tea of the Scotch crofters being taxed for the maintenance of the public Parks in the wealthiest City in the world.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): As representing a large constituency in Lancashire, I think there is a great deal to be said for the principle maintained by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). No doubt, there are some of the Royal Parks—such as Hyde Park, the Green Park, and St. James's Park—which are accessible to, and enjoyed by, the inhabitants of every part of the Kingdom when they come to London, as so many of them are in the habit of doing. Therefore, they have an interest in their maintenance. But there are included in this Vote other Parks which do not possess that national character, but are purely local pleasure grounds, which ought to be maintained by the population for whose benefit they have been made. Therefore, I certainly think there is a great deal to be said for the principle maintained by the hon. Member opposite; but, at the same time, I think it would be most injudicious for the Committee to deal with a question like this on an Estimate framed on the spur of the moment by any hon. Member. If there is to be a redistribution in regard to the maintenance of the Parks of the Metropolis upon something like a fair principle, I think the question ought to be deliberately considered by the House, and that it should not be done by hon. Members who are not at all responsible for the Estimates. I think it would be trifling with the Business of the country if we were to interfere in this haphazard manner with expenditure which has been voted year after year. At the same time, I consider that the question is one which might fairly be considered by a Select Committee, with a view of placing the Expenditure of the country, in this and other respects, upon a more fair principle, and upon one which would not be unjust to the ratepayers of the rest of the Kingdom. Therefore, while I sympathize with the hon. Member in regard to the principle he advances—that the whole of the Kingdom, which maintains its own Parks and Pleasure Grounds, should not be taxed for the Metropolis—I think it is quite impossible to deal with the matter in the manner proposed by the hon. Member.

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.): While sympathizing with certain of the views put forward by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) and the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), with respect to the maintenance of these Parks, I must point out that there are two special kinds of Parks embraced in the Vote. One which the hon. Member for North Manchester (Sir James Fergusson) has called national, or Royal Parks—such as Hyde Park, the Green Park, and St. James's Park, which stand in a different category from the comparatively new Parks, like Battersea Park and Victoria Park. By the London Government Bill provision was made for throwing the cost of the maintenance of these Parks on the Metropolis; the others were more properly Royal Parks? Why are they Royal Parks? They are Royal Parks because they are Crown property, which have been strictly thrown open to the public.

Take the case of St. James's Park, for example. That Park was laid out in its present state by George IV., and thrown open to the public in 1827-8. The charge for those Parks was thrown upon the Votes by an Act of Parliament passed in 1851. I must say that I agree with the hon. Member for North Manchester that this is not the occasion for ventilating any proposal for instituting a great change of this kind in the Estimates connected not only with the Metropolis, but with the whole of the country. No doubt, some change will have to be considered before long; but I hope the hon. Member for Northampton will not press his Motion to a division.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I think my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere) ought to be grateful for the support which has been given to him from both sides of the House, a support based upon sound principles, and often enunciated by hon. Members now sitting on the Treasury Bench when they were independent Members, and which I have no doubt they are anxious to carry out. The object which the hon. Member for Northampton has in view is to place the charge for the maintenance of these Parks upon the Metropolis, and to remove it from the Estimates. I think that a very strong case has been shown why the Royal Parks should be supported by the Metropolis. No one can argue for a moment that the Royal Parks are not valuable as pleasure grounds for the Metropolis; and seeing that London has been relieved from any outlay of capital for the establishment of these Parks, surely it is only a moderate demand that London should be called upon to bear the expense of maintaining them. The hon. Member who has just sat down has urged that these Royal Parks may be more appropriately called National Parks; and he contends that they are valuable for people who reside in the country. But they are not valuable to the country in any genuine sense whatever. There is not one in a hundred who is able to enjoy them, and they ought not to be called upon to pay the expense of maintaining them. The inhabitants of London are, to all intents and purposes, the only persons who have any real enjoyment of them. People in the country cannot come to London without incurring a considerable amount of expense out of their own pockets, and that expenditure is made larger in consequence of their being called upon to contribute to the maintenance of these Royal Parks. As they have already paid largely for the privileges which they are supposed to enjoy when in London, I think the case is clear that out of the pockets of those residing in London should come the cost of the maintenance of the Parks. I do not think the Committee is called upon to be put off any longer with the old story that some day or other there is going to be a measure which will throw the cost of these Parks upon the Metropolis. I would point out another fact—these Parks, in the main, are situated in the West End of London, and the cost of their maintenance ought to come out of the pockets of the rich West Enders. Most of the Parks themselves are not within reach of the people who reside in the East End of London; and, therefore, the charge should be made to lie where it ought to lie, and in that case it would fall upon the rich, who are really the only persons who enjoy the Parks. We have now in this House a real and genuine popular representation, both in regard to town and country, and I think that we ought to undertake genuine economy in the administration of the affairs of the country; and I do not see that we could begin better than by dealing with partial charges like these. I shall, therefore, support the proposal of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton; and I trust that some steps will be taken by the Government to prevent in future charges of this character falling upon the Estimates. I am glad to see the Home Secretary in his place; and I trust that the whole burden of fixing these charges where they ought to be will not be placed on the shoulders of my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will be prepared to admit that there is really something in the complaint we make.

MR. HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): The hon. Member for North-West Staffordshire (Mr. Leveson Gower) has attempted to justify this expenditure by saying that these Parks are thrown open to the public. Now, I maintain that Kensington Gardens are not thrown open to the public in any sense of the word. They are closed in the winter months as early as 4, and even in the month of September at 6 o'clock; and, consequently, the public are excluded from them at a time which would be most convenient, pleasant, and suitable. I would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that the question of closing Kensington Gardens should be carefully considered. Other Parks and Pleasure Grounds are allowed to remain open much later; and I do not see why these grounds should be closed as early as 4 o'clock. If it is only a question of the time of the park-keepers, then I think they might be opened later, and allowed to remain open later.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy): As the question of Kensington Gardens has been raised I wish to say one word. I am not a Metropolitan Member, but I am a Metropolitan resident, and I should be quite prepared to bear my share if the expense of maintaining Kensington Gardens is thrown upon the parish of Kensington; but I think it should be only on the condition that the Gardens are properly kept up, and used for the recreation of the public. What I desire to call attention to is the shocking mortality among the trees in Kensington Gardens. All kinds of excuse have been made by the Department of Works, and we have been told that it is owing to the want of drainage, and one thing and another. I can testify, however, from my own personal observation, that nothing whatever has been done to stop the destruction of the trees during the past year, nor has a spade been put in to remedy the evil. I hope that some explanation will be given.

Mr. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): I hope that before the Committee goes to a division we shall have an opportunity of hearing the views of the Secretary to the Treasury upon the subject. It is well within my recollection how frequently he spoke in the last Parliament, and urged the great hardship of throwing the cost upon the country of institutions which were mainly for the advantage of the Metropolis. If I am not mistaken, I think that he strongly objected not very long ago to the expense of the removal of the Wellington Statue from Hyde Park Corner being thrown upon the general taxation of the country. I believe that the hon. Member made a speech on that occasion, in which he said that it was extremely hard the general taxation of the country should be applied to the particular benefit of the Metropolis; and he protested against the ratepayers outside London being taxed for the sole benefit and advantage of the Metropolis. Those were the views of my hon. Friend when he had not a seat upon the Treasury Bench, and I should be very glad to see him exercising his influence now to put a stop to such a state of things, which certainly did not commend itself to my hon. Friend when he sat in this part of the House. Therefore, before the Committee goes to a division I hope we shall have the advantage of the opinion which my hon. Friend now entertains on this matter.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.): I must say that, in my opinion, the whole amount of the outlay paid by the State for the purpose of maintaining the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens should fall upon the Metropolis. There can be no doubt that the existence of the Parks very considerably enhances the value of property in the immediate vicinity, and I think that some plan ought to be devised for the purpose of taxing the property which is really benefited for the expense of maintaining the Parks. Upon those who enjoy the advantages they confer the cost of maintenance should be thrown.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Childers) (Edinburgh, S.): There have been several subjects referred to in the course of the debate to which it will be hardly necessary for me to reply; in fact, I am unable to do so, because they are questions of pure detail, which do not come in any sense under my notice. I know nothing about the mortality among the trees—in Kensington Gardens, for instance—and I can say no more than that I have noticed it myself. I have certainly noticed the trees go off as the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) has described, and I have very much regretted it; but beyond the fact of having noticed the mortality I really know nothing. So, also, with regard to the closing of Kensington Gardens. The hon. Member says that they are opened too late and closed too early; but, if I remember rightly, that is a question which depends very materially upon the time of the year. I think it has always been the practice to close the Parks in accordance with certain rules—for instance, that they should not be open before sunrise nor after sunset; but it is a question with which I am not able to deal. As to the opinions of my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury, all I know is that he has often addressed the House, and I believe that he entertains at the present moment the views which I also entertain on these subjects—namely, that when we come to deal with the settlement of the Metropolis in something like an intelligent manner, and when the rest of the country, so far as local affairs are concerned, has been satisfactorily arranged, it will be very much fairer that the general Parks enjoyed by the inhabitants of London should be kept out of the income of the inhabitants of London. I entirely concur in that, and I believe it is also the opinion of my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury; indeed, my hon. Friend has expressed his views in that direction on more than one occasion pretty strongly. And now, with respect to the Royal Parks, allow me to say that in former years, up to a time not very long ago, the maintenance of the Parks did not fall upon the Estimates, but upon the Crown Revenue, and they were kept up without any Vote in the House of Commons; but afterwards a change was made, and instead of the expenditure in connection with the Parks being a deduction from the Revenue of the Crown Lands the gross amount of the Crown Revenue was paid into the Exchequer, and these charges were defrayed by Vote, so that they might be criticized from year to year by Parliament. That is the origin of the present arrangement, and it was formerly the practice not to defray any part of the expenditure for the Royal Parks by means of the Estimates. It was considered to be a legitimate charge upon the Crown Income; but it was ultimately thought better to pay a gross sum into the Exchequer, and impose the charges for the maintenance of the Parks upon the Estimates. I think that is a perfectly intelligible reason why the change was made; and I put it to the House that, as far as the Royal Parks are concerned, the general question raised by my hon. Friend does not apply. Now, I come to those Parks which do not stand in the same position as the Royal Parks—such as Battersea Park Victoria Park, and Kennington Park. These have nothing to with the Crown Revenue, and I entirely agree that they should be maintained from local sources—that is to say, that the expense for maintaining them ought to be charged on the localities, and not upon the Revenues of the country. But how do hon. Gentlemen propose to carry out their views? It would seem, from what has been expressed not long ago, that the Metropolitan Board of Works, to whom hon. Gentlemen would hand over the Parks, is hardly a proper Body to be charged with the duty of controlling them. I, myself, have been much impressed with the feeling expressed, that the Metropolitan Board of Works is moribund. If that is so, I do not see how it can be said that they should be invested with further powers and further duties; indeed, I think there has been a very strong opinion expressed against giving any further duties to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Well, Sir, there is at present no other authority who can take over the Parks but the Metropolitan Board of Works. So that it comes to this—that within a few weeks of its having been declared by a large majority that the Metropolitan Board of Works is moribund, we shall be required to pass an Act of Parliament handing over to them the control of these Parks. Therefore, I submit this to the opinion of the Committee—that it would not be wise to add to the powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works at the present time; and, consequently, that it would not be proper for us to pass, during the present Session of Parliament, an Act handing over these Parks to the Metropolitan Board of Works. Further, holding as I do the opinion that, under the settlement which must soon take place, the Parks should be under the control of a Body fairly representing the Metropolis, I deprecate their being handed over to the Metropolitan Board of Works; and I ask the Committee, pending the arrangements to be made, to vote for the amount of this Estimate.

MR. RYLANDS (Burnley): I should like to make a few remarks upon this Vote in connection with what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, because I think, with all respect for his great ability, that he has put this case before the Committee in a manner which is likely to divert the minds of hon. Members from the real facts of the case. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the Revenues of Crown property has nothing whatever to do with the question raised by the Amendment before the Committee. It is true the expenditure on the Parks, which before came from the Revenue of Crown property, has been put upon the Estimates, but the fact remains that the Parks are still Crown property; but I entirely dispute the deduction which the right hon. Gentleman would draw from that fact—namely, that it makes them occupy a position entirely different to the ordinary branches of expenditure. Before the time when the income of the property was handed over to the Exchequer a certain sum of money was devoted to the expenditure on the Parks; and my right hon. Friend says, no doubt truly, that it was thought better that that expenditure, instead of being hidden as it were by being deducted from the Crown Revenue, should be placed on the Estimates, and the larger sum brought to the credit of the Crown. But that, Sir, is no reason why we should not deal with the expenditure, as well as with any other charge upon the taxpayers of the country. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary knows very well that formerly the charges for the Diplomatic Service were paid in the same way; because the expenditure in connection with it was considered an affair of the Crown. The Foreign Ministers being Representatives of the Crown, Parliament did not vote their salaries; but it was decided that that large expenditure should no longer be concealed from the House of Commons, and accordingly a Vote was taken, and appeared in the Estimates. And, therefore, I maintain that we are just as much entitled to say, with regard to this expenditure on National Parks, that the cost of their maintenance shall fall upon the London ratepayers, as we have to say that the London ratepayers ought to support Battersea Park and others, and to say that we will no longer vote this money. If this Vote is refused, what would be the result? Why, it would be absolutely necessary to deal with the matter in some way or other, and legislation on the subject must follow, which would bring the cost of maintenance of the Parks on the population of the City of London. That would be putting the burden upon those who ought to bear it—that is to say, upon those who are immediately interested in maintaining the Parks, and taking it off those who are not immediately interested in maintaining them. Therefore, I trust hon. Members will have no difficulty whatever in voting against this expenditure, not for the purpose of doing away with the Parks, but in order to impress upon the Government to take such steps as may be necessary to throw the charge for maintaining them upon the right shoulders. If the right hon. Gentleman does not like the idea of giving the matter into the hands of the Metropolitan Board of Works, then I would point out that, at the present time, the Office over which my right hon. Friend presides administers the Police, and that they are supported, to a large extent, out of the rates in London; and I say to my right hon. Friend that if he will undertake to administer the Parks also, I, for one, will give him my support.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): It is all very well for hon. Members from the country to contend that the cost of maintaining these Parks should fall upon the London constituencies; but I should like to place before the Committee the view which the London constituencies take of this subject. Well, Sir, the London constituencies are of opinion that London is badly treated, both by the Government and the House of Commons, in this matter. First of all, London is the only large town in the Kingdom which has not a system of Municipal Government; and, therefore, I say that it is very unreasonable that you should try to throw the cost of maintaining these Parks upon London, at a time when they are not under the control of the people of London. At the present moment, the people of London have no more to do with controlling the expenditure for maintaining the Parks than the people of Bradford have. I think it would be right that the management of all the Parks should be thrown upon the great London Municipality which I hope will be created next year, and then I trust that a proper rate will be made upon the houses in the localities benefited by them. I say that it is not right to throw on the whole Metropolis the expenditure for Hyde Park, which is practically only enjoyed by persons who live within a limited area at the West End. In my opinion, there should be district rates for the maintenance of the Parks levied according to the districts which are benefited by them; and until that is done I think that the poorer districts of London, which are already overburdened with rates, have a right to say that we have no business to throw the expenditure upon them. My contention is, that, first, we should have an intelligent Body to control the London Parks; and, secondly, to apportion the expenditure upon them amongst those who ought to pay for them, because they benefit by them; and, as I have said, until that is brought about you have no right to say that the cost should be borne by the people of London. An hon. Member has referred to the Park at Bradford, and the Park at Manchester has also been referred to in support of the contention that the cost of maintenance should be thrown upon the localities; but I would remind the Committee that those Parks are under the control of Municipal Bodies and District Authorities, who can lay down rules with regard to them. The Royal Parks, on the other hand, are under the management of Rangers and other officers, who in no way consult the wishes of the people upon whom it is now proposed to throw the cost of maintenance; and I say it is unfair that the people of the Metropolis should be called upon to pay, as long as the control of the Parks remains in the hands of these officers. Such a proposal is contrary to all fairness, and, moreover, opposed to all the principles of legislation of late adopted in this House; and, therefore, I say it is the duty of Metropolitan Members to support the Vote as it stands upon the Estimates.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): I should like, on this Vote, to say that, in common with others on these Benches, I regard the suggestion of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), that the cost of maintaining the Royal Parks should be thrown upon the Metropolis, as amounting very nearly to a breach of faith. As we have been told by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, the Royal Parks were the property of the Crown. It was the same with the Royal Palaces, and, just as the Sovereign of the time allowed some Palaces to be occupied by Members of the Royal Family and others, the Sovereign allowed the Parks to be used by his faithful people. When the new arrangement came into operation the Royal Parks were handed over, like the Royal Palaces, to be maintained by Parliament; and as Parliament has accepted the Revenues of the Crown, so it is bound to pay for the Parks in the same way as it pays for the Palaces. The Parks were gifts of the Sovereign to the Metropolis, and as the nation has chosen to accept the Revenues of the Crown with regard to them, it is bound, in my opinion, to preserve those gifts. Of course, Sir, this is a defence of the principle under which the Royal Parks are maintained by Parliament, and it does not apply to the outlying Parks, such as those at Battersea and Kennington. If this Amendment goes to a division, I shall, however, vote against it, because I think it would be a great mistake to disturb the existing arrangements; but if any new Parks are made for London, Parliament should watch very closely any attempt to throw the expense of maintenance on Imperial funds. With regard to the suggestions of the hon. Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid), it seems to me perfectly right that if the Metropolis has to pay for the Parks it ought to have some voice in their management; but I think it would be very unfair if, as I understand the hon. Gentleman desires, the management of the Parks should rest with the large Municipality to be created some time or other by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, while the expense of maintaining them is borne alone by the districts in which they are situated. That proposal seems to me to be a confusion of two principles, centralization and decentralization.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I am gratified to hear that the views which I maintained when I sat below the Gangway are maintained there now, and that hon. Members who sit there are faithful to those views. I am not going to recede from a single opinion which I formerly held on those Benches; but, unfortunately, in those days I was as a voice crying in the wilderness, and upon the Amendments which I carried to a division the House of Commons more than once came to an opposite conclusion to that which I desired. Well, Sir, the Committee has had the Provincial view of this question stated by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and my hon. Friend the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid) has put the Metropolitan view; the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department has stated the Treasury view and the view of the Government as to the best way of dealing with this question; while what I may call the high Tory view of the case has been laid down by the noble Viscount who has just spoken. Under the circumstances, the decision rests with the Committee.

Sir ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I would ask those hon. Members who wish the charges for the Royal Parks to be thrown on the dwellers in London to answer this question—of what use are those Parks to the men of the poorer classes, and their wives and families, who live at a distance of a mile or a mile and a-half from them? They cannot use them, any more than those who live in Yorkshire, and therefore should not be rated to pay for them. I ask what is the area upon which hon. Gentlemen opposite demand that the charges for the maintenance of these Parks should fall? There is another point that I wish to bring under the notice of the Committee. The sums charged for Parks under this Estimate are not alone for London Parks. There are charges for Holyrood Park and Linlithgow Peel in Scotland. It seems to me a monstrous thing to put the charge for the Royal Parks upon the poor ratepayers and working-men of London alone, while the whole country gets the benefit of the Revenues derived from the Crown Lands of which they form a part.

Mr. MOULTON (Clapham) [*Cries of* "Divide!"]: I shall not stand between the Committee and the division for more than a few minutes, because, after all that has been said, I think the subject of the maintenance of the Royal Parks has been threshed out. But, as a Metropolitan Member, I wish to say that I thoroughly sympathize with the principle that the Metropolis ought to bear its own burdens, and be proud of bearing them; and, holding that opinion, I desire to explain why it is that I intend to vote with the Government on this question. I am somewhat amused by the conduct of hon. Members from the country, who, while they are willing enough to vote public money in aid of local institutions, are very active in their opposition whenever it becomes a question of their having to contribute to anything of the kind in London. But I should like to ask them whether they think it right that the people of the Metropolis should be called upon to pay for an expenditure on Parks, the amount of which is entirely beyond their control? If those hon. Members will assist us in getting the interests and privileges of the people of the Metropolis placed in their own hands, it will be found, I think, that the whole of the Metropolitan Members will most cheerfully support them on the question that London should bear its own burdens. But until that is effected, and so long as the people of London are in the position of not being trusted with the control of their own destinies, I think they ought to bear some portion of this expenditure, which it is beyond their power to control.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I only wish to make a few remarks, for the purpose of assisting the Committee in coming to a decision on this Vote. There is a good deal more to be learned of the conditions on which the Royal Parks are held than is apparent. A large sum of money was undoubtedly voted for the creation of Regent's Park; but the revenue derived from houses round the Park is paid into the Consolidated Fund. If you take the case of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, you will also find the ground on which a row of houses is built was taken out of the original area, the revenue from which is paid into the Consolidated Fund. I mention these circumstances simply for the purpose of showing that there is another side of the question. As a Metropolitan Member, I am prepared to admit that the Metropolis should bear the charges which properly fall upon it; but I desire to point out that a division adverse to the Vote would not settle this question, and that there is involved in it a vast amount of change which I think hon. Gentlemen opposite are not prepared for. If the Metropolitan Bodies are to take charge of the Royal Parks, without going into details I may say that arrangements would have to be made of greater magnitude than hon. Members probably have any idea of. I am convinced that when the Committee is brought face to face with all the circumstances the question will be found to be a very difficult one. If the Parks were the property of the Metropolis, it would, of course, have the right to do what it liked with them; but in dealing with this question other questions would come forward; and, therefore, I hope that the Committee will not hastily adopt the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere).

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 131; Noes 114: Majority 17.—(Div. List, No. 28.)

(4.) £47,865, Houses of Parliament.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Mr. Courtney, we have not yet disposed of the Vote for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): The Committee has just decided that a reduced sum be granted to Her Majesty for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens; and, therefore, the Vote has been disposed of.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I venture to ask a question relating to procedure; and it is whether there could not be some way of putting Votes by which subsequent Amendments may be proposed?

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: It is too late to raise that question now.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I am sorry that I have again this Session to raise a question which I have frequently raised in previous Sessions of Parliament, and that is the great want of accommodation in this House for the convenience of its Members. I raise the question again in this Session of Parliament with all the more confidence, because the circumstances of Parliament are very different from what they were in previous Parliaments. For one reason, we have a larger attendance and a more constant attendance of hon. Members than we have ever had before. I am afraid that the vote which has just been given will cause some searchings of heart, especially to Members of the Government, as to whether this attendance is altogether an unmixed pleasure. Well, as a matter of fact, the attendance of hon. Members is far greater than ever; and the Irish Members are not now the only section of the House, as they were in previous Parliaments, who practically make the House of Commons their dwelling-place for the greater part of the day. I find that now a much larger number of hon. Members dine here than did formerly. The dinner hour, in the old sense of the word, has been practically abolished, and we have a large attendance and excited debates even in those weary intervals during which sometimes the Speaker, or Chairman of Committees, and the hon. Member who is airing his grievances, are the only occupants of the House. All these things mean that the inconveniences of this House press more seriously upon a large number of Members than they formerly did; and, therefore, I think I may now put forward my claim for better convenience with far more potency than I could on previous occasions. Now, my first charge against the House of Commons is the badness of its atmosphere. I understand that the scientific authority who has charge of the arrangements of the House maintains that the arrangements are perfection themselves. All I can say is this—that my experience is that after about two or three hours' attendance in the House, however fresh I may have felt at the beginning, my brain becomes—I can only express my exact meaning in a good Irish phrase—*moidhered* by the atmosphere. I may explain that *moidhered* means confused, bewildered, and a number of other things for which I cannot find a word in the Saxon tongue, owing to the smallness of the vocabulary. The reason is, that this House is kept too hot. [Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: No.] I hear my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for South-East Durham say "No." I hope he will not suppose I have him in mind in connection with what I am about to say; because I know no man who is in spirit more juvenile than my hon. and gallant Friend. This House and all its arrangements were made on the supposition that Members of Parliament were always elderly men. Well, we have changed all that. It is like a great many other things. The day of exclusively elderly Members of Parliament has passed, never to return. Well, this House is kept too warm, and the result is that, if a man spends four or five hours in it, he is not half the man he came into it. I do not know that the atmospheric effect of the House upon its Members has not, to some extent, been the cause of the exceedingly bad quality of the legislation adopted from time to time. My second charge against the House is, that its means of intercommunication between its different parts are most defective. Here is a startling state of things—that in offices in Fleet Street you can more easily learn what is going on in the House of Commons than you can in the Smoking Room, Cloak Room, Library, or the other apartments in the building. Here you are sitting in the Dining Room taking that scanty meal that the non-payment of Members of Parliament compels most of us to take, and just as you have started your humble chop you hear the division bell. I do not think it is the duty—necessarily the duty—of a Member of Parliament to attend every division which may take place in the House. Sometimes there are obstructive divisions, and to obstructive divisions, in the ordinary state of affairs, I am entirely hostile; accordingly, if I were dining, I would much prefer to continue my dinner than take part in an obstructive division. But I do not know whether the division is obstructive or otherwise, for I have no means of knowing what it is about. Why is it not possible, in these days of electricity and modern appliances, to have some means of sending to the Library and Cloak Room, and Smoking Room, and other parts of the building, some brief message informing us what the division is about, who are the Tellers, which is often an indication of what the division is about, and of other circumstances of that kind which it is necessary Members should know? These are the points to which I would like to call the attention of the Committee. I am glad to say that at last the Irish Party have succeeded in getting a room in which to hold their meetings. Formerly, all meetings had to be held in the Conference Room, and the result was that sometimes the teetotal advocates were found holding a conference in one-half of the room, while the friends of the publicans were sitting in the other half. I am sure neither wished to take the other into their confidence. There is also a small matter—it is rather a matter of personal convenience than any other—which I should like to bring before the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), and that is the necessity of having a few type-writers put into one of the rooms in the building. The type-writer is another of the modern inventions which the House, in its arrangements, seems to be entirely ignorant of. A good many of us are compelled to use type-writers instead of the ordinary pen and ink, and it would be a great advantage to us if a few type-writers could be placed in one of the Committee Rooms which are now unused. I trust the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury will be able to see his way to make some improvements in the directions I have pointed out.

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I should like to say a word upon the question raised by the hon. Member for Liverpool, Scotland (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). I think that the condition of the House of Commons is a very remarkable one. If one desires to obtain a seat, one has to come down here about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, thereby, perhaps, neglecting other important business. It is impossible to get a place if one only comes down to the House just before Prayers. That is a very unreasonable state of affairs. I happen to have had the advantage of attending the Chamber of Deputies in France, and there I noticed that every Member has his seat. In my opinion, every English Member ought to have his seat also. It is unreasonable that Members should be required to waste many hours every day in order to be able to obtain places in the House of Commons; proper places ought to be provided for them. Now, the provision of places for every Member would involve public expenditure; but I venture to say that the constituencies would not grudge a reasonable outlay in affording proper facilities to hon. Members to discharge the duties imposed upon them. It is high time that we should have opportunities of taking places to a greater extent than we have now. Only 300 Members can be seated upon the floor of the House, and only 200 of these can occupy places from which it is possible to address the Chair. Now that we have 670 Members, now that we have popular constituencies who expect, and have a right to expect, that their Members will attend to the work to be done, it is time the Government should consider what improved arrangements could be made in order that every Member may have proper accommodation. I am inclined to go a little further than that. I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), that opportunities should be given to Members who happen to be in parts of the building other than the House of Commons, to ascertain the Business before the House. I, personally, have experienced great inconvenience from the want of intercommunication in the building. For several years I had the honour of being one of the Chairmen of the Committees that sit upstairs. Now, it very often happens that on Wednesday, when a Committee is sitting, the division bell rings, and all one knows is that a division is about to take place. One has to stop the proceedings of the Committee, and disturb the arrangements of counsel and witnesses, in order to run downstairs as hard as possible to get to the House within the two minutes allowed before the division. Now, as the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has very properly stated, it is not necessary that every Member should be present at every division; but now there is no means of knowing what the division is about. There ought to be some means of communicating with Members serving upon Committees and Members who happen to be in other distant parts of the building. The finding of these means devolves upon the Office of Works, and I hope they will speedily turn their attention to the subject. There is another matter which is of importance to many hon. Members. It is necessary, as I have said, to spend many hours here; we come here at 2 o'clock in the day and very often remain until 2 o'clock the following morning. Sometimes it occurs to each one of us that we may require to see somebody on business; but, at the present time, there is no place which is at all private where a Member and a friend could go to discuss business. I think some little apartments, such as the voting booths prescribed by the Ballot Act, might be provided, where Members could go with persons to transact business. There is absolutely no convenience afforded to Members to discharge their private duties at the time they are endeavouring to do the work required of them by their constituents; consequently, I urge upon the First Commissioner of Works, or upon his deputy in the House of Commons, the necessity of providing greater facilities for Members to transact their private business while in attendance upon the House. These are matters which I have often pressed before, and I cordially join the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) in the complaints he has made.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I am very glad that I am able to agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) upon this subject; the want of better accommodation is very keenly felt. I support the hon. Member with peculiar pleasure; because I gather from the interest the hon. Gentleman takes in bringing about better arrangements in the House, and in securing better accommodation generally for hon. Members, he has no very great expectations of a Parliament being established in College Green, Dublin. I hope consideration will be given to the views expressed by the hon. Gentleman, and I trust that it will be necessary to make arrangements for the accommodation of the 86 Gentlemen below the Gangway for a long time to come.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has raised a subject of considerable importance—namely, the state of the atmosphere of this House. I do not quite agree with the hon. Gentleman that the House is kept too warm. I think it would be exceedingly comfortable, were it not for some of the bad smells, which, in constant succession, invade the House, to the detriment of the comfort, and even the health, of Members. Last year, this question became such a very pressing one, that a Select Committee of the House was appointed to consider it, and of that Committee I had the honour to be a Member. We reported, up to a certain point. We found that the system of drainage was in a satisfactory condition, though not of the most approved construction. It is not a good system—the drains are too large, and I should not say they are made on the very best principles of drainage; but, as far as it goes, it appears to be well worked, and we reported accordingly. There is one point which we had not an opportunity of considering before we separated, and that is where the bad smell came from. Our opinion was that it came from somewhere outside—whether from some manufactory down the Thames, or from the drainholes, which we know are open in a very offensive way, we could not say. What I would suggest is, either that the old Committee be re-appointed, or that some expert be appointed to consider the question, and endeavour to find out the origin of the smells which at times are only too painfully perceptible.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottingham, S.): I think that this Vote affords a legitimate occasion for asking whether the time has not arrived when there should be some relaxations of the restrictions imposed, not only on the public, but upon Members of the House, after the occurrence of certain unfortunate events now a considerable time ago. I need not enumerate these restrictions. It is enough to say that some of them are vexatious, and that others put obstacles in the way of the transaction of Public Business.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): I must point out that this Vote is for the buildings, and that, therefore, the hon. Member's remarks are inappropriate.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS: Then I will say, Sir, that I should like to know when Westminster Hall is to be once more open to the public, and when next the public will have the privilege of inspecting both Houses of Parliament on one day of the week? That was a privilege which was very much appreciated by at least those who came to London from the Provinces. I do not think there is any edifice in the Metropolis which excites a greater amount of interest on the part of our countrymen in the Provinces than this edifice does. That is an interest which should be encouraged rather than checked; and I hope it will now be felt that the time has arrived when the restrictions may be relaxed, and when the right, or privilege, formerly enjoyed by the public in visiting the Houses of Parliament may be restored to them.

MR. D. DAVIES (Cardigan): The scarcity of accommodation in the House is a matter which affects me personally. I am an old Member; but ever since the commencement of the present Parliament, I have not been able to get a seat at all upon my own side of the House. I am only an intruder on the Opposition Benches—I am, in fact, here on sufferance. I sit here, because I find that, as a rule, there is more room on this side of the House than on that; but my constituents are rather inclined to fear that I am getting a bit of a Tory, and my sitting here may have the effect of confirming in their mind that fear. My inability to find a seat upon my proper side of the House, therefore, may be a serious matter to me at the next Election. I think it is rather hard upon me. I am willing to do my duty to my constituents—they sent me here, and I find there is no seat for me. I think it is a great waste of time to come down three hours before the House meets. I think the man who goes about the place without a hat rather a fool than otherwise. I have never done, and I will not do it. I am getting older and wiser, and I shall be very much surprised if the new men who have turned us out of our places do not learn wisdom in a few months. I do not believe in the new Members. I have no doubt matters will right themselves in three or four months; but, in the meantime, we are to be punished. When I have complained of the want of a seat, I have been told I can go up to the Gallery. The other day, I heard one Gentleman speak from the Gallery; but I thought he looked rather odd. I do not want to go into the Gallery and make an ass of myself. Certainly, the inconveniences experienced are very great, and I think it is very likely they will continue. They will until there is a Dissolution; and I have got it in my mind that a Dissolution is not very far off. If I have to sit upon the Opposition Benches, it is more than likely that some of my constituents will say I am an old Tory. I only mention this, that it may go forward to my constituents that it is not my fault if I am obliged to sit on the Tory Benches.

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.): I think I may fairly lay it down as a general principle, that these buildings and the arrangements of the House are made for the convenience of hon. Members, and that, therefore, any representations hon. Members may make will be carefully looked into by the First Commissioner of Works. I am sure my noble Friend (the Earl of Morley) will do what he can to meet any reasonable requirement. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has complained of the atmosphere of the House. I should have thought that, considering the number of people — Members, strangers, reporters, and others—who are here night after night, the atmosphere is rather good than otherwise. I see that the average temperature is 63 degrees; but, of course, if hon. Members desire to alter the temperature, the matter is in their own hands. Personally, I think the House is kept at a very comfortable temperature. Besides, as the evening wears on, the ventilation improves, and that is to be attributed to the good management of the Ventilation Department. There are very few variations in the temperature. There may, however, be variations in the temperature of hon. Members themselves, according to the subjects under discussion, and the hour at which the subjects are taken. Such variations, of course, it is impossible to prevent. The question of intercommunication is a very important one, and I am glad it has been raised. The Committee will remember that this evening a Question was asked of me by the hon. Member for the Walthamstow Division of Essex (Mr. Buxton) with respect to increased communication, and that the answer I gave was—the matter would be fully considered. I may say that is not a mere phrase; for I am confident the First Commissioner of Works will take every step in order, if possible, to meet the requirements of hon. Members. He will, if he can, so arrange that Members in the Smoking Room or Library, or other rooms, may know what a particular division is about, or who the speaker is at any given time. As to the Tellers, I may remind the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) that the Tellers in a division are not named until the doors are shut. It will be impossible, therefore, to communicate to Members the names of the Tellers, in time for Members in the Library, for instance, to take part in the division. The hon. Gentleman has asked that typewriters should be provided. There is one great objection to typewriters, and it is that they make a good deal of noise. Their introduction, however, is really a matter of arrangement between the Speaker and the Librarian of the House, and if any representations are made I am sure they will be carefully considered.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I think it would be very objectionable to put typewriters in the Library, because of the noise they make. What I suggest is, that some be put in one of the Committee Rooms upstairs, which are now absolutely deserted.

Mr. LEVESON GOWER: But the Librarian would have to supply them. In regard to the smells, my hon. Friend (Dr. Farquharson) will see, from the Estimates, that a sum of £400 is to be devoted to sanitary works. It is possible that these works may, in a minor degree, prevent the smells. I believe the bad smells complained of arise mainly from two causes—namely, the opening of a manhole of the main sewer in Parliament Street, and the burning of refuse somewhere up the river. I am not stating this as an absolute fact, but as one of the theories to explain the prevalence of these bad smells. With regard to the manhole, instructions were given in the proper quarter that the necessary means should be taken to stop the nuisance; but as to the burning of refuse up the river, it is not within the province of the House to interfere. It is rather a matter for the Inspector of Nuisances. I will not detain the Committee, but will merely add that I am sure the representations made by hon. Members either to the Office of Works or to the officers of this House will meet with every consideration.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) is to be thanked for having brought on the question of the accommodation in this House. The hon. Member for Cardiganshire (Mr. D. Davies) says the new Members are, perhaps, not better than the old ones, and that, of course, is a matter of opinion. When this House was originally made, it consisted of a different class of Members. It was a House of private Gentlemen, who thought it was not necessary to come down here to listen to debates or to take part in divisions, except on important occasions. At present, however, the House is largely frequented by Members, and I think it is a good thing. When a man is elected, it is his business to come here to take part in divisions and discussions of all kinds. But, at the present moment, on the floor of this House there is accommodation for but one-third of the Members. What is the consequence? Why, we have to come down here to look after our seats at an early hour, and in order to secure them have to attend Prayers. ["No, no!"] An hon. Member says "No!" but I maintain that the only reason Members attend so early is to secure seats, and I will show that it is so. The hon. Member knows that the men of light and leading sit on the Treasury and Front Opposition Benches. These Gentlemen can get seats without coming to Prayers, and I never yet knew but one Gentleman, either amongst the Ministers or ex-Ministers, condescending to pray to his Maker in this House; so that when the hon. Member says "No!" he clearly confesses that he has not followed what takes place on the Front Benches. I daresay it does hon. Members good to come here to Prayers; but I assert that hon. Members not only come down at an early hour, but even attend Prayers, in order to secure seats. The hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow (Mr. Mitchell Henry), who is not here, I think, to-night, has suggested that a Select Committee should be appointed to look into this matter. He has received from the Treasury Bench replies of a somewhat evasive character. I have never been able quite to understand whether this Select Committee will be granted or whether it will not; but I think the tone of the discussion this evening ought to show the Members of the Government that there is a very strong, real, and general desire on the part of Members of the House that something should be done to afford better accommodation. The feeling is that a House can be made —that acoustic science has reached a point by which it can be made—capable of containing all its Members. Such a House would not have to be very much larger than the present Chamber; and I think the change ought to be effected as soon as possible. At any rate, I do think sufficient ground has been made out for giving consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the question. I do not know who is leading the House just now—whether it is the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) or the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Heneage)—but I do trust that someone on the Front Ministerial Bench, in view of the general desire of the House that at least a Select Committee will be appointed, will declare that the Government have decided upon that step.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I quite agree with the remark made by the hon. Gentleman as to its being a primary element in the comfort of hon. Members in this House that they should be assured of proper and suitable accommodation, no matter at what time of day they may enter the House; but I do not agree with him in his opinion on his statement of fact with reference to the attendance of hon. Members at Prayers. I have seen in attendance at Prayers Gentlemen on the Front Ministerial Bench and Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench; but, at the same time, I think it undesirable that the test of attendance at Prayers should be imposed in order that a Member may secure a seat. This question of the accommodation of Members is practically in the hands of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow (Mr. Mitchell Henry), who is not here now, but who has taken great interest in the matter, and has already moved in it. The first step which he suggests should be taken is, that the Report of the Select Committee which sat about 10 years ago, and which thoroughly discussed this subject and considered the plans of the late Sir Charles Barry, should be printed and circulated. I myself endeavoured to obtain that Report, but was not successful, the Treasury at the time not being prepared to assent to the expense. However, the Prime Minister has consented to its being printed, and it will be in the hands of hon. Members in the course of a few days. When it has been circulated, if hon. Gentlemen think it desirable that the question should be further considered, or that other steps should be taken, then will be the time for the Government to say what view they take with regard to it. I am sure the Government will take an interest in the matter. At the present moment they conceive that the House should not embark on any course rashly, although, at the same time, they consider that everything reasonable ought to be done to meet the convenience of hon. Members. The first Session of a new Parliament differs from all others. When the Parliament of 1880 met, the tide of attendance at first rose very high, and so continued for the first two or three months; but later on it ceased to reach the same height, and so far as the years 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, and 1885 were concerned, the accommodation provided in the House was practically found to be sufficient. Whether that be so or not, the question is both before the House and the Government, and it will be for them to decide as to what is the wisest course to take. In reference to dealing with the House as it stands, I can assure hon. Members that it is the desire of the First Commissioner of Works and the Treasury that every reasonable expenditure should be incurred to promote the comfort of hon. Members. The main point referred to to-night by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was as to some mode of intercommunication between the different parts of the House. I am entirely at one with him on the point. It seems to me ridiculous that a Member in the Lobby, in the Dining Room, the Library, or elsewhere in the building, should have no means of knowing what is going on; and I shall certainly think the inventive faculties of the Office of Works at fault if no remedy is obtained. I cannot subscribe to the opinion that the House is ill-ventilated and unhealthy. If hon. Members get headaches through bad ventilation, it is not in the House itself that the mischief is caused, but in the Lobbies, the passages, and the Library. The House, so far as ventilation and atmosphere are concerned, is one of the most delightful buildings in the Kingdom; I doubt if any other building has so completely solved the problem of ventilation and warmth. An hon. Member says it is too hot. I wish he would come and sit on the Treasury Bench; I can assure him that it is very cold here. I do not know whether the cold air comes in from behind the Chair, or not; but certainly my complaint, and that of my right hon. and hon. Friends who sit here, goes in the opposite direction to the complaint of the hon. Member. I think an atmosphere of 64 degrees is not an objectionable atmosphere; and, though we are bound to make provision for the comfort of the talented and aspiring and promising young men who have found a place in this House, we must not lose sight of the older men, whose experience is valuable, and the preservation of whose health is a matter of some importance. As to the sanitary state of the buildings, I agree that the smells are very bad indeed. They are very bad now, and have been bad the whole of this week. I have called attention to them, and am of opinion that steps should be taken to remedy the evil forthwith. I think the hon. Member for South Nottingham (Mr. Carvell Williams) called attention to the exclusion of the public from Westminster Hall. Well, that is a question with which the First Commissioner of Works and the Treasury have nothing whatever to do. It is entirely in the hands of the Home Secretary, who is responsible for the peace of the country and the public welfare. If a Question is addressed to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) on the subject, no doubt he will give an answer.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS: And about access to the House?

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: The regulations affecting access to the House are in the hands of the Speaker.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, &c.): I wish to say a word as to the ventilation and atmosphere of this House, as I have had some experience of the Chamber and its surroundings. If any hon. Member wishes to satisfy himself as to the state of the atmosphere in the rooms connected with this House, and will betake himself to the Tea Room, sit down and take a cup of tea near one of the windows, or, in fact, in any part of the room, he will find himself attacked by most objectionable and dangerous draughts. You cannot sit down near one of the windows nor at the side of the room for half-an-hour, without going away with a severe cold. So much for that. Strong representations have been made here on the question, and I hope that the authorities of the House who have charge of the matter will attend to them. If the atmosphere of this Chamber is as good as hon. Members have urged, it is as well to make that of the surrounding rooms equally perfect. With regard to the writing materials supplied to hon. Members, they are far below in quality what would be found in the poorest office in the City. Take the quality of the note paper.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES: That has nothing to do with the building. It will come under the Stationery Vote.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL: I thank the House for the indulgence it has afforded me. The question of typewriters is another matter in which I and several other Members of this House are interested. I happen to use a typewriter, as several other hon. Members do; and anyone who has used one for any length of time must know that it is a great convenience to those who have enormous duties to perform. That being the case, I maintain that these representations establish the necessity of putting typewriters in some part of the building. It is said that we must go to the Librarian or the Speaker for these things; but that is clearly a method of shelving the question, as that of the supply of lockers to Members has been shelved. At present, hon. Members have no place in which to put their papers; and I think this want should be supplied. I can assure the Government that the question will be reverted to again and again, until the demand of hon. Members is satisfied.

Mr. DUCKHAM (North Herefordshire,): We are called upon to pay a large sum for the restoration of Westminster Hall. The matter has been adverted to in the columns of *The Times;* and, as the House is aware, Mr. Dick-Peddie, a retired architect of some distinction, a Member of the Committee, strongly protested against the plans adopted, and others drew attention to the subject, and took great interest in the proceedings of the Committee which sat upon it. This is called a Vote for the restoration of Westminster Hall. I cannot imagine anything more wide of the mark than that. Those grand old flying buttresses which we can now see at the side of the Hall will be cut off, so to speak, by the roof of the new building. Part of these buttresses and the massive stone corbels from which they spring, will be underneath the ceilings of the new rooms. There will be a series of rooms constructed to be appropriated to no one knows whom or what; and underneath there are to be a lot of vaults. Whether or not, in these days of teetotalism, they are to be let out as wine vaults, I do not know; but, whatever use they are to be put to, I certainly think hon. Members ought to hesitate before they hastily sanction these works, which we know will be so costly. It is proposed to spend £35,500, and for that expenditure we shall get what will be of little or no use whatever. If a cloister were made alongside the Hall, where carriages and horses could be sheltered from the weather during the time they are waiting for Members, there would be some use in spending money rather than on the so-called restoration; but, according to the designs I have seen, the new building will be of no use to anyone. I do think that a Vote of this kind should be seriously considered before it is assented to by this Committee.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND (Hampstead): I desire to address a few remarks to the Committee in reply to the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Duckham), as I was one of the Members of the Committee which dealt with the question of the restoration of Westminster Hall. The term "restoration" is, to a certain extent, misleading, as the object of the proposed plan is not exactly to restore buildings which have been on that side of Westminster Hall, but to erect some building which will be in character with the Hall. I desire to point out to new Members that this question has been most carefully considered by a Committee, and that their Report, which was nearly unanimous, was adopted by the House last Session by a very large majority, after a long debate. Moreover, the sum of £10,000 has already been voted on account. The Committee and the House approved of the plan suggested by Mr. Pearson, one of the most eminent architects of the day, and one who has devoted much time and thought to the structure and history of Westminster Abbey as well as of the Hall. It would be improper for me now to discuss the scheme; but, with reference to the buttresses to which the hon. Member has alluded, I may state that their condition was such that it would have been impossible to have kept them in the manner suggested by the hon. Member, and the proposed treatment of them will not hide the upper part of them. As to the vaults, the hon. Member may rest assured that they will not be let out as wine vaults. In truth, there are no vaults at all, as under the upper rooms there is only a long passage. Then the hon. Member has suggested, in lieu of the proposed building, a cloister where carriages and horses could take shelter. I would venture to ask either new Members or old Members whether such a proposal would be consistent with the beauty and dignity of such a building as Westminster Hall?

SIR JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): There are only very few lockers for the use of hon. Members. We were told to-day that a certain number will be added, and an hon. Member very properly asked whether sufficient for all Members would be supplied. The Committee would be glad to have a definite statement on that head. I myself should be glad to have a locker; but I was told that I was not one of the first to make application, and that therefore I might have to wait until the Ides of March to obtain what I want. I do not wish to wait until the Ides of March; therefore, I should like now to ask whether this accommodation will be given to all hon. Members?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): In spite of what has fallen from the Secretary to the Treasury, I remain of the opinion I expressed with regard to the atmosphere of this House. It may be that the Irish physique is different to others; but the fact remains that the atmosphere to us is bad, and it affords us an additional reason for the demand for a Parliament of our own. With regard to what has fallen from the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), I would inform him that when I complain of the atmosphere in the House it is not, as he seems to imagine, because I believe that I and my Friends will have to tolerate it much longer. That is not my idea. I do not mind telling him a secret. My opinion is that the more comfortable this House is made, the more frequently my hon. Friends will attend, and the more frequently they attend the more frequently they will vote, and the oftener they vote the sooner there will be an end of them here. I see in the Estimate an item—"Cost of lighting by electricity the House of Commons and Offices, £460;" and another item—"Supply of oil lamps for the Committee Rooms, Lobbies, Reporters' Rooms, Residences, £1,880." Why, if the cost of electricity is so small, should we not have more of it? I think the House would be vastly improved if we had electricity in place of gas. I feel convinced that the gas overhead, above the glass roof of the House, is as largely responsible for the intolerable heat we endure as the stubborn heart of the Committee. I think electric lighting would remedy the evil of which we complain. The electric light was tried here once; I remember the night very well. I came in, and by the light of the electric lamps saw the Prime Minister standing at the Box and making a very eloquent speech. The light seemed to me to be perfectly satisfactory; I do not know why it was not continued. Some thought that it made their faces and figures a little too apparent; but I am sure the outlines of the fine Vandyck face of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) have nothing to fear from the glare of the electric light. The hon. Member, I trust, will join with me in urging the Government to substitute for the gas above our heads the cooler and more grateful illumination of electricity. In conclusion, I would say to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, if about two years hence certain events have not come to pass, and the hon. Member renews his offer of a place on the Treasury Bench, I promise to give it serious consideration.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The question of electric lighting was fully considered in the last Parliament, and there was an overwhelming consensus of opinion against it. Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who was then First Commissioner of Works, was rather anxious that the experiment should be tried; it was tried, and the House was dissatisfied with it. It was done away with. With regard to the question of heat, I have been always under the impression—though, no doubt, some hon.

Members may know more of these things than myself—that the gas is so arranged that no heat can descend from it. I have always understood the light we receive to be a reflected light. As to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid), I have to say that we are doing the best we can with reference to the lockers. We have only a limited amount of space to put at the disposal of hon. Members; but we have every reason to believe that when the available space is fully utilized, it will be found that we have a locker for each Member. With regard to what fell from the hon. Member for the Leominster Division of Herefordshire (Mr. Duckham) as to the restoration of Westminster Hall, I would point out that the matter was discussed in the late Parliament, that we had a debate lasting six hours upon it, and that a great division was taken in which only 40 hon. Members voted against the scheme. Having regard to the shortness of life, and the multiplicity of subjects we have to deal with in this House, I think we may regard that as a closed question.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I do not agree with my hon. Friend (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) with regard to the desirability of lowering the temperature of the House. If it is too hot for him let him have a private refrigerator for himself—I should not grudge him the luxury. But I do agree with him on the question of electric lighting. As to the experiment the Secretary to the Treasury refers to, it was a very partial one. It was only made one night, I think. I am told that the ladies object to gas-light—that it interferes with their complexion. I do not know if hon. Members object to electricity on that ground. However that may be, I think the experiment is worth repeating. When we tried the experiment, electricity had not made the progress in this House that it has since achieved. We had not the electric light in the Library and the side Lobbies that we have now. If anyone thinks it better to have gas for this Chamber than electricity, let him go upstairs as I have done and examine the lighting arrangements. They have as little wood as possible for fear of fire; but, small as is the amount of wood in use, the danger is great. No doubt everything is done scientifically; but I cannot believe that it is healthy to have that extremely hot place between the roof of the building and the House. Anyone who goes upstairs and sees the extraordinary mass of light there is, must come to the conclusion that electricity would be infinitely preferable to gas.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.): I have been in many public gallaries, in many churches, and other public buildings; but I must say, wherever I have been, I have never experienced so bad an atmosphere as I have experienced in the House of Commons. It seems to me to be entirely owing to the want of having some scientific man who understands ventilation to take the subject in hand. I feel that whoever has charge of the ventilation arrangements take duties on themselves that they do not understand or know how to perform. If it is possible to get someone fully competent to deal with the matter, it would be very desirable to do so, out of consideration for the health and convenience of hon. Members.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): People have a right to take care of themselves, and always do so; and it is owing to this circumstance probably that to-night we have heard so many remarks concerning the atmosphere and temperature and ventilation and drainage of the House. Though much has been said on the subject of temperature, this interesting fact has not been remarked upon—that that temperature varies. It varies in different ways—it has done so very frequently in the course of this evening. And not only that, but everyone who sits on these Benches cannot look around without being cognizant of the fact that we are at this moment inhaling a vapour. Where does that vapour which is so detrimental to everyone who sits on the floor of this House come from? Partly it is owing to the bad system that you have at work in the House. You have air pumped up through the floor—and I would ask hon. Members to take cognizance of that—it is pumped through the floor, through some musty tarpauling arrangements which must necessarily be filled with dust. The heated air must carry up particles of dust which we must all inhale. If anyone doubts this, let him pass up from the floor of the House to the Gallery, and see what comes to pass there. The air on the floor is not the same as it is in the Galleries. I trust the Committee will excuse me offering these few remarks; but everyone likes to look after himself, and Members of this House are second to none in that respect. Though the time may come when the Irish Members will have to leave this House —I am sure we hope it may come soon —at the same time, there is no reason why the evils that exist in the House, and which are capable of being remedied, should go on for ever.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) £500, Gordon Monument.

(6.) £192,221, Public Buildings, Great Britain.

MR. RYLANDS (Burnley): I think this is a Vote of very serious importance, and one on which a very considerable economy may be effected by care on the part of the Treasury. Hon. Members will observe that under Sub-head C. there is a very considerable increase from £39,000 odd to nearly £48,000, an increase of nearly £8,000. Of that increase, £2,800 is charged for the rent of Dover House, Whitehall, which is proposed to be used for the accommodation of the Secretary for Scotland. It seems an extraordinary sum to pay; still, that is the charge, and it represents the value of the house which, under the late Government, was voted in this House for the Secretary for Scotland. I think the Committee might very properly desire to consider how far such an arrangement as that is justifiable. I shall be glad to hear from my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury why an office for the Secretary for Scotland might not have been provided in the Home Office, instead of this very large building having been provided. Considering the amount of business which is likely to come into the office, I think it will be found that a property the rental of which is £2,800, is very much in excess of that which ought to have been obtained for the purpose. I will not move the reduction of the Vote now, although it may be necessary to do so later on. There is another large increase which is for temporary offices for the Admiralty. This is an increase of £3,700, and I shall be glad to hear under what circumstances these temporary offices are required. Another large sum is £700 a-year for the rent of No. 34, Queen Anne's Gate, and I should like to know for what purpose that house has been taken? If my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Stafford (Mr. Leveson Gower) can tell me—I should like to ask him what means were taken to determine what amount of rent ought properly to have been paid, and whether he is satisfied that the Government are not paying a very much higher sum than other persons occupying similar houses close by? Well, I have alluded to several increases in which new charges have come upon the Vote, and which I think deserve attention. I should like to make a general remark on the total sum we are called upon to pay. I would ask my hon. Friend whether it would not be possible, by thoroughly overhauling the expenditure under these different heads, to materially diminish the charge under this Vote? I know that there is a disposition in Public Departments to get accommodation of this kind without considering the cost; but it appears to me that a considerable reduction might be made in the total sum of £44,383 now charged for the rent of offices, especially if some of the unoccupied rooms, of which there are many, in the House of Commons were utilized. The late Commissioner of Works was of the opinion that some of these rooms might be so used, instead of remaining, as they were at present, altogether useless. I shall be glad to hear from the hon. Gentleman that the Government will do something in regard to these matters.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I agree to some extent with the observations of my hon. Friend in regard to these rents, and I should be glad to see my way to get rid of some of them. With regard to the particular question of the sum of £3,700 for the house in Northumberland Avenue, and the £700 for No. 34, Queen Anne's Gate, those are offices or premises taken for the use of the Admiralty pending the rebuilding of the Admiralty Offices in Whitehall. Having regard to the position of those buildings, I do not think that any mistake was made in regard to the rents which are to be paid. I will not go into the subject of the new Admiralty Offices, because it was promised that Notice should be given when the discussion of that matter is to be taken. In reference to the rent paid for Dover House, I am not going to defend that at all. My impression is that the taking of this house for Scotch business is an indefensible arrangement altogether, and the rent paid, amounting to £2,800, I consider to be an extravagant expenditure. I find, with regard to Ireland, that the amount paid for the Irish Office, where, with all due respect to Scotland, there is quite as much business transacted as at the Scotch Office, is only £550 a-year; and I think that suitable offices might have been obtained for the Secretary for Scotland at a rent somewhere between this amount and the large sum now paid for it. It was not the intention of the late Liberal Government to appropriate Dover House for such a purpose; and I can assure the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) that the placing it at the disposal of the Secretary for Scotland is a temporary arrangement, and the matter will be further considered. If the opinion of the Committee should coincide with that of the hon. Member, that the sum is too large, the Government will do their best to carry out the wishes of the Committee. The rent of the houses in Queen Anne's Gate is mixed up with the greater question of the new Admiralty Offices, and I do not think the premises could have been obtained at a lower rent. The rent was fixed by the Board of Works, and I think the hon. Member may rest assured that the sum paid is the market value. In regard to the general Vote, I may say that a great number of public buildings are included in the amount. We have done all in our power to keep it down to as low a figure as possible; and I do not think that we could have done any more consistently with the actual exigencies of the Public Service.

Captain VERNEY (North Bucks): The Vote which I wish to call attention to is the Vote relating to Menai Bridge. I refer to Vote 8, which deals with the ordinary repairs of asphhalte and roadways. I wish the Committee to consider the peculiar position of the Menai Bridge; because, with the exception of the railway tubular bridge, it is the only means of getting from the Island of Anglesey to the mainland, the ferries being made use of only in favourable circumstances. It connects two counties, and, in my opinion, is a great national work, and the responsibility for it is much too important a matter for it to be handed over to the authorities of the two counties; and therefore it remains as a great Government work. Well, the tolls upon this bridge are quite unreasonable, and inflict a great injury upon the counties of Anglesey and Carnarvon, especially as the bridge is largely used by tourists, who come to view the beautiful scenery which abounds in its neighbourhood. The tourists drive up to one end of the bridge and leave their carriages because of the heavy tolls. I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury to consider the question of this burden of heavy tolls which fall upon those living in the neighbourhood of the bridge. A small carriage with four wheels, such as tourists generally use, is charged 1*s.* to cross the bridge. That is a heavy tax for a miserable one-horse carriage to pay for crossing; but if there are two horses, the charge is 2*s.* What we want the hon. Member to consider is, whether he will not let the toll be a uniform one of 6*d.* per horse. There is a gentleman living in the neighbourhood of the bridge, who drives a "random tandem"—three horses in a row—and he is only called upon to pay 6*d.* for crossing, because his trap has only two wheels. This is a very important matter to all in North Wales. I believe that if the tolls were reduced the bridge would be much more used than it is at present; and I trust that some hope will be held out to us that these matters will be put in a more favourable position.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): I hope the Committee will apply to Wales the same principle which it has applied to London. The proposition of the hon. and gallant Member is, that the care of this bridge, which is a local matter, and any loss sustained in its maintenance, shall be thrown upon the Consolidated Fund. Now, I should like to point out that this bridge was built out of loans advanced by the Government; and without going into details at too great a length, I may mention that on the 31st of March, 1885, the principal debt due to the Government was £231,498, and there was an accumulation with interest of £471,307, making a total liability in respect of the bridge of

£702,805. Now, the tolls of which my hon. and gallant Friend complains have amounted since 1873 to £18,510, and it has cost the Government during that period £10,800. In that sum there is no charge for interest, but only for actual working, and our net profit on this bridge has been only £641 per annum. In 1881 an offer was made to the Local Authorities of Anglesea and Carnarvon to hand over the bridge on payment of a lump sum, but the offer was declined by both counties; and, under these circumstances, my hon. and gallant Friend comes and asks us to make a still further reduction in the tolls. However, I can hold out no hope that the Government will consent.

Mr. BAKER (Frome): I was rising for the purpose of drawing attention to the very same facts which have been mentioned by the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Fowler) when the hon. and gallant Member (Captain Verney) interposed. I should like to refer for one moment to the question of Dover House. The rent certainly does seem an enormous one for the purpose to which the premises are going to be applied; and if we pass the Vote now, we shall be relying upon the promise of the hon. Member that such a sum for the Office of the Secretary for Scotland will not appear again in any future Estimates.

Mr. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): I wish to call attention to this sum of £32,000, which is put down for the purchase of premises in Staple Inn for the accommodation of the Patent Office. Staple Inn is a property belonging to a Society of a very ancient character, established in order to increase the knowledge of the law. The gentlemen who had control over it, instead of continuing its existence so as to promote legal education and to continue legal institutions, thought proper to allow their numbers to gradually decrease, and then to appropriate the corporate property to their own personal advantage. Her Majesty's Government have now purchased a portion of the property which has been misappropriated. I should like to have some explanation as to the circumstances under which the purchase has been made, in order that some light may be thrown on the transaction to which I have referred; and I should like some information as to the way in which the price to be paid has been arrived at. I am informed that the total price of the whole Inn, when the Governing Body disposed of it, was something like £60,000 or £70,000; and although I do not know how much of it the Government have now bought, £32,000 certainly seems a large price to pay for a portion. I should like to know also what the Government propose to do as to the title to this property—whether, in the investigation of the title, they can look into the misappropriation of which I complain?

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston): I should like to ask the hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) what he meant by his remarks in regard to Dover House? He has told us that the Secretary for Scotland can be housed more cheaply, and that the present arrangement is only to be temporary. However that may be, his statement seemed to me to be left somewhat in obscurity as to whether Dover House is eventually to be used for Public Office purposes at all, or whether it is going to be turned back into the position of a private residence. I cannot help thinking that, whatever happens, we should have an assurance from the Government that this house, which is so well situated for public purposes, shall not be allowed to go into private occupation again,

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I think that the case which has recently been made out, in regard to the expenditure on London and the country, is very much strengthened by this Vote. Here there is a large expenditure, and nearly all of it expended on London. I wish to say this on behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), that he recognizes the observations which were made by the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) as a distinct pledge that this question of Dover House will be looked into by the Government during the year, with a view of seeing that the country is not subjected to so heavy a charge as £2,800 a-year for the purpose of providing an office for the Secretary for Scotland.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS (Southwark, Bermondsey): I should like to ask whether these are not the facts in regard to the Menai Bridge? It is true that it has cost a great deal of money; but was it not originally constructed with the view of completing an expeditious military route to Ireland; and is it not maintained to enable us to move troops rapidly should occasion require? If that is so, it is not quite fair that the burden of the cost should be thrown upon the two poorest counties in Wales. It is distinctly a road constructed and maintained for Governmental purposes; and, therefore, I think the burden of its maintenance ought to be borne by the Imperial Exchequer. I want to know, also, why we should be called upon to pay for improvements to Aberdeen University and Marischal College? I do think it is shabby that the richest of the Three Kingdoms, Scotland, should come upon the English Exchequer for repairs in their Universities, and for large subventions to their institutions. The Universities of Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester pay their own way; and I do not think it is fair that this House should be called upon to pay for these trivial things, and I think that they ought to be resisted. I want to know why windows erected in Marischal College should be charged to the Imperial Exchequer?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton): I cannot say for what purpose the Menai Bridge was originally required. In reference to the Scotch Universities, the question involves a very old story and a very old bargain, when the Crown undertook to supply the Universities with certain necessaries. As to Dover House, I can assure hon. Members, who are anxious on the subject, that the Government have not the slightest intention of parting with it. It is far too valuable a property, and far too valuable a site; but what I wished to point out was that £2,800 a-year was to high a rent to pay for the offices of the Scotch Department. I do not know what the judgment of the Government will be, but they will certainly consider the necessity of paying £2,800 a-year for an office for the Secretary for Scotland. With regard to Staple Inn, I am not able to discuss the question as to whether the authorities at that Institution were justified or not in selling their property, and whether or not they ought to have appropriated the proceeds to legal education. All I can say is this—that before they part with their money, the Government will take care that they have a good title to the property. The question is, whether we are giving a proper price, when we are giving £32,000 and when the present rental is £1,575 a-year? The purchase was negotiated by a very eminent surveyor, and he was satisfied that the property was well purchased at the sum of £32,000.

MR. J. WILSON (Edinburgh, Central): In regard to Dover House, it is proper to remind the Committee that not only the business of the Secretary for Scotland, but the entire business of the Lord Advocate is done there. In short, the entire business of Scotland, both legal and civil, is done there. It is said that the rent is a very high one; but hon. Members may know that rents are all high in the neighbourhood of Whitehall. I trust that the business of the Scotch Department will not be removed from Dover House, and that it will not be relegated, as it has been in the past, to some back lobby in a top flat. I find that the Receiver in Bankruptcy pays £2,400 for his office, and yet the Committee begrudge this £2,800 for the entire business of Scotland. I have been surprised to hear hon. Members object to the appropriation of Dover House to the business of Scotland, on the ground that the cost to the "English" Exchequer would be large. I submit, however, that surely Scotland has as great a claim upon the Exchequer as England; and hon. Members may rest assured that when Scotland gets one small quantum out of the Exchequer, it gets nothing more than it has paid for. I see the right hon. and learned Gentleman the ex-Lord Advocate in his place (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald). I am sorry he was not here sooner; but I should like to ask him his opinion as to what better use Dover House could be put to, now that it has been adapted to its purpose as the office of the Scotch Department?

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): I see that there is a charge for the maintenance and lighting of Westminster Bridge. Now, it appears to me that these matters ought to be paid for out of the rates of London, and not out of the national finances. As a county Member, I cannot see why the country should be called upon to pay for the lighting of these parts for the benefit of the population of London. I believe that there is to be another bridge built below London Bridge; but I do not know that they are going to ask us to pay for the lighting of it out of the general rates of the county.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottingham, S.): I wish to ask the hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury for information with regard to two items in this Estimate. The first has reference to the repairs of the fabric of Glasgow Cathedral, for which there is a charge of £400. I assume that the case of Glasgow Cathedral differs from that of others, as being under the control of Her Majesty's Board of Works; and if that example be followed it will form a useful precedent for legislation in future. I should like to know if this Vote appears on the Estimates for the first time, or whether the total Vote has received the sanction of the House at a previous time? I would also ask the hon. Gentleman whether there is any property, by the revenue of which the Cathedral benefits? My second question has reference to the item of £3,100 for ordinary repairs and maintenanance of Public, Ecclesiastical, and Collegiate buildings, Scotland. I should like to know whether these are in the same position as Glasgow Cathedral—that is, are they under the control of the Board of Works?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am sorry that I was not in my place when the Committee were discussing the question of Dover House; but, after the speech of the hon. Member for Central Edinburgh (Mr. John Wilson), I think I ought to say something on the subject. When the Secretary for Scotland was appointed, I quite considered, being then the Lord Advocate of Scotland, that the appointment was made in order to give greater dignity and effect to the interests of Scotland in the country and in this House; and as the Secretary for Scotland then appointed was, at the time, suffering badly from gout, I was left in the position of doing the best I could for Scotland in this matter. I was told that it was impossible to get Dover House, and I accordingly inquired as to other houses which we might be able to get, and I must say that the only alternatives were three rooms in Richmond Terrace, or an upper flat above a new post-office somewhere in the slums of Covent Garden. I do not think that any Member for Scotland will say that either of these would afford fitting accommodation for the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate; and I venture to concur with the hon. Member for Central Edinburgh that the discomfort to which former Lord Advocates and those connected with them were subjected in the Home Office was not to be faced again, unless absolutely necessary. I do not think either the three rooms in Richmond Terrace or the flat above the post-office in Covent Garden were suitable for the accommodation of the Department, and the best proof of that is, as I am able to state to the Committee, that not a single hole or corner in Dover House remains unoccupied at the present moment; indeed, some of the staff there are unreasonably crowded. I must say a word also on the subject of the Education Department. At the time when I was Lord Advocate, I had to pay a visit to my friend, Mr. Craik, in the Department, and I venture to assure the Committee that no sanitary officer could have inspected the rooms in which the Scotch Education Department was located, and done anything else than condemn them as absolutely unfit for any person to carry on business in, having regard to its size, and considering that this gentleman had to receive numbers of persons on business, and occasionally deputations, in the course of the day. But, in point of fact, there was no other accommodation to be got, except that which I have referred to—the three rooms in Richmond Terrace, the 10 or 12 rooms in the slums of Covent Garden, and Dover House. But I will tell the Committee something more. It was not intended, and I hope that it is not intended now, that Dover House should be made into a source of gain to the State by taking rent for it. The intention was to turn it into a residence for a Minister of State. [Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER dissented.] The hon. Gentleman shakes his head; but I venture to say that this a correct statement. The intention of the Government was on this occasion changed, and intentions may change also with a change of Government. As I have stated to the Committee, so it was stated to me. It was thought proper for the State to expend a very large sum of money in order to make Dover House a fit residence for a Minister of State. The intention was to transfer the Scottish Office to the house to be vacated by the Minister of State. That was the state in which matters were when I succeeded in having the Scottish Office placed in Dover House. I hear it is now proposed to locate the Scottish Office in a house at about £300 a-year rent. I do not care much about the amount of the rent.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: No such statement was made as to locating the Scottish Office in a house of £300 a-year rent. What was stated in the absence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was, that the present Government considered £2,800 to be a very high rent to pay for the Scottish Office, and that they would consider the whole question; but there was no mention of a rent of £300 a-year.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I hope the hon. Gentleman will not be angry with me. I took it that when the sum of £300 was mentioned to me by my hon. Friends near me, that that was a kind of money estimate which they formed from the tone in which the subject was spoken about by the hon. Gentleman opposite. I can assure him that Dover House affords no very considerable amount of accommodation. I do not know what the present Secretary for Scotland and the present Lord Advocate may feel, but the late Secretary and the late Lord Advocate would not have accepted the kind of accommodation offered to them at all. Now, whatever may be in the future with regard to Dover House, I have only to repeat what I have said already, that if any persons imagine that Dover House can be placed in a fit position to be the residence of anyone who would take a house of that size and distinction, without a very large expenditure, representing the rental of the building for a great number of years, they are very much mistaken. That house could never be made fit for a residence such as I have described without being practically gutted. If the Government are prepared to face that outlay, and get another office for the Scottish Department, then let them do so. I do not know whether Gentlemen opposite will receive any information from me on the subject; but some practical Members say the hon. Member for Central Edinburgh will bear me out when I venture to assure the Committee that they cannot make Dover House a fit residence, in order to get a rent from it, without a very large expenditure indeed. If the Scottish Office is driven out of Dover House, it will be a matter of very great regret to the Members for Scotland on whichever side of the House they may sit, and it will also be a matter of very great regret to the Scottish people. I beg that it may be remembered that the buildings occupied by the Irish Office are very much larger and higher rented than Dover House; and if it is necessary to appoint a Secretary for Scotland to give dignity to the business of Scotland, I think it proper that the Department should be suitably housed. I do not say that if you can get room elsewhere for the Department, and for the deputations which they will have to receive occasionally from Scotland, it may not be desirable to make a change; but I venture to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench, that to make a change which would once more degrade the Scottish Offices to the condition in which they were for a great many years before they were established at Dover House, would be a great mistake as regards the popularity of the Government, and also as regards the feelings of the Scottish people. We are not so easily roused as our Friends from Ireland; but we have some feeling that we ought to be treated with respect, and I hope hon. Members for Scotland will do their duty in preventing the removal of the Scottish Offices.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I do not see why there should be any opposition to the Vote. We know that the rent of houses is very high in London. There are at St. Anne's Gate three houses, the rent of which is £3,200 per annum, and which certainly have not as much room in them as in Dover House, at the rent of £2,800 a-year. But I do not think the Committee quite realizes the fact that Dover House belongs to the nation already, and that in paying the rent we are simply taking money from one pocket and putting it into another. I think there was a general idea expressed in the newspapers, that it was desirable to use this house as a residence for the First Lord of the Treasury, but it did not go beyond a general idea. Now we are asked to oppose this Vote, or, at any rate, it is suggested that the Vote is wrong, because this house costs so much money. But what would hon. Gentlemen do with it? If the house were not used for the Scotch Offices, the Government would use it for the Admiralty. In point of fact, situated as it is, we could never think of re-letting it. You want a Scotch Office, and you have the Scotch Office there, and I do not think, with every wish to practise economy, that it is too much money to take, if we are to have a Scotch Office at all.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I am sure that Scotch Members entirely sympathize with the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) in his anxiety that the Scottish Department should be well and properly housed. I do not know the value of Dover House, or whether any house more suitable for the Scottish Office can be found; but I do expect that care will be taken that the Department will in every way be suitably established.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottingham, S.): The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has not replied to my questions about Glasgow Cathedral.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The Vote of £400 for repairs to the fabric of Glasgow Cathedral is in addition to the sum of £500 already voted. The repair of the Cathedral is under the control of the Board of Works.

MR. JACKS (Leith, &c.): I think if the hon. Gentleman will only consider the amount of taxation which Scotland pays as compared with the money expended on Scotland, I feel sure that he will not find fault with expenditure for Dover House. I have had occasion to visit Dover House since I had the honour of a seat in Parliament, and I am of opinion that it does not constitute at all an extravagant provision for the requirements of the Scotch Department. In point of fact, I think the officials have every claim to the accommodation which it affords.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh S.): I think I ought to answer the observations of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate as to the intention of a former Government with reference to Dover House. When I was Chancellor of the Exchequer in the last Administration, it was my duty to look into the question with a view to its being adopted as a residence for the Prime Minister. We came, however, to the conclusion that, although Dover House under its former tenancy was a good London house, it would not make a satisfactory residence for the Prime Minister. It was necessary that in the Prime Minister's residence there should be proper rooms for the Cabinet, and that the Prime Minister's own Secretaries should be accommodated. Those requirements were not fulfilled in Dover House, and we therefore came to the conclusion that it would not form a suitable residence for the Prime Minister. As to whether the Scotch Offices should be located in the building, I will offer no opinion; but considering the proximity of Dover House to the other Offices, I think it would be unwise to let it again. I think the late Government came to a wise conclusion in not using it as a residence for the Prime Minister.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): The few words I have to say upon this Vote have no reference to Scotch matters. There is under Sub-head A a charge for various alterations, new fittings, and the completion of works now in progress, amounting to £5,687, on account of the Royal Courts of Justice; and under Sub-head B a charge also on account of the Royal Courts of Justice of £24,575 for various purposes, including ventilation. This is, no doubt, intended to cover the cost of ventilation; but, as a matter of fact, the Royal Courts of Justice are not ventilated. Anyone who goes to them is aware that there are still many things to be done there in the way of ventilation. I have experienced what is the condition of the atmosphere which has to be passed through in order to get to the Courts, and what it is in the Courts themselves. The air in the corridor is not so bad as in the Courts, where it is exceedingly unpleasant, and one requires strong nerves to escape unpleasant consequences. The atmosphere in the morning is bearable, but in the afternoon it is positively poisonous. I would refer to the right hon. and learned Member for Grantham (Mr. Mellor), who, I am sure, will be prepared to endorse what I say. Last year there was the sum of £1,962 unexpended under Sub-head A, which was returned to the Treasury, and if the Government are in difficulty as to how they can spend that money, I venture to say that they could not better expend it than in ventilating the Courts of Justice.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I understand from what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department that it was resolved that Dover House should not be used as a residence. I am also in a position to say—whether the decision originated with the late Government or not—that Dover House was inspected with the view of ascertaining whether it was suitable as a residence for the Prime Minister, and whether it was suitable as a residence for the Scotch Minister, and the late Government came to the conclusion that it was quite unsuitable.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): There is an amount of £1,500 for additional accommodation that may be required for vaccination stations. The provision seems to be a very large one, and I call attention to that Vote because it is one of those cases in which grants-in-aid are given in England, without any corresponding grant being made to other parts of the Kingdom.

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.): In answer to the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), I have to say that £200 is included in the charge for alterations at the Royal Courts of Justice for the purpose of ventilation, and the work contemplated will, I hope, be found to remove the inconvenience of which the hon. Member complains. Of course, if the result is not satisfactory, the subject will come before the Commissioners of Works, and I am sure that in that case everything will be done to remove the defect. With respect to the question raised by my hon. Friend the Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Doctor Cameron), the charge he refers to is to carry out a general arrangement for providing vaccination stations, in order that pure lymph may be obtained for vaccination purposes throughout the country.

DR. CAMERON: I think my hon. Friend who has just spoken is rather mistaken in his answer with regard to vaccination. However, I will not pursue the question now, as I may have an opportuuity of raising it hereafter.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The item of £1,500 is purely for additional accommodation that may be required for public offices during the present year. The amount is estimated on the basis of previous years. The expenditure last year was between £1,100 and £1,200. The amount in question is taken to enable the Treasury to have funds in hand to meet expenses. It has nothing to do with vaccination.

MR. T. H BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): I gather from what has been said by the hon. Gentleman representing the Treasury that very little is intended to be done in the way of ventilation to the Royal Courts of Justice. I wish to say that in my opinion it is necessary that attention should be paid to this matter. The rooms attached to the Courts, the Courts themselves, and the corridors are very badly ventilated, and there is no doubt that something must be done to remedy the evil complained of. Certainly a larger sum than £200 will be necessary to correct the defective ventilation at the Courts of Justice.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, E.): I venture to think that we are taking up rather too much time on this Vote in discussing the small matter of ventilation, and I propose that we should proceed to pass the Vote. At the same time, I take the opportunity of replying to the appeal of the ex-Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) by saying that, with all regard for the glory of Scotland, I wish to be as careful about voting money for Scotland as for any other part of the Kingdom, and I venture to suggest to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that Scotland's glory can scarcely be kept up by means of expensive buildings in London.

Vote *agreed to.*

(7.) £19,060, Furniture for Public Offices, Great Britain.

(8.) £227,464, Revenue Department Buildings, Great Britain.

(9.) £29,150, County Court Buildings.

(10.) £6,370, Metropolitan Police Court Buildings.

(11.) £9,360, Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland.

(12.) £258,000, Surveys of the United Kingdom.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT (Sussex, North-West): I should like to hear from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) how this Survey is going on, what position we are in, in how many counties the Survey is still unfinished, and whether we may yet expect, as we were led to expect last year and the year before, that the Survey will be completed in a shorter time than it was originally intended? I think it was promised that the whole of the Survey would be completed within six years. Is there any hope of that promise being fulfilled? It is a very important thing, for the transfer of property especially, that the Survey and maps should be completed. They are the best guides we can possibly have; and, therefore, I hope the Secretary to the Treasury will be able to assure us of their speedy completion.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I quite agree with my hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Walter B. Barttelot); and, so far as the Treasury is concerned, the Survey will be pushed on as rapidly as possible. I find that during the last year, 1885-6, much greater progress was made than was anticipated, owing, to a large extent, to the fine weather. It is expected that in 12 months the whole of the Field Survey will be completed. I think the original estimate was that the whole would be completed by 1890. I have always advocated this as a wise expenditure. The completion of the Survey is a matter of interest to all classes of the community, and should be pressed on as quickly as possible. We will do all we can to expedite the work.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): On page 46 hon. Members will see the heading "maps for the Land Judges' Court, Ireland," and at the bottom an asterisk referring to a note, which says that the £3,405 proposed to be taken "will be repaid from the proceeds of sales of estates." That Vote appears year after year; in fact, the money has not been paid. The arrears due to the Land Judges' Court go on increasing year after year. We have had an assurance from the Treasury that some practical steps would be taken to recover some of the money; but the arrears now amount to a very large sum indeed, £10,000 or £12,000. I should like to know from the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is intended to make any effort to get this money?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: The attention of the Treasury has been called to the heavy arrears to which the hon. Gentleman alludes, and directions have been given to take proceedings for recovery in those cases in which receivers have been appointed. It is not an easy matter to recover these sums; but if we can recover them we will.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: What do the arrears amount to?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: £12,919, and during the last 12 months they have increased by several hundred pounds.

Vote *agreed to.*

(13.) £19,742, Science and Art Department Buildings.

(14.) £11,477, British Museum Buildings.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Before this Vote is passed, I should like to ask whether anything more has been done towards lighting in the evening the Natural History Museum at South Kensington? A very strong feeling was expressed on a former occasion that that Museum ought to be lighted at night for the benefit of the industrial classes. An enormous sum of money has been spent upon the Museum; but it is turned to very little use. I pass it frequently, and notice that in the day time it is visited by no one but a few nursery-maids and children. I do not think any Museum could be used by the working class to greater advantage. It is not one of those Museums which contain indecent pictures, from an inspection of which there is a question whether the working classes benefit. I believe there would be no danger in lighting the Museum at night. It is merely a question of moderate expenditure. I think that, considering the large sum already expended on this Museum, and that the use of the Museum would not only be doubled, but trebled, the Government would do well to consider favourably my suggestion.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I am sorry that my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) is not present; because, in his absence, I cannot give any positive answer to my hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell). I quite agree with him as to the great value of the Museum, and the great desirability of making it accessible to all classes. The suggestion the hon. Gentleman has made shall be carefully considered, and we will see what can be done.

Vote *agreed to.*

(15.) £17,598, Harbours, &c. under the Board of Trade.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): This Vote has strangely increased during the last two years. In the year 1884-5 the original Estimate was only £9,347; but a Supplementary Estimate for £3,500 was brought in, making a total of £12,900. The expenditure, however, only amounted to £10,800. In the Estimates last year the amount asked for was £15,502—that is to say, 50 per cent more than had been spent in the previous 12 months. Now, we have a further increase of £2,000, bringing up the total to £17,500, very nearly double what it was in the original Estimate, no longer than two years ago. One item—that for the Holyhead Harbour—is more than the whole of the original Estimate two years ago. I think it is fair matter for consideration why there should be this continual extraordinary increase on this particular Vote. I do not know whether there is anything exceptional in the present time; but if there is, I should be very glad to ascertain what it is. I should also like to know from the Secretary to the Treasury why the London and North-Western Railway Company are not called upon to contribute something more than they do towards the Holyhead Harbour, and why the whole of this charge is to be borne by the country?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The great increase on this Vote arises from the work upon the Holyhead Harbour. The work has been undertaken with the view of facilitating the transfer of the mails, and it is part of the contract with the Railway Company that the charge should be borne by the Government. The work will not occur again, so that this is only a temporary increase.

Vote *agreed to.*

(16.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for constructing a new Harbour at Dover."

SIR ROBERT PEEL (Blackburn): I think, Sir, that after the discussion which the Committee will recollect took place in the earlier part of this Session we are bound to have some explanation from the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) upon this very important subject. Now, the Committee will not probably be aware that since 1834 this question of the Dover Harbour has been constantly before the country. Every Government had declined to entertain it until, in 1873, the Government of Mr. Gladstone obtained a Vote of £10,000 for the purpose of undertaking preliminary works. The other day we had a Vote of £60,000 for buildings in which to lodge convicts engaged in carrying out a work which the House of Commons and the country has never sanctioned. The cost of this new harbour at Dover is to be estimated by hundreds of thousands of pounds. It has been proved by every Committee that has inquired into the subject, and every Government has acknowledged the fact, that a harbour at Dover would be absolutely useless as a harbour of refuge. The Government obtained a Vote the other night of £60,000 for the purpose of erecting convict barracks, with a view of making a harbour; but they told us that the House of Commons and the country were not pledged at all to the harbour. I hope that the Secretary to the Treasury will be good enough to explain to the Committee this Vote of £1,000. I observe that the present Government are adopting the principle of putting down very small—infinitesimal—sums, with the view of compromising the House of Commons to Votes which ultimately become hundreds of thousands of pounds. This question, as I say, originally came before the Government of Lord Beaconsfield; and the Government of Mr. Gladstone, in 1873-4, obtained a Vote of £10,000 for preliminary works. It was understood that the £10,000 were required to commence works which were estimated, according to the plans, to cost £1,000,000 sterling. Now, the other night the Government informed us they had no plans whatever—that they intended to take a Vote in order to get plans made. The Government of Mr. Gladstone brought forward this scheme; but when that Government fell, and Lord Beaconsfield's Government succeeded it, I recollect perfectly well that the new Government was asked whether they intended to accept the plans of the late Government. Lord Beaconsfield, then Mr. Disraeli, admitted that the Bill—there was a Bill before the House—of Mr. Gladstone's Government was inherited by his Government; but they wished time to sift and digest the evidence concerning the Bill. In 1876 they promised to bring in the Bill; but, having considered and sifted the matter, they, like every Government since 1834, very wisely decided to proceed no further in the matter. The real truth is that the Dover Harbour Board is always pressing this matter on my noble Friend (Lord Granville), who does everything he can to induce the Government of the day to carry out this magnificent scheme. I should like the Committee to understand what the present plan of the Dover Harbour really is. It is said that the scheme will cost £1,250,000 sterling; it will probably cost between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 sterling. Those who have been long enough in the House know, from the experience of the expenses at Alderney, that hundreds of thousands of pounds are, upon works of this kind, thrown into the sea. I maintain that the harbour it is proposed to make at Dover will be absolutely valueless for the purpose for which it is to be constructed. Now, this harbour is to contain, according to the present plan, an area of about 640 acres. There will be 140 acres of deep water for ships-of-war, and the rest will be shallow. It is well known—and I see upon the Treasury Bench the hon. Baronet the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), who is well competent to give an opinion upon the subject—that a ship-of-war, when it is riding at anchor in a harbour, requires about 40 acres to play in; therefore, if you have here only 140 acres of deep water in the proposed new harbour at Dover, only three ships-of-war, or four at the outside, can be rested. Well, now, the Report of every Select Committee has been against this scheme. I am astonished at the Government of the present day—an economical Government—undertaking a scheme of this kind—that a Government which tells us they are reducing the Estimates on every hand should undertake an expenditure of this kind. I warn the Committee that if they agree to the present Vote of £1,000 towards the expense of constructing a new harbour at Dover, they will commit themselves to an ultimate expenditure which can only be calculated by hundreds of thousands of pounds. I have ventured to trouble the Committee on this question, because I take a great interest in it, having considered the subject in years gone by. I do believe that, in the course they are now taking, the Government are involving the country in an expenditure which they will find will not produce the advantage expected of it. I trust that the Secretary to the Treasury, or some other Member of the Government, will favour the Committee with some observations upon the subject, in order that the Committee may sift the question thoroughly before they pledge themselves to this vast expenditure.

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir EDWARD J. REED) (Cardiff): I regret I am unable to support all the statements of the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Robert Peel). I happened to be a Member of the Committee which was appointed by the last Conservative Government but one to consider this question; and I can say that, after taking a great deal of evidence, all the Members of that Committee, with one exception, were in favour of the construction of a harbour at Dover. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Kincardineshire (Sir George Balfour) was against the proposal altogether; and I was against it, as proposed, upon the ground which the right hon. Baronet has very properly touched upon—namely, that while the evidence of the Army and Navy Authorities went to demonstrate the necessity of a deep-water harbour at Dover, for the purpose of coaling Her Majesty's iron-clad ships and the embarking and disembarking of troops, the harbour, as proposed, included a comparatively small proportion of deep water, and a very large proportion of shallow water. That came about from the circumstance that the Government of the day were anxious to keep the estimated cost of the works below £1,000,000 sterling. I suggested to the Committee the desirability of not making the question one of finance only; because I desired that the harbour might be so constructed—of course, with some increase of expenditure—that it would accommodate large ships, which the evidence showed it was necessary to accomplish. The Committee, with the exception of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire and myself, if I remember rightly, were entirely in favour of the proposal even as it stood.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: As a commercial marine harbour?

Sir EDWARD J. REED: No; mainly for the purpose of the coaling of Her Majesty's Fleet, and for the accommodation of Her Majesty's transports. Of course, the commercial consideration entered into the scheme; but the evidence was very powerful as to the desirability of having a harbour at Dover for public purposes. After the Committee had reported, a Member of the Admiralty Administration of that day came to me, and asked me what could be done to induce me to support a measure in the House for the construction of the harbour; but I obstinately—I hope not too obstinately—adhered to my view that, while it might be proper to expend even more than £1,000,000 sterling of public money upon a thoroughly efficient harbour, it was highly improper to expend such a large sum upon what would manifestly be a wholly inefficient harbour. In the end, the Government withdrew its proposal. I am not in a postion to express an opinion as to any contemplated form of harbour that may now be proposed; but I think it right to say that, since the period at which the Committee sat, very great improvements have been made with respect to the dredging of solid bodies from the bottom of the sea. I believe it would now be a comparatively inexpensive process to convert much of the shallow water there into deep water, in comparison with what it would have been before the improvements in dredging; in fact, it would have been impossible before those improvements. If it could have been shown to the Committee that the harbour originally proposed would include a large measure of deep water accommodation for Her Majesty's ships, the proposal would, I am sure, have received the assent of the whole Committee, with the single exception of the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardineshire.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): I, as an Irish Member, cannot assent to such an expenditure upon the Dover Harbour, while there are Irish harbours wholly unprotected. We, in Ireland, contribute more than our proper share of Imperial taxation, and yet there is a positive refusal to expend any money in the improvement of our harbours. In Bantry Bay, for instance, fishing is seriously impeded by anchors lying at the bottom. There has been no attempt on the part of the authorities to remove them. Again, there are shoals in Bantry Bay, on one of which Her Majesty's vessel the *Seahorse* went ashore some years ago, in consequence of there being no marks to indicate where the shoal was. I think the Irish Members will not assent to this expenditure without a guarantee, at least, that the obstacles to fishing in Bantry Bay will be removed.

Mr. RYLANDS: I move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Rylands.*)

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): We have no objection to the Motion, because we feel that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) has initiated a discussion of the greatest importance; and it is desirable hon. Members should have the opportunity of stating their views, and that the Government should have an opportunity of giving an explanation. It was understood that Progress should be reported at an early hour, in order to enable my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) to make his statement upon the introduction of the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill.

SIR ROBERT PEEL (Blackburn): Perhaps the Home Secretary will say whether he proposes to take the Compensation for Damages Bill to-night? It is rather too bad to keep us here night after night upon the off-chances of the Bill coming on.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): I have received applications from many quarters to go on, and I intend to go on if I can get any hon. Members to stay.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can now say, with anything like certainty, when the Civil Service Estimates are likely to be renewed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I propose to take them to-morrow night, if there is a reasonable opportunity. It has been arranged that the Navy Estimates shall be taken on Monday, and the Army Estimates on Thursday.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N. E.): It is a surprising thing that the Government should bring forward a Vote for £1,000, and not be prepared with any explanation of it.

MR. CHILDERS: We promised at Question time to report Progress early, in order to allow my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) to make his statement. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) has raised a discussion of the greatest importance, not as to £1,000, but as to £1,000,000 sterling. Undoubtedly there are at least half-a-dozen Members, if not more, who wish to speak on this subject; and therefore it would be quite impossible to conclude the discussion in time to allow my right hon. Friend to make his statement.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [8th March],

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the better regulation of Railway and Canal Traffic; and for other purposes."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed*.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): In introducing a measure of the great complexity and importance of a measure dealing with Railway and Canal Traffic, I think it will be well if I give a brief retrospect of the legislation since 1854 which bears upon the subject. In that year an Act was passed by the late Viscount Palmerston for giving facilities for through traffic over different railway systems, and to prevent undue preference. From that year down to 1867 there was no legislation and no inquiry with regard to the railway systems of the United Kingdom; but in 1865 a Royal Commission was appointed of very eminent and able men, of which the present Duke of Devonshire was Chairman. It sat for a long time, took a great deal of evidence, and in 1867 made a Report which went very thoroughly and completely into the whole of the principles which ought to govern legislation in the matter of railways. The question of unequal rates was then, as now, a subject of contention between Railway Companies and the public—it is, indeed, a question which has exercised the public mind ever since 1845—but the public interest in the subject has been developing of late years, and it has been quite recently very much increased in consequence of the depression in trade and agriculture. The Commission I refer to went very deeply into the question of rates, and reported—and here I may say that I will trouble the House with as few quotations as possible—especially in regard to inequality of rates. It reported that—

> "Inequality of charge in respect of distance, besides being a necessary consequence of this competition, is an essential element in the carrying trade—that is to say, the principle which governs a Railway Company in fixing the rate is that of creating a traffic by charging such a sum for conveyance as will induce the produce of one district to compete with that of another in a common market."

And they sum up their judgment on this question of inequality of rates in the following words:—

> "The power of granting special rates thus permits a development of trade which would not otherwise exist, and it is abundantly evident that a large portion of the trade of the country at the present time has been created by and is continued on the faith of special rates."

I draw the attention of the House to these words, because we have recently heard equal mileage rates advocated; and the whole tendency and result of all inquiries that have been made, from the very first inquiry that took place down to the last in 1882, shows that equal mileage rates are practically an impossibility. In 1872 a strong Joint Committee of both Houses was appointed to consider the question of Railway Amalgamation. I need hardly say that the Report of that Committee was of a very exhaustive nature, and of very high authority, having regard to the fact that among the Members of the Committee were the Marquess of Ripon, the Marquess of Salisbury, the Earl of Derby, the Earl of Redesdale, Lord Monk Bretton (then Mr. Dodson), Mr. Chichester Fortescue (now Lord Carlingford), the late Lord Belper, Sir R. Assheton Cross, the late Mr. Ward Hunt, and others of great weight. They decided that the principles laid down by the Duke of Devonshire's Commission were sound, and with regard to the proposal to introduce equal mileage rates they declared it to be impracticable. In their Report they say—

> "The proposers of equal mileage have admitted that there must be numerous exceptions —*e.g.*, where there is sea competition (*i.e.*, as above stated, at about three-fifths of the railway stations of the United Kingdom) where low rates for long distances will bring a profit, or where the article carried at low rates is a necessary, such as coal. It is scarcely necessary to observe that such exceptions as these, while inadequate to meet all the various cases, destroy the value of 'equal mileage' as a principle, or the possibility of applying it as a general rule."

That Committee made a variety of valuable recommendations, amongst others the appointment of a Commission; and as a result of that Report the Railway Commission of 1873 was appointed, and an Act was passed giving extensive powers to that Body. I think experience has shown that the powers conferred on the Commission by the Act of 1872-3 were too restricted. And not only were the powers too restricted, but the jurisdiction of the Commission has been considerably limited since its appointment by the action of the Courts of Law. The powers which the Courts possess of limiting the jurisdiction of the Commission by prohibition or *certiorari* has been freely exercised, and the usefulness of the Commission thereby curtailed. Nevertheless, it has done really good service to the community. Its decisions have given general satisfaction to the trading community; it has operated, so far as the railways are concerned, *in terrorem;* and we believe it is capable, if strengthened, of doing much good and useful work. Now, the most recent inquiry is the one of 1881-2 by a Committee of this House, over which Mr. Evelyn Ashley presided, and on which, no doubt, all the various interests were represented. The railway interest was fully represented. ["No, no!"] Well, there were nine Members representing that interest on the Committee. The best proof of the strong convictions which were entertained by different sections is that there were 100 divisions on this Report, and that some of the decisions were conflicting. There were very few occasions on which there was anything like unanimity. I must demur to the statement of my hon. Friend behind me, that the railway interest was not satisfactorily represented on that Committee. It was fully and adequately represented. However, Sir, we are all familiar with the Report of the Committee, which made a number of recommendations, none of which have been yet put into the shape of a Bill. I think many of these recommendations, notwithstanding the statement that the railway interest was not well represented on the Committee, are exceedingly valuable, and I hope we shall embody them fully in the measure I am now about to submit to the House. The next step was the Bill introduced by my right hon. Friend who was then President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain). That Bill was not considered, for various reasons, and was never discussed by the House. In consequence of the withdrawal of that Bill last year, the principal Railway Companies introduced Bills of their own, proposing new classifications and revisions of rates. The fate of these Bills was certain from the moment of their introduction. No doubt, they were objected to by the commercial and trading community, and they were practically rejected by the general feeling of this House. It was felt, not merely upon the merits of the Bills, but on the ground of procedure, that it was not right that such great changes should be effected by the means of Private Bills, introduced by Railway

Companies, who, if objecting to modifications made in their Bills by Parliament, could withdraw the measures altogether. Now, I have brought down the history of railway legislation from 1854 to the present time. We have arrived at a point when it is admitted that the condition of affairs with respect to railways is not satisfactory. There are statements made from all classes of the community, with regard to the treatment they receive from the Railway Companies. There is no doubt that the Schedules annexed to the present Act governing the rates and charges of Companies are obsolete, and greatly need revision and reform. It has, therefore, become necessary that some course shall be taken at once to satisfy the reasonable demands of the public, strengthen the Commission, and prevent what I am afraid is now a good deal too common—namely, undue preference being given to the large and heavy traffic, to the neglect of the local and intermediate traffic. But there is a good deal of exaggeration and misconception with respect to the rates charged, and I cannot substantiate some of the statements made; on the contrary, I think they will not bear investigation. For instance, I do not think it is correct that it has ever been possible to send grain from England to New York, in order to bring it back to London, or that sheep have been sent from Colchester to Rotterdam, in order to bring them to London. Various statements of that kind have been made, and I think they have been exaggerated and misleading. Those who make them cannot substantiate them. Yet, I am bound to say, there is much reason for many of the complaints we hear. I am daily almost overwhelmed with evidence of the inequalities existing between the rates charged for different articles of produce, according as they are British or foreign, coming from the same towns in the same quantities and under the same conditions. There is sometimes a variation of as much as 50 per cent—*e.g.*, between foreign cattle and home cattle. There are great inequalities in the charge for the carriage of foreign and home cattle from Newcastle to Wakefield, and from Newcastle to Chesterfield, and so on—inequalities which would seem so arbitrary that I can understand the trades generally, and the agricultural classes in particular, feel considerable irritation and annoyance at the disadvantage under which they are placed as compared with the foreigner. I do not believe the Railway Companies wish to discourage the development of English trade. On the contrary, their interests are really identical with those of the public generally. But I am afraid that railways in the past have been conducted during the period of prosperity very much on the same lines as the general business of the country. We have all made too much of the *grand commerce*. Everybody desired to deal with goods in bulk, and to send large quantities. The agriculturists despised *petite culture;* the manufacturers and merchants despised petty commerce; the railways despised petty transport. We have been prosperous—too anxious only to cultivate the great trades and heavy traffic, to deal with great bulks, and have been too neglectful of the development of smaller affairs and the smaller traffic and commerce, to which we shall probably have to pay more attention in the future. With regard to many of the complaints which have reached me as to some of the charges, I am bound to say that I think certain of those charges are doubtful in point of legality; and that being the case, where it is conceived that the rates are not consistent with the spirit of the Acts under which the railways work, we may fairly ask—"Why do not the traders appeal to the Commission on the subject—why have they not combined to put a case before them to try the legality of these doubtful charges?" Well, they have done so in a good many cases; but, in reply to that question, it may be said that the traders—especially the small traders and producers in the rural districts—are unwilling to incur the costs of litigation; and, moreover, it is a very unequal affair for such traders to enter into a contest with powerful Corporations having a large capital at their back, which they do not hesitate to use for the purpose of maintaining their vested interests. That fact will, perhaps, account, in a great measure, for the continuance of these inequalities of charge which are complained of, and for the apparent indifference with which the traders, especially in the agricultural districts, regard them, and for their unwillingness to bring test cases into Courts of Law for the purpose of having doubtful questions determined. I have no desire to exaggerate the feeling that exists on this subject; but every hon. Member in this House knows what the feeling of his own constituency is. But while there is this feeling in this country, the same kind of contest is being carried on in every other country. The question of railway rates and charges is a subject of the liveliest interest in France at this moment—in fact, there have been very excited discussions upon it there during the past few days. I have received from the Foreign Office information that complaints are made in France by the French manufacturers that the through rates from England to Germany, Switzerland, and Italy are so low that it is impossible for them to compete with the English manufacturers in the German and Belgian and Italian markets; and this complaint is especially made by the coal miners of France. In connection with a strike now going on there, it is complained that English coals sold in the interior of France are allowed preferential rates, and that French coals are handicapped thereby. It is said that more is charged for the carriage of French coal over short distances than for the carriage of English coal over long distances. The same contest has been going on in the United States for many years, and there various different forms of dealing with railway rates have been tried. There, I think, some progress has been made towards arriving at a solution of the question, more, perhaps, than has been made in any other country; and it is possible that we may have much to learn from that country on the subject in the future. I am sure that the House will not forget that while the traders have brought forward many well-founded complaints against the Railway Companies, yet that in legislating with regard to Railway Companies we are dealing with interests of great magnitude. It would, in fact, be suicidal if we were to do anything that would seriously interfere with the successful working and management of our railways. It has been said by Viscount Sherbrooke, I think, that the railways have contributed largely to the fortune of everyone but their own shareholders. I do not think anyone desires unduly to limit the railway rates. It may be desirable, to a certain extent, to regulate the through rates charged by the Companies; but it may be fairly said that the interests of the public and of the railways are so bound up together, that if Railway Companies will adopt a liberal policy towards the public, nobody will profit by that course as much as the Railway Companies themselves. Wherever the railways have adopted a liberal policy towards the public, they have been liberally rewarded for it. There can be no better illustration of the truth of my statement than is to be found in the result of the liberal course which was taken by the Midland Railway some 10 or 12 years ago, upon the advice of Sir James Allport, when they determined to make only two charges for conveying their passengers — one being at the rate of 1*d.* a mile, and the other at the rate of 1½*d.* a mile, and this for the shortest route. In this way they reduced the number of their carriages and the haulage on their lines very materially. There is no better travelling in the world than that afforded by the Midland Company, who convey their passengers to the North at the rate of 1*d.* per mile in comfortable and well-ventilated third-class carriages; while their first-class carriages, for conveyance in which they charge only 1½*d.* per mile, are the most roomy, the most convenient, and the most luxurious that can be found anywhere. The liberal reduction of fares to which I have referred was made in 1872, in accordance with the advice of Sir James Allport and Mr. Edward Ellis, head Superintendent; and nothing has ever answered the expectations of a Company more completely than this arrangement. Comparisons have often been made in this controversy between the rates of English and foreign railways; but in comparing them we must not forget to compare, at the same time, the relative costs of making the respective lines. No doubt, this House has done something to increase the cost of making English railways, and, no doubt, the landowners have also contributed to increase that cost; while no class of the community has profited so largely by the formation of railways as the landowners themselves. The disparity between the cost of making English and foreign railways is enormous. Let me give the House some statistics on this subject which have been prepared at the instance of the Board of Trade, showing the capital invested in English, Colonial, and Foreign Railways, and the cost per mile of making them. The capital which has been invested in railways in the United Kingdom amounts to £801,000,000, the cost of construction has been at the rate of £42,000 per mile, while 18,864 miles are worked at a cost of 63 per cent on the receipts. In the Colonies £362,000,000 has been invested in railways, which have been constructed at a cost of £12,000 per mile. In foreign countries £3,288,000,000 have been invested, the average cost of construction being £16,400 per mile, as compared with £42,000 in England. Here are the figures concerning a few of these foreign countries. That in which the railways have been most expensive, next to our own, has been France. The cost of construction there has been £28,000 per mile, in Germany it has been £21,000 per mile, in Russia £15,000 per mile, in the United States £13,000 per mile, in India £13,000 per mile, and in Canada £12,000 per mile. So that it will be seen that English railways cost 50 per cent more than the next most costly railways—the French. Now, it will be interesting to the House to know the rates of dividends among the English railways. Preference dividends range from about 4 to 4½ per cent. On the ordinary capital, amounting to about £300,000,000, the dividends are as follows:—

> "£48,000,000 of ordinary Stock pays no dividend; £3,000,000 pays under 1 per cent; £14,500,000, above 1 and not over 2 per cent; £9,500,000, 2 and not over 3 per cent; £21,000,000, or nearly £22,000,000, 3 and not over 4 per cent; £70,000,000, 4 and not over 5 per cent; £65,000,000, 5 and not over 6 per cent; £60,000,000, 6 and not over 7 per cent; £3,800,000, 7 and not over 8 per cent; £1,000,000, 8 and not over 9 per cent; £1,228,000, 9 and not over 10 per cent; £30,000, 12 and over 13 per cent; and £1,512,000, 15 per cent; or, on the whole, an average of 4¼ per cent."

Now, it would be impossible, at this stage of the Bill, to give illustrations of the difficulty of making through rates and short-distance rates comparatively equal and just. But there is one illustration that has come before me which I will submit to the House, which will show, perhaps better than a long statement, how possible it is to have a long distance rate which may seem very low, but which is regarded by those who pay for the traffic as being very heavy. I hold in my hand a Correspondence, put on the Table on Monday night, in relation to the rates charged for the conveyance of fish from Wick. The Wick fishermen complain of the high and almost prohibitive railway rates on their fish despatched to England. They say—

> "Considering the continued low prices, it is utterly impossible for us now to pay 80*s*. per ton, as we are greatly handicapped with large quantities of fish coming from Norway, Sweden, and France, these fish being sent by steamer, and landed in London and other English ports, at 2*s*. per package, whereas we have to pay 9*s*. per package of a similar size by rail."

They go on to say—

> "On the other hand, if you make a reduction in the carriage rates we are confident it will not only largely benefit the fishing communities, but that it will likewise also largely benefit the Railway Companies and the consumers in England and all concerned. At present almost the whole of the autumn catch of herrings, which is the principal catch of the year, is salted for exportation to the Baltic ports. If sufficient encouragement were given by low carriage rates, several hundred thousand tons of the autumn catch of salted herrings would be sent in a fresh condition to the English markets. In this manner the glut in the foreign markets would be prevented, better prices would be obtained by those engaged in the fishing industry, the rolling stock of the Railway Companies would be more fully and more profitably employed, and a large quantity of cheap and nutritious food would be brought within reach of the working classes in the large manufacturing towns of England in these depressed times."

The answer of the Railway Company to this is—

> "My Directors (of the Midland Railway) considered the present rates very favourable to the trade of Wick and Pulteneytown, as upon reference to a schedule of rates, which I sent to the Board of Trade on the 24th of June, 1884, it will be seen that fish is carried from Wick to London, by special or passenger trains, a distance of 742 miles, for 65*s*. per ton in three-ton lots, although for the same description of fish from Leith to London, a distance of 388 miles, the rate is 60*s*. per ton."

The House will see that you may have a rate for a short distance—even a very low rate—for, say, 50 miles, which, when multiplied fourfold, would be practically a prohibitive rate. Therefore there must be special rates for long distance traffic in order that the public may get the advantage at the centre of consumption. While I have complaints from the rural districts that foreign produce passes their door at half the rates the Companies charge for the same kind and amount of produce home-grown, importers are also complaining of the difficulty of distributing their produce owing to high rates. I remember a striking illustration of this with respect to Australian meat. There has been within the last few years an increase in the importation of frozen meat from Australia, and when it comes to London by steamer the importers are anxious to distribute it all over the country. No doubt, in the large towns, the people are anxious to obtain the benefit of this cheap import. Well, the importers complain, and they substantiate their case, that they have been required, in the first place, to pay 50*s.* a-ton for meat sent from London to Liverpool, whereas American meat is sent from Liverpool to London at 25*s.* a-ton, or just half as much. It is clear that the railways gave a special rate to Liverpool; but they would not give one to Manchester, so the rate was 25*s.* per ton from London to Liverpool, and 50*s.* per ton from London to Manchester. As a result, the frozen meat was sent to Manchester from London *viâ* Liverpool at 25*s.* to Liverpool, 12*s.* back from Liverpool to Manchester, so as to save some 12*s.* 6*d.* or 13*s.* per ton. The evidences of this kind of anomaly are, I am sorry to say, too abundant. There is hardly enough consideration, I believe, on the part of Railway Companies of what is fair to the public. Where there are competing lines, or where the lines converge at competing points, there the rates are low enough. I do not know that they are not, in some instances, even too low, because there is some evidence that the able and astute managers of these railways—and I do not know a more capable and astute set of men, taking them as a class—are not quite sure whether, in some of these cases, they are making a profit or not. They only know what the result is in the end. Where there is no competition—where the railway has, practically, a monopoly, and there are no lines converging at competing points—the through rates are too high, and the local traffic is not sufficiently considered. Well, Sir, I have now said all that I need say as to the reasons for the introduction of this Bill. I may say that I regret very much that my right hon. Friend the late President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) is not in his place to-night. I have received a note from him expressing his regret that, through indisposition, he is unable to be present here to-night. I should have liked to express to him my acknowledgments for the great care and thought and attention he devoted to the subject during the time he was at the Board of Trade. When I took Office I found that a measure had been fully prepared by him, and a measure which, I am sure, must have caused him a great deal of anxiety and care. During the time I have been at the Board of Trade I have given as much thought and attention to the subject as I possibly could. I have had the assistance not only of officials of the Board of Trade, but of the Law Officers of the Crown, and of the Lord Chancellor, in considering how we can make this Bill most effective for its purpose. And I may say that though, in some important respects, it may differ from the measure of my right hon. Friend, yet all his important provisions are included in it. When he comes to compare this Bill with his own measure, I think he will find very little that was in his absent from this. We have made some changes, and some important additions, which I will state to the House, and which, I think, will commend themselves to the House for their usefulness. The present Bill does not deal with the question of safety. I thought it better not to include questions of safety in the Bill. There was a danger of overloading the scheme. The question of safety is one which, I think, should be dealt with separately; and, as a matter of fact, private Members have Bills before the House dealing with it—Bills which I consider will be well worthy of consideration in Parliament. I have confined my Bill to the question of rates and fares, and the business of the Railway Commission. We propose to introduce very important changes; and I must say I think it is only right that I should acknowledge that the Commission, though much fettered in its work, has earned the respect of the community. I should be very sorry if, in consequence of any changes we may make in the Commission, it should be thought that we do not sufficiently appreciate the services of the gentlemen who, during the last 13 years, have devoted themselves with so much care and courtesy and devotion to the business of that Court. I wish to speak in the highest terms of Sir Frederick Peel, who has presided over it. No one could possibly have discharged his duty with more painstaking, with more conscientious-ness, and with greater determination to master every point of the cases brought before him, and no one could have been more anxious to show in his judgments a complete mastery of every detail. But in committing very large powers to the new Court — in enlarging the legal powers of the Commission—it has been felt that it is necessary that the First Commissioner, or the Chief Commissioner, should be a man possessed of legal knowledge and legal training, having the authority and standing of a Judge of the High Court. It has been felt, Sir, that the effect of appointing a man of that standing will be to shorten the proceedings of the Court, to add weight to its proceedings, and to limit the number of appeals; and I think, on the whole, it will be found to be a measure of economy. The Bill is divided into five parts. The first deals with the constitution of the Court of Procedure of the Railway Commissioners; the second with the jurisdiction of the Court; the third with railway traffic; the fourth with canals; and the fifth with miscellaneous matters. Well, it is provided in the Bill that the Court shall be a permanent Court of Record. The uncertain tenure of the Commissioners hitherto has detracted much from the dignity and authority of their Court. The necessity for its being continued from year to year has been injurious to it. The powers of the Chief Commissioner will be exercised in England by one of the Judges of the High Court, nominated from time to time by the Lord Chancellor; in Scotland, by a Judge of the Court of Sessions, nominated by the Lord President; and in Ireland, by one of the Judges of the High Court, nominated by a like authority. The other two Commissioners will be laymen, practical men of business. In every proceeding before the Commissioners the Chief Commissioner is to deliver judgment; and on all questions of law his opinion is to prevail. The only difference between this clause and the clause of my right hon. Friend is that he proposed a trained lawyer, not making him a member of the High Court of Justice. I confess that this is not at all essential to the Bill, and no part of the principle of the measure. I have no very strong opinion with regard to it. I only take the best evidence I can possibly obtain. Nevertheless, I must say that it all points to the appointment of a Judge to deal exclusively with this business. Of course, when the Railway Court is not sitting he may have time and leisure to devote to other judicial functions. In the next clause, as the House, no doubt, will have gathered, we intend to provide that the Court shall proceed to every locality where its services may be required, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland. Of course, the English Judge will not preside elsewhere than in England. The lay Commissioners will sit in Scotland with a Scottish Judge, and in Ireland with an Irish Judge. Every order of the Commissioners shall have the force of a judgment. No appeal from the decision of the Commissioners will be allowed on any question of fact; but on questions of law an appeal will lie to a Superior Court of Appeal. Beyond this there will be no appeal, unless the Court of Appeal themselves direct one to the House of Lords. I come next to the question of complaints. Complaints may be made to the Commissioners by any Local Authority or body of traders or freighters. It is deemed very important that we should extend the *locus standi*, and make it as large as possible, so as to include all persons who have complaints to make. I will just read the clause dealing with this matter—

> "A complaint of a contravention of section two of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1854, as amended by subsequent Acts, and a complaint under the principal Act, and any Act amending it, and under this Act, may be made to the Commissioners by (*a*) any local or harbour board, any council of a city or borough, any representative county body which may hereafter be created by an Act passed in the present or any future Session of Parliament, any justices in quarter sessions assembled, or any public local authority which now is or hereafter may be established under any general or special Act; or (*b*) any association of traders or freighters, or any chamber of commerce or agriculture, who shall obtain a certificate from the Board of Trade, that they are, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, entitled to make such complaint, without proof that the complainants are aggrieved by the matter complained of."

It is impossible, I think, to draw a clause more comprehensively. As I have said, no appeal shall lie from any decision of the Commissioners upon any question of fact, or from any decision of the Commissioners, regarding the *locus standi* of a complainant. The Bill strengthens the power of the Commissioners very liberally, and in giving such extensive powers the House will see the importance of the presiding Commissioner being a trained lawyer, whose decisions will carry weight and authority. Passing to another point, we extend the jurisdiction of the Commissioners to special Acts, and to all questions respecting tolls, rates, or fares; and we give them power also to award damages. Now, Sir, the Bill also provides that the public bodies may apply corporate funds, or may pay out of the rates the cost and expenses of any prosecution arising under the Act. Now, I come to the question of traffic, and with regard to the 24th clause I wish to point out that it is one of the most important clauses in the Bill. The 24th clause requires that—

> "Notwithstanding any provisions that may be contained in any general or special Act, every railway company, within twelve months from the commencement of this Act, shall submit to the Board of Trade a revised classification of rates and charges, and a revised schedule of maximum rates and charges."

I know it may be said by the Railway Companies that we have no right to require this from them; but I think anyone familiar with the Regulations of this House, from 1838 down to the present time, will see that the House has had the right to exercise this control. I will read the clause of the Act of 1845, and the Standing Order of the House is in the same spirit, and almost in the same words—

> "And be it enacted that nothing herein contained shall be deemed or construed to exempt the railway by this or the said recited Act authorized to be made from the provisions of any general Act relating to such Acts, or of any general Act relating to railways which may hereafter pass during the present or any future Session of Parliament, or from any future revision and alteration under the authority of Parliament of the maximum rates of fares and charges authorized by the said recited Act."

So that every Railway Company has contracted with the public and with Parliament that they shall, from time to time, be liable to such conditions as Parliament may see fit to impose. We provide also that, in framing such classification and schedule, the nature and grounds on which terminal charges are proposed to be made, and the circumstances under which they are proposed to be made, shall be fully stated. Well, Sir, when a Railway Company has sent in its new classification and schedule to the Board of Trade, what is to happen? We have provided for that. We shall advertise, so that the Board of Trade may receive representations from any part of the country, or from anybody interested, against either the classification or the maxima. It was thought that the Railway Commissioners would be the right authority to receive, consider, and revise the new classification and schedules; but the more that comes to be considered, the more it will be found to be impracticable. The Railway Commissioners are a Court of Law; and as these matters will be matters of consultation, we think they can be done better without a man in a long robe, but that we should appoint assessors to argue out the questions which may arise. Accordingly, with great deference, we think the Board of Trade ought to undertake this work. The Board may appoint assessors to meet the parties, and when the difference is argued out it is provided that they shall frame the schedule of charges in the way they think just and reasonable, and submit them to Parliament as a Provisional Order. If unopposed, they would pass into law in the ordinary course; but if opposed, these Provisional Orders would be treated in the same way as other Provisional Orders, except that they would be submitted to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament; so that Parliament will have the schedule, classification, and maximum entirely under its control. Provision is also made for amending and re-adjusting from time to time these rates and maxima, and also for grouping rates and settling questions of undue preference. And in the matter of undue preference, we provide that where it appears desirable, wherever there are unequal charges, the burden shall be thrown on the Companies to show what is the reason of the inequality, and the Board shall take into consideration what are the justifications of any inequality. So that, on the proof of inequality, it will lie on the Railway Company to show that such inequality does not constitute undue preference. Well, Sir, I have stated something of the power of the new Commission with regard to the schedule, maximum, and undue preference. We also provide for annual Returns, bringing the canals under the same heading as the railways. We authorize the public authorities to expend sums of money for the purpose of application to the Commissioners. Now, I come to a clause which is entirely new, and which may excite a little harmless ridicule, but for which I am prepared to take the responsibility. It has been found in the United States, notwithstanding that they give the Commissioners the same legal power and control as we propose to give our Commissioners, that there is room for something like negotiation—for the Commissioners or other independent bodies to arbitrate between Railway Companies and traders, to bring the two parties together, and bring them to something like an agreement. There is a very remarkable Report which has just been issued by the Bureau of Labour at Philadelphia. It is from the work on *Railway Transportation* by Mr. Hadley, head of the Bureau of Labour Statistics of Connecticut, who, I believe, has the honour of having started the scheme which I now submit to the House. I will read a few lines of it, if the House will permit me, to show precisely what the scheme is. He says—

> "There is another class of Commissions of quite a different character, Commissions with little or no power to act, and simply established for the sake of securing publicity. The success of such Commissions has been in some instances surprisingly great. This was especially the case with Massachusetts under the leadership of Charles Francis Adams, jun. The Massachusetts Commission was established in 1869. At first a great many people were disposed to treat it with good-natured ridicule. It had really no power, except the power to report. But its Reports were strong enough to command respect and even obedience. The Commissioners were by no means infallible. Some of their theories were wrong. They were in favour of a partial State ownership of railroads, which could not have done what they expected of it, and would probably have proved a great misfortune. But the Commissioners had something better than correct theories; they had practical business sagacity. They abandoned courses which proved wrong; they followed up with successful persistence those which proved right. Gradually but surely they introduced improvements in accounting, which since 1878 have been further extended by the Commissioners of other States. In the same way they gradually compelled the roads to adopt safety appliances by educating public opinion to a point where it demanded such action. And in the same way they exercised a decisive influence on the policy of the railroads with regard to rates, leading them to develop their local business instead of confining attention to the through business."

Now, what do we do? It is set forth in the 28th clause, and I hope Parliament will think it worthy of its consideration. It provides that—

> "Whenever any person sending or desiring to send goods by any railway, is of opinion that the railway company is charging him an unfair or an unreasonable rate of charge, or is in any other respect treating him in an oppressive or unreasonable manner, such person may make a complaint to the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade, if they think that there is reasonable ground for the complaint, may thereupon call upon the railway company for an explanation and endeavour to settle amicably the differences between the complainant and the railway company. For the purpose aforesaid, the Board of Trade may appoint either one of their own officers, or any other competent person to communicate with the complainant and the railway company, and to receive and consider such explanations and communications as may be made in reference to the complaint; *and the Board of Trade may pay to such last-mentioned person such remuneration as they may think fit, and as may be approved by the Treasury.*"

I see this proposal is received by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir Richard Webster) with a smile; but it has met with success, and in America they have shown what can be done by mediation.

> "The Board of Trade shall, from time to time, submit to Parliament reports of the complaints made to them under the provisions of this section, and the results of the proceedings taken in relation to such complaints, together with such observations thereon as the Board of Trade shall think fit."

Now, the Report of the American Commissioners shows that there is nothing to which Railway Companies are so amenable as public opinion; and the Reports made from time to time of these complaints, and the way in which they are dealt with, will, I believe, constitute a very important mass of evidence, as to the way in which the railways of the country are managed, not only for the guidance of railway managers, but also for the guidance of Parliament, as to how it may have to deal with them in future. I have the strongest conviction that what has happened in America will prove to be our case here, and that by securing proper management you will do much to prevent the permanent interests of railways being sacrificed to temporary interests, and also secure the interests of the public. There is no necessity to appoint a Commission, because these complaints will be made to the Board of Trade, who will appoint an assessor or one of its own officers to hear complaints from time to time. It will not, of course, listen to frivolous complaints; and it may make rules and charge a small fee to prevent vexatious and unnecessary complaints, and the result of this, I believe, will be to prevent a good deal of litigation, because when men having one object in view get together round a table to discuss any questions they generally arrive at a reasonable result. The last number of *Bradstreet's Journal* speaks of the almost unvarying success which has attended the work of the Commissioners, and the extension of it. Last year has been free from litigation, and it speaks of the good done by the Railway Commissioners in bringing the Railway Companies and the public together in friendly discussion. Having now submitted the Bill to the House, I must appeal to hon. Members on a subject of such importance, where such vast interests are concerned, to give this measure a patient and careful examination. We do not claim for it that it is incapable of improvement, and, no doubt, it will be in the power of hon. Members to discover and repair many defects in it. All I can say is that we shall welcome, from any quarter whence they may come, suggestions which tend to improve the measure which I now ask the House to read the first time. I believe there is no desire in the House or in the mind of the public to harass the Railway Companies, or to diminish their lawful gains; but there is a desire to regulate the monopolies they have enjoyed, so as to conduce in the future more effectually than in the past to the interests of the country and to the national prosperity.

Mr. HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): I crave the indulgence of the House for a few moments while I address myself to some clauses of the Bill. I should like, first, to express my sense of gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman for the great care and knowledge which he has bestowed upon this Bill, and the lucid manner in which he has placed its provisions before the House. If, therefore, I call attention to one or two points which it seems to me have been overlooked, I beg the House to consider that I do so not in a carping spirit, or with a desire unduly to criticize the measure. In the first place, I have not heard, in the course of the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, much about canals. ["Yes!"] If the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with the subject, I am, of course, glad to be corrected. I will turn to the question of through rates. I should like to see powers given to the Commissioners to declare through rates between points connected by two or three different lines, so that the public may not incur terminal charges three or four times over on the same traffic. There is another point to which I desire to call attention. I should be glad to see something done with regard to unequal rates between different districts. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that there will be power to deal with unequal rates as between different classes of traders; but we want, also, power to deal with unequal rates as between different districts. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the difficulty which traders have in contending with and prosecuting their rights against powerful Railway Companies. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned that it was proposed that persons having complaints would be able to make them to the Board of Trade, and that the Board of Trade would appoint assessors to stand between the Railway Company on one side, and the person making the complaint on the other; but I did not gather from the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman that there was any power to enforce their decision.

Mr. MUNDELLA: The permissive clause, under which the Board of Trade will report the result of its mediation.

Mr. HICKMAN: Then, Sir, it would appear that the tribunal will be unable to decide questions of this character. If that is not so, I shall be glad to be corrected. The right hon. Gentleman said, in the course of his speech, that equal mileage rates have been found to be impossible, because, in some cases, there was sea competition; but I entirely fail to see why sea competition should make equal mileage rates impossible. It is, perhaps, impossible to make mileage rates on coal equal to those on articles of more bulk and greater value; but I submit that for equal distances and for traffic of the same character there might be equal mileage rates. Then the right hon. Gentleman says that other countries are complaining of the railway rates, and he mentions that complaints are now being made in the United States of America. But, Sir, at the present time corn is being carried from Chicago to New York at one-seventh of 1*d.* per ton per mile, and the rate for iron from Birmingham to London is $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per ton per mile, or more than 10 times as much as the cost of bringing corn from Chicago to New York. That, Sir, is not the only instance I could give; and if the right hon. Gentleman will examine the valuable Returns made by the hon. Baronet the Member for North Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson), he will see that in all cases—at any rate, as compared with the district which I have the honour to represent—foreign railway rates are lower to the extent of 40 or 50 per cent. The right hon. Gentleman said that English railways cost more to make than foreign railways; but I suggest that the explanation of that is that the right hon. Gentleman has taken the cost of a single tract in America and compared it with the cost of, say, a quadruple tract in this country. The London and North-Western Railway, to a large extent, consists of four lines; and it is obvious that the cost of its construction is more than that of a railway having only a single line. Having made these few observations, I beg to express my thanks to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade for the very lucid statement with which he has accompanied the introduction of this Bill.

MR. J. C. BOLTON (Stirling): The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has stated, in the course of his speech, that many exaggerated statements have been made, and many complaints with regard to railway rates which have not been substantiated. Sir, I think that any hon. Member who takes the trouble to examine the evidence produced before the Railway Commission in 1881-2 will find that many of the statements made then were very much of the same character as those to which the right hon. Gentleman has to-night alluded, and that when those statements were thoroughly examined they were found to be what I may call entirely bottomless. ["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen dissent from that statement. I refer them to the evidence and to the Report of the Committee, in which they will find my words fully borne out. But the right hon. Gentleman himself seems to have some belief in those statements. The right hon. Gentleman read a paragraph from a letter which he said had been laid on the Table of the House from the Provost of Wick, and various other gentlemen connected with the fish trade in that district. The paragraph was to the effect that the Memorialists that, if sufficient encouragement were given by low carriage rates, several hundred thousands of tons of the autumn catch of herrings would be sent in a fresh condition to the English market. Now, if there were any Members of the Fishery Board here, they would, I think, be able to bear me out in saying that there is no such thing as several hundreds of thousands of tons of fish caught on all the Coast of Scotland together. But, if further proof is required, I hold in my hand another letter signed by the same gentleman who led the signatories of the Memorial — namely, Mr. Rae, Provost of Wick, dated March, 1885, and which is upon the same subject. Complaining of the exorbitant rates charged by the Railway Companies for the transport of fish from Wick to London, amongst other things he says that during the herring season—that is to say, the same time as is mentioned in the other letter, from about the 20th of July to the 6th of September in each year—"Almost the whole catch of herring, ranging from 100,000 to 120,000 barrels, is salted for exportation." Now, the difference between the two statements is that in one it is said that, with low rates, several hundred thousand tons of herrings would be sent from Wick to London; and, in the other, it is said that almost the whole catch of herrings, but ranging only from 100,000 to 120,000 barrels, is salted for exportation; whereas, if the carriage rates to the English markets were more reasonable, a large proportion of this would be sent fresh to the English capital. Now, Sir, what are those exorbitant rates? The right hon. Gentleman has told us that there is a special rate of 65*s.* per ton for 741 miles; but I will take the higher rate—the rate charged for smaller quantities—the ordinary rate, which is 80*s.* per ton. These same gentlemen, in a letter to which I have alluded, say that the cost of herrings on the quay at Wick is £3 per ton, and they complain that the carriage of these herrings is £4 per ton. The total cost of herring laid down in London is, therefore, £7 per ton. I will assume that each herring will weigh half-a-pound, and that will give 4,480 herrings to the ton; the cost of the fish in London, therefore, including the carriage, is £7 a-ton, or 1,680 pence, and three-eighths of 1*d.* is the cost of every herring laid down in London. Where, then, is the enormous reduction which can be made in the carriage rates which will enable the fishermen of Wick to catch their hundreds of thousands of tons of herrings and send them in a fresh condition up to London? Well, Sir, there is a very similar statement in the document to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred, and that is with respect to the carriage of codfish. The Memorialists state that the cost of codfish at Wick is from 9*d.* to 1*s.* each, and they complain that the rate for them is 1*s.* 2*d.*; but they do not tell us what is the average weight of these fish, and we shall, in consequence, have to arrive at it by calculation. Assuming the freight to be £4, there are about 69 fish in a ton, which gives for each fish the weight of about 32 lbs.; and, therefore, hon. Members will see that, at the rate complained of by these gentlemen, codfish are laid down in London at something less than 1*d.* per pound. If hon. Gentlemen know anything about their own housekeeping, they will perceive from this that the scarcity of fish in London is not due to any extravagance in the rates of carriage charged by the Railway Companies. I have gone into the details of these matters for the purpose of disabusing the minds of hon. Members, as far as I can, and for the purpose of explaining the letter to which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has alluded; and I have now merely to say in conclusion, as a Member of the Railway Committee referred to by him, that I am satisfied that the railway interest was not over-represented on that Committee. Out of the 27 Members of the Committee, only seven represented the railway interest. There were some Gentlemen who came there—I do not wish to speak particularly—with their minds made up that the Railway Companies were acting very improperly, and no evidence that we could produce was sufficient to disabuse their minds of that impression. But the minds of the majority of the Committee were disabused, and over and over again since then Railway Managers and Railway Directors have informed the Board of Trade that that they were perfectly willing to do all in their power in support of a Bill based on the recommendations of that Committee, and they wish for nothing better so far as the railway legislation of the future is concerned.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER (Isle of Wight): Sir, I desire to add to the acknowledgments already made the expression of my appreciation of the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. I shall not occupy the time of the House for more than a few minutes, and I should not have taken part in the discussion but for the unfortunate absence of the late President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Stanhope). Sir, I acknowledge the very fair and kind way in which the right hon. Gentleman has intimated that he is aware of the labour bestowed on the preparation of the Bill by Members of the late Government. It is not my intention to criticize to-night the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman; but I think I may say at once that we on these Benches consider that the subject before us is one which ought to be discussed in a friendly and not in a Party spirit, and with the desire of producing a measure which will deal out justice to the Railway Companies, and which will, at the same time, confer benefits on the trade of the country. I am sure that hon. Members will bear in mind in discussing this question that it is one which on almost every point presents two sides, and that it will be most necessary to balance the scales of justice so as not to confer upon either parties a benefit to which they are not entitled. I may, perhaps, be permitted to say a few words only of a general character on some of the leading points to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred; and I do so very willingly, because it has been my good fortune to have to consider this question on both sides for some years. I have seen the working of this Commission from the point of view of the Railway Companies, and I have seen the working of the Commission from the traders' point of view; and, therefore, I trust that I shall, to a certain extent, be able to assist the House in their discussions on this Bill. I am exceedingly glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman state that he, and those who have assisted him—amongst others, the Lord Chancellor—

have come to the conclusion that it is right that this Commission should be presided over by a competent lawyer, and a lawyer who holds the position of one of Her Majesty's Judges. If there is one thing which has done more harm than anything else, it is the feeling that this is a tribunal where something "more than justice" can be obtained. It is hardly necessary to point out that "more than justice" means injustice, and that, both from the traders' point of view and from the point of view of the Railway Companies, a bold and firm judgment is required of matters of law which will command the respect of both sides. There is another most important consideration in connection with the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, which must, I think, commend itself to the House, and that is the question of utilizing judicial strength. It will be remembered that for a very considerable portion of time every year the Commissioners have had practically nothing to do; and I think it would be a very great advantage to the country if the time of any Judge who presides over railway cases should be devoted to other business when such cases do not call for his services. There is another point which I ask the House most carefully to take into consideration; and that is, the question of assessors who are to sit in England, Scotland, and Ireland at the side of the Judge. Of course, I recognize to the fullest extent the great advantage of assessors, and I am quite sure that those who practise in those Courts in which assessors sit for the purpose of assisting the Judge, or before tribunals where an engineer has to be called in to assist a lawyer, or a lawyer called in to assist an engineer, must be convinced that this is a convenient form of tribunal. But I think that the right hon. Gentleman should consider whether it is always necessary that an assessor should sit, because there are a large number of cases which do not involve any questions of a technical kind at all. I speak in the hearing of many hon. Members who have conducted cases before the Commission, and I say that although there are cases requiring technical knowledge, there are a large number which depend entirely and solely on the construction of Acts of Parliament; and I submit to the right hon. Gentleman that it is worthy of consideration whether or not there should not be power in the parties, or in the Court itself, to dispense with the sittings of assessors where it is deemed that their services would not be required. By that means it seems to me we may further utilize the Court, by enabling them to employ their time in other ways. I do not wish to discuss the question as to whether it is better that the classification should be settled by the Board of Trade or the Railway Commission. I quite agree that there is a good deal to be said for the Office presided over by the right hon. Gentleman, and I assure him that whatever were the views put forward by the late Government they were not final, and that the question was left for discussion. It is a most difficult question, and I agree that it is very desirable to have a preliminary discussion in the nature of a familiar forum where the parties can discuss their difficulties. I think all the Railway Companies will agree that a new classification is required; and I do not believe that anyone would contend that the classification which has grown up in Committee Rooms is of the kind which should continue. It must be remembered that the question of short-distance traffic is one of exceeding difficulty, because a mere mileage rate which might be proper for long distances would not do for short ones of a few miles. I have seen a rate as low as 3*d.* for a distance of four miles; but I have no doubt that many hon. Gentlemen will know that it is impossible to move a ton of goods under a cost of 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* That which requires very careful consideration is the adjustment of rates, both in the interest of traders and of Companies; because to a great extent, at the present time—and I can give chapter and verse for what I say—there is no doubt that the long-distance traffic has been the source of profit which has enabled the Companies to carry the short-distance traffic at all. Therefore, you will have to see that each description of traffic bears its own burden, and that it produces some remuneration to the Railway Companies for carrying it. But I quite believe that there will be no indisposition on the part of the Railway Companies to deal with that matter upon a proper footing. Then, Sir, I think that it will be necessary to give very careful consideration to the question of awarding damages.

Although I do not object to the principle, I may say that it has often been pointed out that the remedy for undue preference does not consist of necessity in lowering the rate paid by a particular applicant—it may consist in raising the rate charged to people about whom he complains. So far as I can see, if proper provisions are made, the question whether it is right for a Court presided over by a competent Judge to give damages is one well worthy of the consideration of the House; but I do not think it desirable at once to adopt the principle until we see a little more of the way in which it is proposed to be worked out. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood the smile which passed across my countenance if he supposes that I was laughing at anything which he said. Nothing was further from my mind; I smiled at a remark of one of my hon. Friends, and certainly not at any proposal which he brought forward. I am as much as anyone in favour of negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, or anything which will bring the parties together; but I am not sure that it would be wise to take a step in the direction of holding over either party the power of public complaint, which might encourage the ventilation of grievances which have no substance in them. Still, with regard to this, I only say that the clause by which the right hon. Gentleman sets store is a difficult one; and I trust that it will receive the most fair and candid consideration from every hon. Member on this side of the House who takes part in the discussion. I shall not enter tonight on any discussion of legal mileage rates, or of the rates on foreign produce; but I should like to say that, although there may be very little difficulty—and I think there is very little difficulty—in dealing with the rates on foreign produce, as compared with the rates on home produce, if it be treated as a question of law, yet the matter has great difficulties when you come to deal with it on commercial grounds. It may be to the advantage of the community that there should be some power of carrying imported goods at cheap rates; but my only desire in referring to the subject is to keep before the minds of hon. Members the fact that this question of the carriage of home produce as compared with foreign will require the most careful attention of the House. Having made these few observations, I have only to express the hope that the House will not think I have done wrong in simply calling attention to the particular points which interest us, and on which we desire to assist Her Majesty's Government. I do not intend anything like instruction to the right hon. Gentleman, whom I beg to thank for the very clear and interesting statement which he has given to the House.

Colonel SALIS-SCHWABE (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I should like to make a few observations upon this subject, which I believe is of great interest to the community at large, and which is most certainly of great interest in Lancashire. In that county we have found that our profits have almost, and in many cases quite, disappeared, and that wages have gone down; but the railway rates remain just as they were formerly, with the exception of a small reduction which has taken place since the Manchester Ship Canal Bill was introduced. Now, among the reasons given by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) for the present high rates, it is said that there has been considerable extravagance in the purchase of land and the construction of the railways; but if that be the case, I say it is no reason why the consequences of that extravagance should be made good by a tax on the trading community. If it be necessary to help the railways out of their difficulties, let it be done by some general tax. Then, again, we fail to see the justice of two rates, one for goods for exportation, and another for goods for the home markets. If it pays the Railway Companies, as apparently it does, to take goods for exportation from Manchester to London at 25*s.* per ton, we cannot see why they should charge 40*s.* per ton for goods to be sold in this country. It is certainly to be hoped that the Bill will carry out the object we have in view—namely, that the Railway Companies shall no longer be allowed to carry on their business to the injury of the mercantile community.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells): I desire to make my acknowledgments to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella) for the very able and clear statement he has made with regard to a measure which is, perhaps, one of the most important that this House has had to deal with. If anything were necessary to recommend it to the impartial consideration of hon. Members on this side of the House, it would be so recommended by the handsome and generous manner in which the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the labours of his Predecessors in connection with this Bill. I think that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman leaves little to be desired, in so far as it shows that he has realized the fact that the difficulty to be contended with is only to be met by a practical remedy. The right hon. Gentleman appears thoroughly to understand the difficulties which now exist with regard to rates which he calls obsolete, and as to the practice of Railway Companies, with local traffic, and with the rates—of which he gave us examples—for the conveyance of foreign stock and home stock. I wish to mention a point on which all those who are interested in this subject feel very strongly—namely, that in entering into a dispute with one of the Railway Companies before the Commissioners the persons interested are entering into a very unequal contest. We have had from the hon. Member for Stirlingshire (Mr. J. C. Bolton) an interesting statement with regard to the rate of the carriage and cost of fish brought from Wick to London; and there was at the conclusion of his speech one sentence which struck me as being of great value. I understood the hon. Gentleman to say, with reference to the Committee on Railway Rates which sat in 1881-2, that he wished for nothing better than that the railway legislation of the future should be based on the recommendations contained in the Report of that Committee. Exactly; I can quite understand that. It is a very natural suggestion; but I hope, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that the whole of the remedies which will be provided for the evils which now exist will not be confined within the narrow limits of the recommendations of that Committee. That Committee did good service in bringing forward a good deal of evidence; but there are reasons why it is thought that the recommendations contained in their Report should not be accepted as a settlement of the question. It is quite clear from the feeling out-of-doors, which is both justifiable and has been justified, that, having regard to the undue preferences which have been given and are given—undue preferences given not only between place and place, and between trade and trade, but also, in the way which comes most home to us, undue preferences as between our own and foreign produce—the time has come when it is absolutely necessary that this question should be grappled with boldly and settled. As far as can be judged from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, he appears to deal with every point which we have urged. It is not for me, without having had an opportunity of reading the Bill, to give a definite judgment upon the matter; but I am bound to say that, on the face of it, we have every reason to be well satisfied with the proposals of the Government. I say that the right hon. Gentleman appears to have grappled with the subject boldly, and to be anxious to deal with it effectually. The Railway Commission, as I understand, is to be strengthened by the appointment, as its head, of a Judge of the High Court. That, Sir, will undoubtedly have the effect of causing the decisions of the Court to be more effective, and received with more respect, not only by those who approach the Court as appellants, but by the Railway Companies themselves. When we come to the question of the Board of Trade being constituted as a special tribunal to settle, in the first instance, the nature and amount of terminals, and to settle the whole of the classification of all the railways—I do not desire to express any definite opinion, but it does seem to me that you are putting on the Board of Trade an amount of work which is so vast that it is somewhat doubtful whether they will be able to cope with it; and at this early stage I submit to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman whether it might not be more effectually dealt with by the appointment of a Royal Commission for the sole purpose of dealing with the difficult questions of the re-classification of rates and terminals? The question as to the right of Railway Companies to charge terminals outside their maximum rates was before the Railway Commissioner quite lately. The contention of the trade interest was that the maximum rate includes within it the ordinary rate. The Railway Commissioner's judgment supported the traders' contention. That decision was questioned, and the point is still *sub judice.* Whatever may be the result as between the traders and the Railway Company, the question of terminals must not at this moment be regarded as settled; and I am of opinion that the traders will not be satisfied with an arrangement which leaves the question of terminals an open one. I do not understand whether the Board of Trade will give what the Railway Companies now claim — namely, that they may have at every station on their lines the right of imposing a separate and definite terminal. It is the contention of the Railway Companies that they have the right to do this. Does the Bill give power to the Board of Trade that they are to determine, and that they are to publish in a Bill to come before this House, the whole classification of every rate of the Railway Companies, together with every terminal which the Railway Companies are to be allowed to charge at each station? I do not wish to say anything in a contentious spirit; but, having been interested in this question for a long time, I desire to make the matter as clear as it can be. At this late hour I have only to thank the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade for the able way in which he appears to have grappled with the subject as a whole. After listening to that statement, I am induced to hope that when I have read the Bill I shall be able to give it my support.

Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON (Oxfordshire, Banbury): Sir, I desire to add the expression of my satisfaction to that of other hon. Members at the comprehensive way in which my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) has dealt with this question. I shall reserve anything I may have to say as to its provisions until the Bill comes forward for second reading. I should not have spoken to-night had it not been for two or three words which fell from the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir Richard Webster) with reference to the Railway Commission. I understood the hon. and learned Gentleman to say that the impression was abroad that the Court, as constituted at the present time, did more than justice, which was equivalent, in point of fact, to doing injustice. Now, Sir, having served on the Committee of 1881-2, before which Sir Frederick Peel was examined, I am bound to say that, so far as justice is concerned, every decision of the Court which was impugned was fully justified by the evidence which Sir Frederick Peel gave before that Commission. Those decisions were justified not only as being consonant with common sense, but also as being in conformity with previous decisions of the Court of Common Pleas; and when we are told that the Railway Commission does not possess the full confidence of the public, I think I am justified in saying that it has the full confidence of the traders of the United Kingdom, and that, not because it has done more than justice, but because it has done equal justice. I thought it my duty to say this; but I will not at this late hour say anything else, except again to express my full concurrence in what has been said by my hon. Friend (Sir Richard Paget) on the opposite side of the House, that there is in this Bill a promise to all those who are interested in railway traffic that the grievances that have been felt will be remedied, and that a system will be created which will prevent the recurrence of similar grievances for the future. There are many other questions that have been raised in the long and interesting speech of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Mundella) to which I shall have other opportunities of adverting. As I said at the outset, notwithstanding my desire to do justice to the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has introduced this important question, I should not have been induced to rise had it not been for the reference made to the Railway Commission.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I do not intend to go into the question of railway rates at any length at this late hour, nor to comment on the details of the measure brought so clearly and exhaustively before the House by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella). I am quite content that he has recognized the maxim of one of the late Inspectors of the Board of Trade, that if the State does not control the railways the railways will control the State; and that he has recognized that the interests of the public and the interests of trade are safer in the hands of the State and the Bodies that the State appoints as representatives of the interests of the public than they are in the hands merely of Railway Directors. The reason that I have ventured to rise for one moment to ask the indulgence of the House to allow me to make one or two remarks is this—there is an omission in the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman has himself referred to it; and it is because I am responsible for the measure to which he most kindly referred, and to which he drew the favourable attention of the House—the Bill for securing the greater safety of railway passengers and railway servants—that I desire to refer to that omission. I do not wish to detain the House for more than a moment; but I certainly do desire to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider his decision as to the non-admission of clauses dealing with the question of safety. What are the facts? The Royal Commission which reported on Railway Accidents took an immense body of evidence, and gave us an elaborate Report about nine years ago.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in referring to matters which are not within the Bill. He is now speaking upon a totally different subject.

MR. CHANNING: I simply wished to draw attention to the fact that in the Bill brought before the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) in the Session of 1884 this question of public safety was dealt with; and I would, therefore, appeal on these grounds to my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade to reconsider his decision, and to admit considerations of safety into the scope of his Bill.

MR. LIONEL COHEN (Paddington, N.): I am sorry, Sir, to detain the House at this late hour; but I only wish to say a word or two. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mundella), I must say, has introduced his Bill in a most clear manner. For 20 days the Royal Commission on Depression of Trade has been taking the evidence of traders, many of whom feel aggrieved by undue preference been given by the Railway Companies to certain other traders or certain other districts. With three sheets of the memoranda of specific grievances of which they complain in my hand, I can state most emphatically that there is scarcely one of these grievances that will not be covered by the clauses of the Bill the right hon. Gentleman has brought forward. If the clauses of the Bill are examined they will be found to deal satisfactorily with this question of rates, which is a most difficult one to touch. If it were dealt with in any other way than that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to adopt, as regards the general principle, I am satisfied that the result would be an utter failure. You must have an elastic system if you are to succeed. If you are going to fix a maximum or a minimum rate you will find that the circumstances of the country change so rapidly that you will have, in the course of time, to renew your legislation. It would then be impossible, without new legislation from time to time, to do justice to the interests of the traders and the railways. You must have some elastic tribunal that will have it in its power from time to time, without fresh legislation, to take cognizance of the circumstances of the development of trade and the other elastic circumstances which it is necessary to bear in mind. I am somewhat anxious with regard to one part of the Bill, because the right hon. Gentleman did not speak of it with that extreme confidence which I should have liked to see him exhibit—I refer to what I may call the conciliatory tribunal of the Board of Trade. It seems to me that in the clauses which give power to the Chambers of Commerce and other authorities and Local Bodies to be heard before the Board of Trade or Railway Authority, he did not allow any facility for the individual trader to appear before it; therefore, unless there is that tribunal of conciliation that he speaks of, the individual trader would have no *locus standi.* I remember an instance in which a trader was advised to appeal to the Commission; but he asked what power could he have against the Railway Companies? That was a farmer in the North of England. It is most important that there should be a tribunal like that referred to which will be easily open to the individual trader just as the public tribunal will be open to public bodies. So far as I can speak on behalf of the commercial community with which I have been connected, without pledging myself to all the minute details of the Bill, I think our best thanks are due to the right hon. Gentleman and to his Predecessor for their services in dealing with this question in so exhaustive, and, at the same time, so complete a manner.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade will value any expression of congratulation from hon. Gentlemen sitting on these Benches; but it is so seldom that we Irish Members have an opportunity of congratulating Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite on the Bills they introduce, that I, for one, cannot deny myself the luxury of expressing my satisfaction at the very conciliatory and comprehensive manner in which the right hon. Gentleman has dealt with this question. As a Representative of an Irish constituency, and also as a member of a very large trading body in Ireland which has suffered from these differential rates that are given to English Companies and shippers of foreign agricultural produce, I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that though it has been challenged by an hon. Member behind him, he will find that in what he has said this evening as to the inequalities and preferential character of the rates charged by the Railway Companies, many hon. Members, particularly those from Ireland, will be able to corroborate him. They will be able to more than corroborate him, because I think, on the second reading of the Bill, we shall be able to bring before the notice of the House cases of most exorbitant charges on the part of the Railway Companies—such extraordinary charges as he probably does not dream of at the present time. With reference to his having been challenged in regard to the fish trade in Scotland, I certainly must admit that the hon. Member (Mr. J. C. Bolton) on the Bench behind the right hon. Gentleman went into figures to prove that the fish trade in Scotland is not handicapped to the very extraordinary extent that the statement in the Report read by the right hon. Gentleman would indicate; but I shall be able to prove—and other Members from Ireland will be able also to prove—to the satisfaction of the right hon. Gentleman that hundreds of tons of fish captured along the Irish Coasts in the fishing season are actually used as manure, because the railway rates from the different towns on the Western and South-Western Coasts are so prohibitive that it would not pay the fishermen and dealers in fish to send their takes to the English market. If the steamers plying between these Irish Western ports and the English ports are not at hand when the large takes of fish occur in Ireland the fishermen absolutely consent to sell their fish by the car load to the farmers for manure rather than trust to the enormous charges of the Irish and English railways for sending their fish to market. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, when further considering this matter, to give his most careful attention to this question of the preferential rates that are being given to all kinds of foreign produce coming into this country. It is one of the greatest grievances that producers of the whole of the United Kingdom have to labour under, for this reason—that, as a rule, the Railway Companies have almost a monopoly of the carriage of goods from all the different parts of the country. Goods from Scotland must come on one or two lines, also goods from Ireland, and this likewise applies to goods brought from different parts of this Kingdom. But goods coming into this country from other countries have so many different ports of entry—Bristol, Liverpool, Southampton, Grimsby, Hull, London, and so on—that the competition between the railways to carry these goods from the different ports to the centres of commerce is so keen that it is impossible for some home producers to compete in the English market with the foreign supply on account of the preferential rates which the foreigner receives. There is another point on which I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to stand by the clause he referred to in the final part of his Bill—that is that particular part in which he requires the Railway Companies to send regular Reports to the Board of Trade. No matter what has been said by hon. Members who followed the right hon. Gentleman, I can assure him, as a trader myself, and one who has had a large experience in connection with railways, that there is no point on which they are more susceptible of influence than that particular point of publication being given to complaints which are made against their charges. There is no clause in the whole of the Bill which will be found to operate more to the benefit of the trading community and to the prevention of litigation—to the prevention of the Companies pushing traders to that extreme point of pressure when they have to resort to litigation—than that part which requires justifiable complaints to be made public by the quarterly or annual publication of Reports. Of course, the hon. Gentleman who spoke from this side of the House is quite right in saying that it would be ridiculous for the Board of Trade to publish every trifling complaint sent down to them; but whoever is at the head of the Board of Trade should discriminate and make a choice of the complaints to be published in the quarterly or annual Reports. I should like on another point to ask a question—that is to say, as to the clause dealing with the cost of bringing these complaints before the Board of Arbitration. The right hon. Gentleman said the cost would be borne by the representative or other Body that would make the complaint to the Railway Commission. I should like to ask this—if these Bodies, or even if individuals, substantiate their complaints, showing just ground for them, and compel the Railway Companies to adopt the rates they demand, or to yield in any other respect to their claims, should not the Companies, under the circumstances, be compelled to pay the costs incurred, as in any ordinary case where a plaintiff obtains a verdict against a defendant? I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will be good enough to inform us on that point? It would, I think, be a hardship upon the ordinary taxpayer if the cost of trying a case where a Railway Company presses unduly on one particular branch of trade is imposed upon the general community. While we shall all, I am sure, be very glad to see the local representative Bodies allowed to appear before the tribunal, many of us would be inclined to object to the clause, unless it were so drafted as to allow the costs to be charged against the Companies where they are proceeded against successfully.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire): I do not wish to detain the House; but, as a Member of the Railway Rates Committee, I cannot allow the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stirlingshire (Mr. J. C. Bolton) to pass unchallenged. I think that a consideration of the facts and figures brought before that Railway Rates Committee will show that a large number of the charges as to the existence of preferential rates which were brought against the Companies were proved. With regard to the representation of the railway interest on the Committee, I may state that an examination of the divisions will show that Railway Directors, on an average, formed a third of the Members who attended. It is almost unnecessary to say that these Gentlemen invariably voted in a body together. As to the extraordinary system of charging and carriage on some of the railways, the statements to which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade referred are not altogether so apocryphal as the hon. Member seems to suppose. It seems to me probable, from very trustworthy information I have received, that the charges on the railway with which the hon. Member for Stirlingshire is himself connected—namely, the Caledonian—shows that the allegations are not ill-founded. With regard to the reconstruction of the Railway Commission, I think the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman will give satisfaction. It has always been considered that the legal element on the Commission is somewhat defective; the law element on the Commission should be of the highest standing to deal with such important questions as those which come before it. I think, however, it would be more satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman could tell us, before going into Committee on the Bill, that the services of Sir Frederick Peel and Mr. Price will be available as Members of the new Commission. Speaking for the public generally—that is to say, the traders—I must say they have the greatest confidence in these two gentlemen. So far as I have been able to ascertain, they have acted in the most independent, impartial, and practical manner; therefore it would add to the satisfaction and confidence of the traders in the tribunal if the right hon. Gentleman were able to inform us, before going into Committee, that these gentlemen will form part of the Commission. With respect to this new duty of conciliation or arbitration, which the right hon. Gentleman has hinted at, I am glad to believe that he has, so far, adopted the suggestion made to him by the deputation that attended at the Board of Trade the other day. I am glad also to see that the right hon. Gentleman has been taking counsel with what has taken place in the United States of America. I may explain that there are various kinds of Commissions in America. He referred to that in Massachusetts; but I would point out that, although that may be the best, there is a good one in Iowa, and another one in Illinois. As the right hon. Gentleman has not the Reports of these Bodies before him, and an account of their constitution, I would strongly recommend him to obtain them. For myself, I am strongly of opinion that it will be necessary to go a step further, and make this new Department of the Board of Trade something more than a Board of Conciliation and Arbitration. In the first instance, after having tried conciliation and negotiation with the Railway Companies, if the Board is satisfied that the Companies are acting illegally and unjustly, I think it should have the power to bring them before the Commission. That is a duty which I think lies upon the State to perform. Parliament has given to these Companies exclusive right and privileges; and I think it is the duty of the State to see that these rights and privileges are not abused or exceeded. I was not quite sure about the right hon. Gentleman's idea of giving the Companies power to develop trade. I think that is a power which is liable to very great abuse. No doubt, private traders do, in certain cases, work for a time without profit in order to create a business; but they have to sacrifice their own profits in order to accomplish this object. But the complaint against the Railway Companies is that they develop traffic in one part of the country at the expense of traffic in another part. I think it is altogether a mistake, and beyond the province of Railway Companies to develop, or rather to divert, trade out of its natural channel, which is the cheapest channel. When they attempt such a thing great mischief to the country is the result. Take the case of this fish traffic from Wick. I think the rate charged from Wick to London is a very reasonable rate. Hon. Members who represent Railway Companies in this House will be able to explain the principles upon which this charge is made. The charge from Wick to London, a distance of 784 miles, is 65*s.* a-ton, and from Leith 60*s.*, so that for about one-half the distance we may say the charge from Wick is 60*s.* a-ton, and for the other half 5*s.* a-ton. The natural route for the carriage of fish from Wick is by steamer, and such a steamer traffic would be developed were it not for this fact—that when a steamer is started to contend with a railway the Companies reduce the rate under that which is a paying rate to the steamer, so as to deprive the latter of the traffic. As an evidence of this, I need only point to the fact that between Dundee and Liverpool the railways have been carrying goods at a very low rate in order to drive off the route a steamer which has been competing with them. I think we are very much indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade for dealing with this subject, and I am sure the House will give him every support in carrying through a measure which will put the traffic system of the country in a much more satisfactory position than it occupies at the present moment. As to the proposal for the classification of rates, I quite appreciate the convenience and desirability of simplifying the classification, and especially after what we have seen, from the Report of the hon. Member for Oxfordshire, Banbury (Sir Bernhard Samelson), has been accomplished on the Continent. I do not see why there should be any difficulty in bringing about the same results in this country. I do not know, however, that the Board of Trade is the best authority for this object. I think a small Royal Commission acquainted with trade and traffic, who would have the precedent of the foreign railways to go by, would be the best authority. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will soon proceed with his Bill, and be able to carry it to a successful issue.

Mr. P. McDONALD (Sligo, N.): I join my hon. Friend the Member for East Cork (Mr. Lane) in congratulating the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) in having introduced a Bill which, for the first time in railway legislation, will do justice to Ireland. It is a Bill that has been very much needed in Ireland; and though I do not propose to detain the House long, I desire to say a few words on the subject from an Irish point of view. The portion of the Bill that has struck me as being, perhaps, the most commendable is that relating to arbitration, inasmuch as I think that if a fair and equitable arrangement or agreement can be come to by both parties, there will be an avoidance of litigation on the part of either the Railway Company or the public. Now, Sir, what we have mainly to complain of in Ireland is the high rates—the railway rates in Ireland are, I regret to say, much higher than they are in England. I have taken the trouble to go into the matter with some care, and I find that upon the leading lines in England first-class goods are carried at the rate of 1⅛*d.*, while in Ireland we have to pay 1½*d.*, or, in other words, something like 33 per cent more. That we should have to pay such an increased price for the carriage of our goods is certainly not just. But it is not merely in the case of goods that we are overcharged. We are obliged to pay for our passenger traffic more than is paid in England. In comparing the mileage rate, I find that on the English lines the average is 74*s.* 5*d.* per mile, while in Ireland it is 84*s.* per mile; the Irish Railway Companies, therefore, charge 10*s.* per mile more than the English Railway Companies do. But this is only one of the grievances we have in respect to our treatment by the Irish Railway Companies. The terminal charges in Ireland are most excessive; they are such as, if brought to light by the investigation which the right hon. Gentleman has foreshadowed, will astonish the English trading public. We have, as was pointed out by my hon. Friend the Member for East Cork, to complain very bitterly of the preferential rates. We claim that in justice to us there should be an equalization of rates—in other words, that there should be equal rates for equal distances. Preferential rates always have an injurious tendency towards some portion of the public, and an advantageous tendency towards another portion. In my opinion, public Companies should deal and act justly with all parties; that certain individuals should not be allowed preferential rates, while the general public are deprived of the advantages of such rates. In order to give you some proof of what I have said concerning preferential rates I will read to the House a letter. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members need not be afraid. I will not detain them long. This is a letter which was read before the Select Committee on Irish Industries, which sat last year. It was written to the Committee by Messrs. Dixon, Hughes, and Co., of Dublin, soap manufacturers. Writing to my hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), by whom the letter was read to the Committee, they say—

"We beg respectfully to draw your attention to the evidence given before your Committee by Sir Ralph Cusack, Chairman of the Midland Railway Company, and also to the following facts. The Midland Company carry soap from Liverpool *viâ* Dublin to Westport at a through rate of 22*s.* 6*d.* per ton. This rate we have asked them to reduce, but they have refused to do so. We think this action of the Midland Railway Company, in thus carrying goods for the English manufacturers over their line from Liverpool to Westport for a lower rate than goods from Dublin, most unjust, if not illegal."

The Chairman of the Committee, Sir Eardley Wilmot, asked me, as being the witness on the occasion, what I thought of that; and my reply was—

"My view of that is, that if I were in the position of Messrs. Dixon, Hughes, and Co., I would not stop agitating till I had used every possible means by which such egregious wrong should be remedied. It is a matter of impossibility for this firm to hold their own against the English manufacturers, while the Irish railways are offering advantages to the one, and denying them to the other."

I will only trouble the House with one more quotation, for the time is getting late; it is a letter from myself, bearing very strongly upon the question of preferential rates. It was as follows:—

"On my return from London, I again looked up the rates charged to my firm by the several Irish Railway Companies for the carriage of our goods, which are rated fourth-class. The anomalies which I discovered are so striking, that I am induced to submit to your Committee a few out of the many such cases. From Dublin to Belfast, a distance of 113 miles, the rate is 15*s.* per ton; and to Galway, 126 miles, it is 33*s.* 4*d.* per ton, or more than double for corresponding distance, both seaport towns. From Dublin to Clones, 93 miles, the rate is 24*s.* 6*d.* per ton; but to Bandon, 181 miles, and to Kinsale, 185 miles, it is for each 27*s.* 6*d.* per ton, including the cartage through Cork City from one station to the other. Clones and Bandon are both inland towns. From Dublin to Cavan, 108 miles, the rate is 20*s.* per ton, while to Newry, 76 miles, it is 20*s.* 10*d.*, or about 50 per cent more to the latter, though Cavan is an inland town, and Newry a large seaport. From Dublin to Dundalk, 54 miles, the rate is 15*s.* 5*d.*, while to Cork, 161 miles, or nearly three times the distance, it is only 17*s.* 6*d.* per ton, both seaports. From Dublin to Enniskillen, 116 miles, the rate is 28*s.* 4*d.* per ton, and to Tralee, 206 miles, it is 32*s.* 6*d.*, or nearly double on the Great Northern of that on the Great Southern. Enniskillen and Omagh are both inland towns on the Great Northern, the one 116 miles and the other 142 miles from Dublin, yet the rate is equal to both places—namely, 28*s.* 4*d.* per ton. Londonderry and Waterford are both large seaports, distant from Dublin respectively 177 miles and 162 miles; the railway rate to the former is 27*s.* 6*d.* per ton and to the latter 12*s.* 6*d.* per ton. The rate to Newry, a large seaport, is, as already stated, for 76 miles, 20*s.* 10*d.* per ton; while to Kilmallock, an inland town on the Great Southern, it is only 20*s.* for 124 miles. From Dublin to Limerick, 129 miles, the rate is 17*s.* 6*d.* per ton; and to Portadown, on the Great Northern, it is 22*s.* 4*d.* for 88 miles. But the most remarkable case is one on the Midland line, and to illustrate it more fully I send you the correspondence relating thereto. In April last we sent two casks of whisky, equal in contents and weight, the one to Ballina, distant from Dublin 166 miles, and the other to Westport, on the same line, and distant 161 miles; yet the rate to the former, as you will see by letter marked No. 2, was 4*s.* 7*d.*, and to the latter 8*s.* 8*d.*, as per letter No. 1. On the 13th instant (July, 1885), we asked for an explanation of this discrepancy, and in reply (letter No. 3) were told 'that in one case the rates are competitive, owing to steamers coming to Ballina, and in the interest of Dublin firms the Company try to keep out the Scotch and English houses.' Now, as the Scotch and English houses do not send Irish whisky into Ireland, this alleged reason will not hold good; and still more so, in the face of the letter received from Messrs. Dixon, Hughes, and Co., which was read to the Committee on the day I gave evidence, and in which it was stated that the Midland Company charged 22*s.* 6*d.* per ton for carriage of soap to Westport, while the English manufacturers can send it over the Midland line to the same place at exactly the same rate."

I have only to say, Mr. Speaker, that while such anomalies as these exist on Irish lines, and while preferential rates are being offered to traders in any one district for the advancement of the interests of those traders, justice cannot be done to the people of Ireland. Unquestionably, Irish industries are "Boycotted" for the furtherance of the industries outside Ireland. I hope, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella), with the justice which seems to have prompted him in the introduction of this Bill, will see that anomalies of the nature I have pointed out, and which injure seriously the trade of Ireland, are removed.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I only desire to say a very few words. At this late hour (1.40), it is not desirable to discuss this Bill very much more upon its merits. I have to thank my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) for bringing it in, and I only hope it will prove a solution of that long controversy in which many of us have been engaged. With regard to the Railway Committee of 1881-2, I must protest against the statement of the hon. Member for Forfarshire (Mr. Barclay), that the railway men were in anything like overwhelming force on that Committee—we were 7 to 27. We sat there with the patience of Job and the resignation of Saints, whilst all sorts of charges were brought against us for two years. My position was that of a large trader, as well as a Railway Director; and I think the recommendations of the Committee are not all embodied in the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman. I cannot agree with all the plaudits heaped upon the Railway Commission. I do not think it had the full confidence of traders, or of the Railway Companies. They have done their best, but they were weak—["Oh!"]—owing, no doubt, to the fact that they had no judicial head. I maintain that they were weak in their decisions, and I could give case after case in which they have acted in the weakest possible manner. The whole drift of this Bill is contained in Clause 24. The Company with which I am connected came to Parliament with a new schedule of dues, and a new classification; and that involved giving up, to some extent, the powers which they at present possess. Parliament threw the Bill aside for the reason, which I think was correctly described by the right hon. Gentleman, that it was not desirable for every Company to go in for a separate Bill. What I want to remind the House of is that, if there be complaints against railways, there have been still graver complaints against this House. This House has for years legislated with regard to railways in the blindest possible way, without having any great scheme of national policy before it. They have gone on granting or refusing, as the case may be, powers to Railway Companies; but they have not had before them any settled line of action for the development of great industries. The want of a settled purpose on the part of Parliament has resulted in great injury to the trading interests of the country. These things, however, are past, and cannot now be remedied. If railways are to be regulated, Parliament ought not to forget the interests of those who have subscribed the millions of capital. I see hon. Gentleman from Ireland in their places, and I should like to call their attention to one paragraph of the Report of this Committee, of which nothing has been said this evening, and that is the paragraph which says that there came up a universal complaint from Ireland of the management of the railways of that country. The witnesses from Ireland desired that there should be almost one management of the railways of Ireland, in order that many of the anomalies of the Irish railways might be redressed; and, above all, that the management might be confined within narrower limits. I will not trespass further upon the attention of the House, the Committee of 1881-2 having exonerated the railway interest from the charge that it had betrayed the trust which the public has placed in it.

MR. MAGNIAC (Bedford, N., Biggleswade): I only wish to make a few remarks upon one part of the Bill—namely, the part relating to arbitration, and to fortify the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade in standing up against any attempt to whittle away his arbitration proposals. About two-and-a-half years ago I happened to be the President of the London Chamber of Commerce, and at that time I instituted an arbitration which has been very successful in certain trade cases. We are endeavouring to extend the principle, and have good hope that we shall, before many years are over, establish in London some such system of arbitration as exists in France, Spain, Germany, and, in fact, in every trading country in the world except our own. I do think that, with all the authority of a Government Department, a system of arbitration may be and will be established which will be of the greatest benefit indeed to traders. As has been said to-night, traders have been beaten in details by the Railway Companies. If traders are able to go into details with a Government Department, I feel confident the Railway Companies will be aware of it. I feel certain that very great disappointment, at any rate, will be avoided. Traders will be able to ascertain what their real position is, and they will be able to avoid the necessity of going into the Railway Court. I am glad that this Court is going to be made a Court of much greater authority than it has hitherto been. Mr. Speaker, I do not think this debate ought to be allowed to close without some words in acknowledgment of the great labour bestowed upon the question of a re-adjustment of railway rates by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire (Sir Bernhard Samuelson). In my opinion, that hon. Gentleman, if he has not influenced this Bill, is responsible for the direction it takes. Certainly, he has had a great share in directing public opinion on this matter in the right direction. The Report which the hon. Gentleman has made is the most extraordinary document I have ever seen with reference to any trade matter. I have no doubt many hon. Gentlemen have read it; but should there be some who have not seen it, I hope they will take the trouble to go over it; for from it they will see it is possible to have a reasonable system of classification of rates and charges. I will conclude by saying that I hope my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) intends to pass this measure. The Bill has met with much assent; but there are many of us who have known Bills brought in with quite as much approval as this Bill, and yet at a particular period of the Session they have been abandoned. I hope my right hon. Friend will not allow that to be done in this case, but that he will insist upon the Bill passing. The agricultural and commercial interests are intimately concerned in the matter; and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that it will redound not only to his own credit, but to that of the Government, if he succeeds in passing, at least, a fair and satisfactory measure dealing with the great anomalies which exist.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. MUNDELLA, Mr. ACLAND, and Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 138.]

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

(*Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Joicey, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Lockwood.*)

[BILL 76.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Burt.*)

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I trust that when this Bill is referred to a Select Committee the question whether its operation is to be compulsory or not will be open. Many men of various occupations can be brought forward to say that the working classes do not desire that the Act should be compulsory—in fact, I personally would regret it very much if the Act were made compulsory, because I think it would operate in a retrograde direction.

MR. LLOYD (Wednesbury): The object of the Employers' Liability Act of 1880 was to strike at injurious contracts which may be made between employers and their workmen. Now that, of course, is a most desirable thing to accomplish; but it is questionable whether the proposal of the Act does not go to prevent beneficial agreements being made. Some workmen would be injured if they were prevented from making beneficial agreements; and, therefore, I hope the Proposer of this Bill will take care that nothing is done to damage the interests of the working classes. I also desire to know whether any evidence will be given before the Select Committee to which it is intended to refer this Bill, because there are several points on which I think evidence should be adduced. In the Act of 1880 there is a mistake made, to which it is well the attention of the House should be drawn. In Section 6 of Clause 3 it is said that in County Courts in England cases can be heard before a jury; and it is also stated that the Sheriff's Court should be taken as a synonymous Court. Now, the fact is that in the Sheriff's Court in Scotland there can be no jury. The two Courts, therefore, are not synonymous; and I would ask that the Select Committee may have their attention called to the clause. If people wished to have a jury in Scotland they were forced to go into the Superior Court at very great expense; whereas a case can be heard before a jury in an English County Court, providing the sum in dispute does not exceed £50. I wish also to say that the objection which is raised to the compulsory character of the Act is more imaginary than otherwise. I approve of the compulsory character of the Act, though I think that if the employers go beyond the Act and give something better than the Act they ought not to be prevented from doing so. Some working men have suggested to me that every contract that is made should not be valid unless it is agreed to by, we will say, the Board of Trade, that the Board of Trade should have the power of making a contract valid if it was considered beneficial to the contracting parties. It seems to me that that would be a great improvement.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Select Committee on Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill.

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (NO. 2) [REMUNERATION TO OFFICERS, &C.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to any Commissioners and Officers who may be appointed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session, for amending the Law relating to the Tenure of Land by Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and the payment of remuneration to Sheriff Clerks for duties arising under such Act.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

COMMONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to consider every Report made by the Land Commissioners for England, certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the enclosure or regulation of a Common, and presented to the House during the last or present Sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the confirmation of such Order:

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power, in respect to each such Provisional Order, to inquire and report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament, and, if so, whether with or without modification; and in the event of their being of opinion that the same should be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly, with a view to such Provisional Order being remitted to the Land Commissioners:

Ordered, That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members, Seven to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection:—Sir WALTER BARTTELOT, Mr. WALTER JAMES, Mr. RICHARD POWER, Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON, Mr. ARCH, Mr. EDWARD BUXTON, Mr. WROUGHTON nominated Members of the Committee:

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 12*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*First Reading* — Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Fermoy) * (32).

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES — THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

OBSERVATIONS.

Lord LAMINGTON, in rising to call the attention of the House to the new Public Offices, more especially to the proposed new National Portrait Gallery, said, that on a former occasion he had brought the subject to their Lordships' notice; and it now appeared that a decision had been arrived at to build on the site next the Horse Guards. The Government plan for the new Offices for the War Office and the Admiralty had been examined by the Royal Institute of British Architects, and they had pronounced in favour of an alternative scheme. The plan proposed by the Institute was one which would utilize the fine site at Charing Cross to the utmost, and would, moreover, constitute a great public improvement. The additional expense would only amount to £200,000, half of which would be paid by the Metropolitan Board of Works. He did not know whether a site for the National Portrait Gallery had been selected; but he believed it had not. By the adoption of the plan suggested by the Royal Institute of British Architects a good site would become available. He would earnestly ask the Government to reconsider the matter, and to make up their minds to a slightly-increased expenditure in order to provide public buildings really worthy of the country, as well as make suitable provision for the National Portrait Gallery.

The Earl of WEMYSS said, that there were three important questions raised by his noble Friend—(1.) the general plan; (2.) the elevation of the proposed building; (3.) the position and action of Her Majesty's Office of Works. The question was one of considerable importance, particularly as regarded the ground plan of the new Offices and the elevation; and he contended that there should be an alteration in the ground plan. He was sure that if their Lordships had a full opportunity of judging the comparative merits of the plan, and had before them a large map of the proposed new building, there would not be the slightest doubt as to which plan would be decided on—*i.e.*, the plan of the Government or that of the Institute of British Architects—they would select the latter, both as regarded light, space, and many other matters. Even Mr. Shaw Lefevre, in a letter to *The Times*, speaking of the comparative merits of these plans, said that there could be no doubt that a more perfect scheme could be made for the new Offices with the addition suggested. His (Mr. Lefevre's) objection was to the increased cost; but that, it appeared to him (the Earl of Wemyss), was a secondary consideration, for they should remember that they were trustees for those who came after them; and if, with a view to a small saving of money, they wished to destroy one of the finest sites in London, they would incur a heavy responsibility to posterity, whereas the alternative plan would deal with the site to the greatest advantage. Not only was the ground plan suggested by the Institute much better than the original scheme, but public opinion had now pronounced strongly against the elevation of the proposed buildings. The new elevation would be destructive to the appearance of the Horse Guards, and out of harmony with all its surroundings. The Office of Works had afforded no guidance whatever to the architect who designed the proposed new buildings as to what their character should be; and they did not appear to care whether that character was Gothic, Grecian, Roman, Japanese, or Chinese. It was essential that the new buildings should be in harmony with the older ones which surrounded them. The present Horse Guards made an admirable centre to the Whitehall side of the parade, and the buildings on either side of it ought to correspond in character; whereas, if the proposed plans were carried out, the buildings on one side of the square would be wholly out of character with the Horse Guards, which they would dwarf and destroy. He regretted that the recommendations had not been carried out of a Royal Commission on which he had sat, to the effect that there should be a permanent Council to assist the political First Commissioner of

Works, so that there should be a continuity of policy and of idea in dealing with our public buildings. Sir Henry Layard had felt that want so strongly that he had appointed the late distinguished artist, Mr. Ferguson, Consulting Architect to the Department of Works. But he and Sir Henry Layard ended by resigning their appointments, as Sir Henry Layard, not being in the Cabinet, found himself powerless for good. Now they were dependent wholly upon the taste and fancies of the First Commissioner, and one generally undid or upset the plans of his Predecessor. Then, when designs were required for the Natural History Museum, a Commission, of which he was a Member, decided in favour of the design of the late Captain Fowke, and this design would have been adopted had the then Liberal First Commissioner of Works remained in Office; but before the building was begun he was succeeded by Lord John Manners, who, being of a Gothic turn of mind in architecture, threw over the Fowke plan, and appointed Mr. Waterhouse to make a Gothic design, which, greatly cut down by Lord John Manners' Successor, Mr. Ayrton, who boasted that he knew nothing about these things, was now the Natural History Museum. Again, a Royal Commission, of which also he (the Earl of Wemyss) was a Member, recommended that the present National Gallery should be handed over to the Royal Academy, and that National Collection of pictures should be transferred to Burlington House. This would have given ample accommodation to the National pictures, as galleries could have been built in the garden at the back of Burlington House as required. Now, there was great difficulty in finding space for our pictures, and it was not known where to house and exhibit the noble gift of his works which Mr. Watts was about to present to the nation. Lord Mount-Temple, when First Commissioner, adopted the recommendation of the Royal Commission, and proposed a Vote in Parliament, which his political rival, Lord John Manners, succeeded in inducing the House to reject. It was the same system which had removed the Wellington Arch to the side of a hill; and we had now presented to us the ludicrous sight of a triumphal arch erected on the side of a hill, with one long leg and one short leg, a thing quite unique in architecture, for which they were indebted to Mr. Shaw Lefevre. He hoped that the whole matter would be reconsidered.

Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL: My Lords, the noble Lord (Lord Lamington) who has brought the subject forward deserves support from all who view it with anxiety. Since it came last before the House, the Institute of Architects have sent their deputation to the Government; Mr. Shaw Lefevre has endeavoured to reply to them; further correspondence has appeared this morning from the President and Secretary of the Institute calculated to impress on all who see it the error of the scheme involved in what is called the Public Offices Site Act. I only wish to-night to advert to a single ground on which the Government may be induced to pause before they carry out the measure. I have no reason to assume that the noble Earl (the Earl of Morley) who has consented to preside over the Board of Works is anxious to precipitate it. The ground I wish to mention is the striking multiplicity of projects which ought to be collated before a final step is taken. You have the project of the deputation by which Drummond's Bank would be removed, a larger site obtained, and St. James's Park encroached upon more widely, a thoroughfare from thence into Trafalgar Square being ultimately contemplated. You have the plan of building on the Great George Street site, which the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees (the Earl of Redesdale) has repeatedly defended, and which, at a humble distance, I no less thoroughly adhere to. But something else might be considered. It would be easy, instead of effacing Spring Gardens altogether, to rebuild the houses on a larger scale and with a higher elevation. In that way, in a year or two, without the hazard, or the outlay, or the time which a great enterprize demands, you might nearly double the accommodation they give to offices at present. Those upon the northern side might be thrown further back over the garden they look out upon; and those upon the southern side over the mews which they command. Under these circumstances, the Board of Works and the Treasury, with whom the question lies, should act upon the well-known principle, "*Siste in dubiis.*" As to the War Office, I have already pointed out that if the demolition is arrested its wants may be supplied to a great extent, although not to the full extent that we should wish for. As to a new Admiralty, the public would thank you more for a new Navy. They are more inclined to spend on ships than on the palatial residence of those who organize and guide them. What the Government might do with every advantage is to exhibit detailed plans of all the rival schemes during a twelvemonth, and thus allow opinion to mature as to the course to be selected. The scheme of Mr. Shaw Lefevre has no defence but the economy it claims, and which is far from being admitted. But as to economy, I cannot but repeat what has fallen from my noble Friend (the Earl of Wemyss) on the Cross Benches. When new Public Offices are in question it is not at all the first consideration. If you are bent upon economy there is no necessity for having them. If you desire to save money, not to have them is the easy mode of saving it. You are only justified in spending in order to increase, and not in order to reduce, the splendour of the Capital in future generations.

Viscount HARDINGE said, that he mainly agreed with his noble Friend who spoke second in the debate; and with regard to what had fallen from the noble Lord who had just sat down, he would reply that it had been decided by Parliament, considering the wants of the Army and the Navy, that no further delay was desirable in the erection of a suitable building for the accommodation of both Services. He agreed in the opinion which had been expressed as to the alternative scheme of the Institute of British Architects. The original mistake made was that a larger area had not been taken. There was a time when the owners of Drummond's Bank might have been negotiated with; but nothing at the time was done. Drummonds said they were willing to wait two or three years until a decision was arrived at; but, no decision having been come to, they were in danger of marring the plan. If Mr. Shaw Lefevre's plan was adopted they would have a lofty pile of buildings erected, with an enormous tower overtopping and dwarfing the public buildings in the neighbourhood. He thought that a result of this kind would be a very unsightly object to contemplate. One advantage of the alternative scheme was that both wings would be so low that they would not dwarf the other buildings in the same way as the other scheme would do if carried out. The elevation, too, was very poor. In regard to plans of this kind, he expressed himself as being unfavourable to a public competition. A limited competition would be far more suitable, or let the best architect that could be obtained be taken. The only good work ever obtained by public competition was Stephens' monument of the Duke of Wellington. He agreed with the view expressed in the Memorial of the British Architects that if they were to erect Offices of the kind proposed, with a wretched frontage and a tavern or two, it would be a disgrace to the nation. They ought, if possible, to have a wide vista, in order that an uninterrupted view might be had from the statue to the Houses of Parliament. He had not been converted by Mr. Trevelyan's letter in *The Times*, which evidently considered economy the first object. As to the cost, he was of opinion that if they were going to do a good work they had much better not spare the cost, because it was well known that the cheapest way was not always the best. And now he would say one word as to the proposed site of the new National Portrait Gallery. It was to be built on the open space joining the India Office, on ground belonging to the Government. It would have spacious galleries lighted from the top, extending from King Street to Delahay Street, with a handsome façade towards King Street. It would have four times the space now allotted to the pictures, and would be a very central gallery for the public. This was Mr. Plunket's plan, and he trusted the Government would adopt it.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (The Earl of Morley) said, that although the debate had been an interesting one, the only point really calling for the attention of their Lordships was whether the scheme of the Institute of British Architects or the plan of Her Majesty's Government was the better. The noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) condemned the elevation that had been approved by the Government. That elevation was chosen after competition, and the designs were selected by a competent Committee, on which Mr. Christian, President of the Institute of Architects, sat. The noble Lord (Lord Lamington) who introduced the discussion quoted a reply of his own to an interesting deputation from the Institute of Architects which waited on him the other day. He admitted that in some points the scheme proposed by the Institute of Architects would be an improvement. No doubt it would open up Charing Cross, as well as one of the façades of the building; but he did not think their Lordships could entirely put aside the question of cost, as one noble Lord had done. As to the estimate of additional cost, he had seen it placed as high as £1,000,000 sterling, and the lowest estimate was £200,000. Making a rough estimate of the extra expense, he believed it would be little short of £400,000, which would include the rebuilding of Drummond's Bank and the additional area given by the Institute of Architects. The noble Lord seemed to have an idea that the Metropolitan Board of Works would contribute in some way to the expense; but he possessed no information leading him to the belief that the Board would contribute anything, and he doubted very much if they would do so. He acknowledged, from an æsthetic point of view, that the question of opening up Charing Cross and Trafalgar Square would be a considerable improvement on the present aspect of things; but if their Lordships looked at the convenience of traffic at Charing Cross they would find that there was no block at that point. Having, therefore, all the area they wished for the Public Offices, and when they did not require as a necessity to widen the thoroughfare, he did not think they were justified in spending an additional large sum of money. In considering these rival schemes it was absurd to put aside altogether the question of expense. He could not say more at present than this—that the whole question was under the earnest consideration of the Government. He could not, however, forget that Parliament had already decided the site question, and the property had already been purchased. He should receive any suggestions with pleasure, and he would not at present commit himself to an opinion upon the question, or to the plan of the Institute of Architects, although he admitted that there were certain advantages connected with that plan. With regard to the new National Portrait Gallery, he regretted that he was not in a position to afford their Lordships any information upon the subject. The National portraits, as the noble Lord had remarked, were removed from the very dangerous building in which they were deposited at South Kensington last August to Bethnal Green Museum, where they were perfectly safe. When their Lordships considered the great value of the Collection, they must be heartily glad that the pictures were safely housed. At the same time, he quite admitted that they ought not to remain at Bethnal Green. The question of their future destination was one which must be left for future careful consideration, and it would, no doubt, shortly occupy attention.

LORD BALFOUR said, he hoped the Government would obtain and lay before the House an Estimate of what the scheme suggested by the Institute of Architects would cost before altogether discarding that scheme. So far as his information went, he understood that it would not cost more than £200,000, instead of £350,000 or £400,000, as mentioned by the noble Earl, because the question of compensation to the Messrs. Drummond could be got over by the erection of new offices for them, which would be ready before they would be asked to move out of their present premises. If that were so, then he thought that a matter of £200,000, if that were the outside, should not be allowed to stand in the way of their securing suitable buildings.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that his figures of £350,000 to £400,000 had not been given at random; but were based on a rough estimate which had been made of the cost of the scheme.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS—EVENING OPENING.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY, in rising to move—

> "That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty will be pleased to direct that the National Gallery, the British Museum, and the Natural History Museum shall be open to the public weekly on three week-day evenings till 10 p.m., in order that Her Majesty's subjects whose occupations during the day prevent them from visiting

> these institutions may have the advantage and enjoyment of studying the national collections,"

said, he hoped their Lordships would consider this question carefully, because it seemed strange that so beneficial a change, which was recommended by the House of Commons 26 years ago, should not have been adopted. He did not wish to reflect upon the conduct or action of the Trustees of the British Museum and the National Gallery, who were perfectly right in taking great care of the all-important and priceless treasures committed to their charge; but the question which he had brought to the notice of their Lordships was one for Parliament and for the Government of the day to consider. He hoped it would be decided that the time had come when the great boon of opening the National Collections on week-day evenings should be conferred upon the hundreds of thousands of people in London. The late Government, he might remark, had no opportunity of carrying the proposal into effect; but the noble Marquess, who was absent from the House (the Marquess of Salisbury) had instructed him to adopt every means in his power to secure the opening of the Museums and Galleries on week-day evenings. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Plunket) who had held the Office of Chief Commissioner of Works in the late Government was in favour of the proposal, and his noble Friend (Lord Iddesleigh), when First Lord of the Treasury, spoke strongly on the question, advocating the opening of the Collections to the public on two or three evenings a-week, He trusted that in time such collections as the Royal Academy would also be opened on week evenings to the public either free or at a nominal charge, and that there would be no difficulty in throwing open some parts of the Tower by night to the large population around it. He submitted that to carry the proposal into effect would confer a great benefit upon artizans, mechanics, and people who were employed in banks, counting-houses, warehouses, and workshops, and especially would it be an advantage to the young. Such people had a great deal of leisure at their disposal. They had the whole of their evenings to themselves, and one of their greatest difficulties was how to dispose of them. He believed the long evenings hung very heavily on the great mass of the population. There was one very curious and encouraging fact which their Lordships ought to note, and that was that if they inquired of the great employers of labour, as he had lately had to do in connection with another matter, they would find that a great number of young men employed in labour had now some cultivated pursuit quite independent of their daily work. It would be found that some took up theology, others botany, birds, or shells; and among many there might be found a great taste for drawing and painting. That was one of the most encouraging signs of the age, and it was for that large and he believed increasing class of men that he particularly pleaded with their Lordships. He believed it would afford great delight to these young men to have these great Halls and Galleries open to them from 6 to 10 o'clock in the evening—just the hours that hung most heavily on their hands; just the hours they would otherwise have to spend in their sometimes, he was sorry to say, not very pleasant homes. He believed that the advantage, at any rate, to the younger rising generation of London would be really untold, and it was on their behalf he especially asked their Lordships to consider this matter. It might, perhaps, be said that he was a dreamer on this subject; but to that his simple answer was—What had happened at South Kensington and Bethnal Green? South Kensington Museum had now for nearly 30 years been open to the public for three nights in the week, and during that time some 7,000,000 of people had visited the Institution in the evening. The total number of visitors, day and night, during the same period, was 17,000,000. These figures then showed that the proportion of evening visitors was very much larger than that of day visitors; and, of those evening visitors, Sir Henry Cole stated that he observed that a large number of them were what were called working men—that is to say, they were of that class whose evening meal was tea or supper and not dinner. Bethnal Green Museum, too, had been opened since 1872 for three nights in the week, and nearly half the total number of the visitors to that Institution came during the 12 evening hours of the week. When they considered those facts, he confessed it did seem very strange to him that these Galleries could not be opened. Let them look at the authorities in favour of his proposal. On March 27, 1863, a Select Committee of the House of Commons recommended—

> "That institutions such as the British Museum and National Gallery should be open on week-day evenings to the public, and that as the opportunity thus afforded of bringing the instruction and pleasure to be derived from visiting them within the reach of those who are occupied during ordinary working hours would be appreciated by them, it is desirable that they should be thus opened between 7 and 10 in the evening, at least three days in the week."

Then, on May 6, 1870, after a debate on the evening opening of Museums, Mr. Lowe, the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in regard to lighting the National Collections—

> "We might be on the eve of some scientific discovery which would remove the present risks and objections; besides, sooner or later, we should have to build a new National Gallery and a Museum for the reception of our natural history collections. These new buildings, of course, could be constructed in such a manner as to be safely lighted with gas."

On May 19, 1874, the House of Commons adopted the following Amendment, moved by Mr. W. S. Allen, M.P.:—

> "That the House is of opinion that all possible facilities should be afforded for the moral and intellectual recreation of the people by opening Museums, Libraries, and similar institutions on week-day evenings."—(3 *Hansard*, [219] 508.)

In 1883 and 1884 their Lordships also passed Resolutions, urging the desirability of opening the British Museum and National Gallery on week-day evenings. The only difference between those two occasions and the present was that he had now to ask their Lordships to go a little further and to address the Crown upon the subject. During the last Parliament, in August, 1881, 191 Members of the House of Commons memorialized the Trustees of the National Gallery, asking that the Gallery should be kept open to the public till 10 o'clock at night on every week-day. In March, 1882, 200 Members of the House of Commons memorialized the Trustees of the British Museum with the same object. Then Sir Henry Cole said—

> "I cannot conceive why the National Gallery should not be lighted up at night if properly prepared, and if the ventilation were made what I presume it could be made."

But there were still greater authorities than these. In May, 1882, he found, from a letter from the Trustees of the British Museum to Mr. Daniel Grant, M.P., that the former body had taken the matter up. In that letter they said—

> "The Trustees have, during the last three years, made trial of the electric light in the reading room of the Museum, and for the purpose of lighting it in dark weather, and keeping it open for students until a late hour, and this has been done with very satisfactory results."

On July 19, 1883, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock) also said, in reply to Mr. Daniel Grant—

> "The same objections, however, do not apply, or apply with much less force, to the electric light; and subject, of course, to security being taken for the safety of the building and its contents, and on satisfactory arrangements being made with reference to electric lighting in the district, the Trustees will be prepared to apply to Government for the funds necessary to enable them to open portions of the Museum in the evening."—(3 *Hansard*, [281] 1882.)

And on February 28, 1884, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock), who was one of the Trustees of the British Museum, said, in reply to a Question asked by Mr. Daniel Grant, M.P., that—

> "The Trustees of the British Museum have applied to Her Majesty's Government for the funds necessary to supply electric light in the new Natural History Museum. This application has been refused so far as the present year is concerned, and it is therefore impossible for the Trustees to open the Museum in the evening."—(3 *Hansard*, [285] 62.)

That brought him down to August of last year, when the Trustees of the British Museum made a formal application to the Treasury to be allowed to use the electric light. It was true that he was asking by his Motion, that not only the Museums but also the National Picture Galleries might be opened. He did not think that would be considered very daring, when he referred their Lordships to a Memorial addressed, on January 28, 1885, to the Trustees of the National Gallery, and signed by 57 out of 73 Royal Academicians and Associates, in which they urged the Trustees to take into consideration the best means of lighting the great National Collections of pictures, so that they might be opened to the public on three evenings in each week till 10 o'clock. He could not believe that a body of men, who were specially interested in pictures, would have made that request if they had believed there could be the slightest danger in it. 2,400 working-class organizations had asked for it, through Mr. Broadhurst, and the Trades' Union Congress of last autumn adopted a resolution in favour of it. He thought he had now satisfied their Lordships that there was really a real consensus of opinion and authority in favour of the Motion. It was remarkable how rapidly the authorities were increasing in its support. As to the difficulties that existed, there was, first of all, the question of light. Of course, if it were simply a question of gas, there might be a risk of fire, though he thought gas might safely be used in the great buildings if it was used from the outside, or if there were properly constructed roof arrangements. But now electricity was in use, and in that there was a great advantage, for, as pointed out in a letter in *The Times* of March 11 from Mr. Robinson, there were many pictures which would not bear the light of day for any length of time, but might safely be exposed to the light of gas or electricity. He thought there must be very much more danger to these Public Institutions from heating apparatus than could possibly accrue from the use of electricity. It had been urged against his proposal that damage might be caused to the pictures by the breath and dust that would be caused by a large assemblage of people; but he could not understand why that danger should arise specially in the evenings. But even if that were the case, it would be very easy to complete the glazing of the pictures in the Public Collections. Only 89 now remained unglazed. Another more serious objection had been urged—namely, that in times of anything like popular disturbance danger might arise in respect of these priceless works of Art from outrage; but he thought that the risk was very much greater on a foggy day than when the Galleries were lighted with the electric light. The last objection in regard to the National Gallery was that there was a danger of the disreputable persons who infested the neighbourhood going into the Gallery at night. He could not believe, however, that our police regulations were so bad that we should not be able to prevent any outrage against propriety in our National Gallery. He did not think we ought to give up this great boon to respectable people in consequence of a panic fear lest some bad characters should come in. Of course the change would cost a certain amount of money. The great library of the British Museum was lighted by electricity, and he was informed that the estimate for lighting the whole of the Museum was something like £14,000. Of course there would be the cost for additional attendants on three nights of the week, but that would not be very great. He trusted that the public would be amply supplied with seats in these great Galleries, so that they might have opportunities of resting. If the difficulty of money really stood in the way, he would make a suggestion which would perhaps shock those who were connected with these great Institutions—namely, that for two or three years the grants for fresh buyings should be somewhat diminished. He submitted his Motion with confidence to their Lordships, because he believed they would rejoice if it were possible to bring to an end the struggle of the last 26 years; and he felt sure it would be satisfactory to them if this great boon should come owing to the action of their Lordships' House.

Moved, "That a humble address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty will be pleased to direct that the National Gallery, the British Museum, and the Natural History Museum shall be open to the public weekly on three week-day evenings till 10 p.m., in order that Her Majesty's subjects whose occupations during the day prevent them from visiting these institutions may have the advantage and enjoyment of studying the national collections."—(*The Earl of Harrowby.*)

Lord SUDELEY said, the question raised by the noble Earl was one of great interest, and one which it was impossible to approach except with feelings of the strongest sympathy and with an earnest desire to see the proposal carried out. There could be no doubt that if it were possible, with due regard to the expense involved and the safety of our priceless Collections, to enable any large number of the working classes to spend the evening in our National Galleries and Museums, an enormous blessing would be conferred upon all concerned. The noble Earl had stated these benefits with great force and clearness; but he had passed over the objections very lightly. This, of course, was no Party question; it was purely a social problem, and whichever Government were in power would gladly assist in solving it. Unfortunately, it was a matter which could not be dealt with without serious consideration. In the first place, the main question to settle was this—Would the working classes attend these places if opened as proposed in sufficiently large numbers to warrant the expense incurred? Many high authorities doubted whether people who had been working all day would to any extent be likely to visit these Galleries in the evening, however much they would be willing to go on a Sunday. It was true that at South Kensington Museum, where the experiment of having three free days in the week had been tried over a number of years, it had to a certain extent been found successful, and that about 20 per cent of the total number visiting the Exhibition were there in the evening; but this percentage was after all very small in actual number. He found that in 1885 the total number of visitors to South Kensington was 900,000, of whom 169,000 went in the evening. These numbers had somewhat fallen off during the past three years, probably owing to the Exhibitions in the Gardens. It was a question, however, whether if the National History Museum were opened in such close proximity the number would not be further reduced, and be divided between the two Museums. At the Jermyn Street Museum in 1885 the total number of visitors was 45,000, of whom 17,000 went in the evenings. But the Museum was only open on two evenings in the week, and those attending the lectures were included. At Bethnal Green in 1885 the total numbers were 450,000, of whom 209,000 went in the evening. These statistics certainly showed that a fair amount attended in the evening; but the number was absurdly small, taking into consideration the enormous population surrounding the Museums. Taking the three Museums now open at night, it meant that about 2,500 were divided among them during the evenings they were open. Whether, if more Museums were opened and greater facilities given, these numbers would largely increase, remained the problem to be solved. Of this there could be no doubt, that if the Gallery and Museums were open at night, there must be a satisfactory attendance to justify the expense. To solve this problem, and to ascertain what that number would be, it seemed most desirable that further experiments should be made. The Memorandum which had been presented by the Trustees of the National Gallery, but which had not yet been printed, showed that there were several difficulties besides expense which stood in the way. Some of their objections could undoubtedly be met and overcome; but it was perfectly clear that those distinguished gentlemen, who were the custodians of the priceless treasures of this country, looked upon opening the National Gallery as an experiment which could not be tried without a considerable amount of risk. In the objections raised they pointed out a probability of the Galleries becoming the resort of idle and immoral people from the neighbourhood who now infested the Haymarket, and who would drive respectable people away. This, on the other hand, it was argued, was purely a question of police management, and was one which was got over at the Exhibitions at South Kensington, Jermyn Street, and Bethnal Green during the last few years. A few police in plain clothes had been found sufficient to stop all nuisance in this respect. Danger from fire seemed now to be greatly diminished by the introduction of electric lighting, as if properly carried out there could be no question that this system was much less harmless and dangerous than gas. With regard to the danger of the light going out opinions differed; but it was stated that if electric lighting were arranged with duplicate plant, and the buildings were illuminated by two distinct circuits, all possibility of the danger of the rooms being left in darkness was entirely removed. Even working with a single circuit at South Kensington and Bethnal Green no trouble whatever had arisen from this cause. Whether these objections could be removed he knew not; but the Trustees of the National Gallery were bound to emphatically point out every conceivable danger that could arise, and no Government would be justified in agreeing to the opening without fully considering the matter in every possible light, and seeing that the objections raised were fully met. It must not be forgotten also that the National Gallery was open for more hours than any other Gallery in Europe. On the Continent he believed he was right in saying that there was no single Gallery which was lit up after dusk. The greatest difficulty in connection with the whole matter was undoubtedly the question of expense. The opening and illumination of these Galleries and Museums at night would mean the laying down of a considerable amount of plant for the electric lighting, together with its working expenses and annual maintenance; and also the employment of additional attendants and police. The total outlay in putting down this plant was very roughly estimated at £65,000 per annum; and to this had to be added the annual maintenance and the cost of attendants and police. It had been argued that as this sum would in a great measure come out of general taxation these Institutions should, as far as possible, be made self-supporting by charging a small entrance fee; but the experience of the South Kensington Museum Authorities was directly opposed to this, as it was found that even a small fee had the effect of almost entirely stopping people from coming. At South Kensington so great was the dislike to pay a fee that it had been found that even people coming up on payment days in their carriages would frequently drive away on finding that an entrance-fee of 6*d.* was necessary. If, however, it could be proved that the working classes would make use of these Galleries to a satisfactory degree, he did not think that anyone would wish that the question of expense should outweigh what all agreed would be a great national benefit. He was informed that the late Government were considering the subject shortly before they went out of Office, and that the noble Earl the late First Lord of the Treasury (the Earl of Iddesleigh) took a special interest in the matter, and made many inquiries on the subject generally. He felt sure their Lordships would have been extremely glad if he had been present, as he could have given them the benefit of his impressions on the question and what conclusion he arrived at. So far as the Government were concerned, they had been in Office but a few weeks, and had not yet had time to give the full consideration which the subject necessitated. It was, however, their intention to go thoroughly into the matter, with every hope that it might be found possible to carry out some portion of the programme, though, of course, at that early stage of the matter they could not give any pledge.

Lord NORTON said, it seemed to him that the argument of the noble Lord representing the Treasury (Lord Sudeley) against the proposal was a new one. He had never before heard it contended that if practicable it was not desirable to open Museums in the evening; but the noble Lord seemed to think that there would not be sufficient attendance of the public to make it worth while. That argument was very like that with regard to railways before they were begun. It was gravely urged that the traffic upon roads by the old modes of transit was not sufficient to justify any expectation that there would be enough traffic on a railway to pay the enormous cost of forming it. How did the noble Lord know what number of people would visit Museums if they were opened in the evening? Those who now came in the day did not in any way represent the numerous classes which would avail themselves of the evening to visit the Galleries and Museums. Besides the working classes, there was in London a very numerous population of clerks and intelligent tradespeople whose occupations precluded them them from going to Galleries in the day. Then it should be remembered that the bulk of the people were more educated now than they used to be, and were better able to enjoy Museums and make good use of them than they were a few years ago. If the noble Lord doubted whether the public would use the Galleries and Museums in the evening let him try the experiment, however gradually he liked. If only a few people availed themselves of the privilege, in his opinion, it would justify the expense. It was part of the national education of the day. The Prince Consort, who was the founder of South Kensington, meant it to be the climax of the new Art development of the country, which it would fail to be if not available by the working classes.

Lord NORTHBOURNE said, that there were many objections to opening the National Galleries in the evening, and that gas was very injurious to works of Art. As to the social aspects of the question, they had been stated very fully by the noble Earl (the Earl of Harrowby), and were perfectly true;

but they must not forget that the Collections were invaluable, and that, if lost, could not be restored to the nation. Under all the circumstances, he should vote against the Motion.

THE EARL OF NORTHESK, in supporting the Motion, said, he hoped that if noble Lords voted for this Motion it would not be used as an argument to weaken the case of those who were in favour of opening Museums on Sundays.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl Granville) said, he must appeal to the noble Earl (the Earl of Harrowby) not to press his Motion to a division. The noble Earl had introduced this Motion in a comprehensive speech, and had put in a very clear and able manner the arguments in favour of opening these Institutions on week-day evenings. He (Earl Granville) was not prepared to argue against the noble Earl's proposal. Indeed, his own feelings were strongly in favour of making their Art Collections available in every possible way for the instruction and enjoyment of the great body of the people. At the same time, he could not help observing that the noble Lord (Lord Sudeley) had given the assurance that, although the Government had not come to any decision on the subject, they thought that it was their duty to consider all the bearings of the question before coming to a final decision. He could assure the noble Earl (the Earl of Harrowby) that it was the intention of the Government to consider the question with the greatest possible attention, and that without loss of time. The matter was before the Earl of Iddesleigh, but no memorandum had been found as to the decision to which he came. He was unwilling by his vote to go against the noble Earl's Motion; but, on the other hand, he did not think it right that so soon after the Government had entered into Office they should be expected to have come to a decision with regard to the question. He hoped that the noble Earl would be satisfied with what had been stated, and that he would not oblige them to vote for or against the Motion.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, he was anxious to fall in with the suggestion of the Leader of the Government in that House (Earl Granville); but he must remind their Lordships that this matter had been 26 years under consideration, and that during the seven months the late Government were in Office he was instructed by the Prime Minister to do all in his power to push the question forward. Everyone was in favour of the proposal; but by some extraordinary means or other there was a kind of dead opposition to it which prevented it coming forward. He felt, therefore, that he should be betraying the cause if he did not press forward the Motion—which was a substantive and not a mere abstract one—to a division, with the object of strengthening the hands of the Government in any action they might take.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER) said, that as the noble Earl had not responded to the appeal made to him, he might be allowed to state what the Government proposed to do. If all the authorities in the late Government were unanimous in favour of opening the Museums, it seemed strange that they were not able to come forward at once and make the proposition. He thought that showed that there must have been some difficulties of a real kind which were not so very easy to be overcome. But there was another matter. The present Government had not had time to consider the subject, and it was due to the distinguished bodies concerned in the maintenance of these valuable Collections that their views should be carefully considered. He agreed very much with the noble Earl (the Earl of Harrowby), and should be glad to see the privilege conceded in Dublin and South Kensington extended to other National Collections. As far as his own feeling went, he confessed it was very much that of the noble Earl behind him (Earl Granville)—namely, that if it were practicable, then the privilege asked should be conceded; but, at the same time, the Government were not now prepared to accept the Motion, and, therefore, he begged to move the Previous Question.

Previous Question *moved* (*The Lord President of the Council*).

EARL COWPER said, he had come down to the House that evening to support the noble Earl who had brought this subject forward. He had not heard an argument advanced by any noble Lord to induce him to change his opinion. There were two principal objections put forward against the adoption of this proposal. The first was that of expense, which he regretted to see referred to. He trusted it might be withdrawn as an argument against the opening of the Gallery. Considering that the taxpayers of the country had recently to pay the enormous sum of £75,000 for one picture, he thought that to raise as an argument against the opening of the Gallery the comparatively small sum required to enable the mass of the population to enjoy these Art treasures was likely to be viewed with disfavour by the lower classes. Another objection was raised on the ground of morality. He was inclined to look with suspicion on questions in which morality was put prominently forward as a governing consideration. There seemed to be a tinge of hypocrisy about it. It was well-known that nothing in the shape of free evening amusements of any sort in London was exempt from the danger of some doubtful persons taking advantage of them. But he thought they ought to trust to the police. Vice was a creature which flourished in dark nooks and corners, and not in a lighted room where everything that went on was subjected to general supervision. Another argument advanced was that the opening of the Gallery at night would be injurious to the pictures by reason of the amount of dust raised and general wear and tear. Large crowds with muddy boots frequently visited the buildings in the day time; and if the argument was to hold good these crowds ought to be excluded for fear of injury to the pictures. But the authorities did not shut out these people in the day time. They were willing to incur this infinitesimal amount of risk; and nothing had been shown that evening in any way leading to the opinion that a large amount of risk was likely to be incurred from crowds at night. There were Trustees of the National Gallery who sat in their Lordships' House, who, no doubt, had carefully considered this subject, seeing that it had been before the country for 26 years, and Resolutions approving the opening of the Gallery at night had been twice adopted. These noble Lords ought, therefore, to say what the real danger of opening at night was, in order that the House and the public might form an opinion as to what was the danger to be guarded against. He believed that many of the noble Lords who sat on the Government Bench were, in their hearts, in favour of this proposal, but that, owing to some official reason, they were obliged to oppose it. He hoped, therefore, the noble Earl the Leader of the House would excuse him if he voted with noble Lords opposite that evening.

On Question?

EARL SPENCER intimated that, after the reasons adduced by Her Majesty's Government against adopting the proposal, they would not put their Lordships to the trouble of dividing.

Previous Question *affirmed.*

Original Motion *agreed to.*

EGYPTIAN WAR MEDALS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to ask, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government that the officers, seamen, and soldiers of the naval, marine, and military forces employed at Suakin between March, 1884, and May, 1886, shall be disentitled to the medal about to be distributed for services during that period in the cases of such amongst the number as had already received the medal for 1882? said, he claimed that the operations at Suakin were distinct from others undertaken in Egypt, and ought no more to be classed with them than the campaign in Burmah could be classed with the Afghan Expedition.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord SANDHURST), in reply, said: I understand from the Question of the noble Viscount that he wishes to know whether a second medal is to be granted to certain portions of the forces serving at Suakin at certain dates. This question was fully considered, and it was decided that there should only be one medal for all war service in Egypt and the Soudan from 1882 onwards, and that certain clasps should be given for certain specified actions with the enemy. Full Regulations will be found in General Orders of His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief for the years 1884 and 1885. I may add that, as regards the sailors and marines, this decision was arrived at by the Board of Admiralty of the last Government, and this opinion is concurred in by the noble Marquess the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Marquess of Ripon).

MERCHANT SHIPPING—LIGHT AT PORTLAND BREAKWATER.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord COLVILLE of CULROSS, in rising to call attention to the inferior nature of the light now exhibited at the north end of Portland Breakwater, and to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether, considering the importance of Portland as a harbour of refuge, it is intended to replace the existing red light by one of greater power? said, the breakwater was a work of which the nation might justly be proud. It included a very large area which was sheltered from almost every wind. It was much resorted to, and, as a harbour of refuge, it was made use of by vessels caught in bad weather in the Channel. The harbour was easy of access in clear weather; but at night, with bad weather, the reverse was the case. The red light at the north end of the breakwater was said to be visible at a distance of eight miles; but a short time ago, when he was on board a vessel running to Portland during what sailors called a dirty night, they were within two miles of the light before they could see it. On another occasion he was within a mile and a-half of the end of the breakwater on shore, when it was hardly possible to say whether the light was a red or a white one. Of all places in the world there ought to be a fine light at the point to which he had referred; and in any alteration which might be made this particular light should be distinguished from other lights in the harbour. He hoped the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Marquess of Ripon) would give his attention to the matter.

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (The Marquess of Ripon) said, it was no doubt the intention of those who established the light in question that it should be visible at a distance of eight miles. He thought the noble Lord would allow that that was a sufficient distance if the light fulfilled the objects intended. He understood that a light of this nature was affected more than a white light by atmospheric influences; and it was possible that, on a bad night, the red light at the north end of Portland Breakwater would not be visible for eight miles. At the same time, the light should be visible at a very considerable distance from the point. If it could not be seen as it ought to be, there must be some defect in the light itself rather than any mistake as to the character or magnitude of the light adopted. Since his noble Friend had mentioned the matter, directions had been given to the harbour master to report fully on the character of the light; and if it appeared that it was in any respect defective, he would take care that it should be made a good and efficient light. He fully admitted the necessity of having such a light. It would not do to put a very strong white light in that position, as it might not be distinguished from other lights.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (FERMOY) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the Town of Fermoy—Was *presented* by the Lord President; read 1^a; to be *printed;* and *referred* to the Examiners. (No. 32.)

House adjourned at Seven o'clock,
to Monday next, a quarter
before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 12*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Parliamentary Procedure, *nominated.*

Supply — *considered in Committee — Committee deferred—Resolutions* [March 11] *reported.*

Private Bill (*by Order*) — *Second Reading* — Scinde, Punjaub, and Delhi Railway Company.*

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Infants * [139]; High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings) * [140].

Committee—Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment [10]—R.P.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS.

Mr. THEODORE FRY (Darlington) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If he will bring in a Bill to alter the hours of polling at School Board elections, making them the same as those in force on other occasions, as the present limit practically disfranchises large numbers of voters?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): The Education Department has received very few representations from School Boards desiring the extension of the hours of polling beyond seven hours. No Act is required for the purpose, as the extension of hours could be made in the General Order regulating the elections. But as the expense to the ratepayers would be increased, the Department has not thought it judicious to extend the hours of polling beyond seven hours until there is either a general expression of desire on the part of the School Boards or a Resolution of this House that the time for polling should be assimilated to that for the School Board for London, which is now from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—POLICEMEN AS TENANTS OF AN EVICTED FARM—CASE OF SERGEANT O'DONNELL.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Charles O'Donnell, a sergeant in the Royal Irish Constabulary, at present stationed at Castleisland, county Kerry, has become the tenant of an evicted farm near Newport, county Mayo; and, if so, whether it is in accordance with the rules of the service for police constables to engage in the business of farming?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Sergeant O'Donnell is not the tenant of an evicted farm at Newport, County Mayo. He is the trustee of a farm there, and is no way engaged in farming. The instruction to the Force is that the men should not hold farms or engage in agricultural pursuits in the district or county in which they are engaged. Sergeant O'Donnell is not stationed in the County Mayo, but in Kerry.

BURMAH.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is proposed by Her Majesty's Indian Government to continue the system of leasing monopolies in timber and other productions of Upper Burmah which existed under the late rule?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): No information has been received from India on this subject; but in ordinary circumstances the fiscal policy of the Government of India is opposed to monopolies.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—HOWTH HARBOUR.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is a fact that the Royal Harbour of Howth has not been dredged for nearly twenty years; whether the offal of the last dredging has turned into a sandbank, dangerous to life and property; and, whether, in consequence of the length of time that has elapsed since the last dredging, as well as because of the effect of the fashionable promenade called a pier, in helping the collection of stones and sand at the mouth of the harbour, the water there has become so shallow that boats have to remain for four hours at low tide before they can either enter or leave the harbour; and, if so, what steps the Board of Trade proposes to take towards rendering the principal fishing station on the East Coast of Ireland suitable for its purpose?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.) (who replied) said: The Royal Harbour at Howth, which is under the control of the Commissioners of Public Works of Ireland, and not the Board of Trade, has not been dredged for nearly 20 years. Like all similarly situated harbours, it has a tendency to silt. The sea rises 10 feet in four hours, and fishing boats of ordinary draught enter the harbour in much less than that time. It is not considered desirable to spend any money on the harbour on account of the great decrease of the herring fishery, for the convenience of which the harbour practically exists. I regret to say that for some years the herring has deserted the East Coast, and Howth in particular. As an instance I might mention that some 10 years ago there were caught in one day as many herrings as were taken during the whole of last year.

ARTIZANS' DWELLINGS (METROPOLIS).

Mr. INCE (Islington, E.) asked the honourable Member for Launceston, as an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, Whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have sold or let, or are ready to sell or let, any sites of land, in London or elsewhere, at reasonable rates, for the erection of artizans' dwellings, in accordance with the powers given to them and other corporations by the Housing of the Working Classes Act of last year; whether a site belonging to them, near Bream's Buildings, Chancery Lane, was formerly occupied by poor people; whether the Commissioners did not, several years ago, pull down the dwellings and eject the poor people; how many poor people were so ejected; how many years the land has now been vacant; whether they have received applications, both with respect to this site and elsewhere, for land for artizans' dwellings; whether they are now prepared to let this and other sites for that purpose; and, if so, whether they will at once make known their intention; and, whether, until the site near Bream's Buildings is actually let for building, they will take away the high railings and allow the site to be used as a playground?

The SECRETARY (Mr. C. T. Acland) (Cornwall, Launceston): The Ecclesiastical Commissioners have from time to time sold or let on building leases various sites for the erection of artizans' dwellings in the Metropolis. In most of these cases the sale or letting took place before the passing of the Act of last year, and before the sitting of the late Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor. There are upwards of 20 of these sites. The total number of the tenements for which these sales and lettings were designed to provide may be taken as nearly 2,000. In the year 1879 some ground near to, and comprising the place then known as Bream's Buildings, Chancery Lane, had come on the expiry of leases gradually into the possession of the Commissioners. It was covered with small tenements of a very miserable description and occupied by a dense population living in degrading circumstances, and having a considerable admixture of the criminal classes. These may have numbered 1,000 persons. The Commissioners, in co-operation with the Metropolitan Board of Works and the City Commissioners of Sewers, took measures for clearing this area as circumstances permitted, and have formed a new street through the centre of the same and of adjoining properties. The present proximity of the Royal Courts of Justice to this ground has caused a special demand for additional offices in this neighbourhood, and a portion of the frontage has been let for that purpose. The opening of the new street has been effected between three and four years, and a portion of the total adjoining area, which comprises about half-an-acre, has already been let for the erection of offices. The Commissioners have not received any applications for the appropriation of any part of this area as a site for artizans' dwellings except from a single individual—a Mr. J. Theodore Dodd, a barrister. His inquiry was of a very general character, and he was informed that the Commissioners did not regard the ground referred to as suitable for the purpose contemplated. There is in the vicinity of the vacant ground above referred to other land, at present covered with old houses, which is partly in the Commissioners' possession, and which they would be prepared to let for the erection of artizans' dwellings if a definite and practical proposal were submitted to them. The Commissioners do not consider it would be proper to take away the existing high fence by which their ground near the late Bream's Buildings was protected in order to allow it to be used as a playground. They have, in fact, been under the necessity of increasing the height and strength of the fence in order to obviate the nuisances complained of by adjacent occupiers.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND)—BARLININE PRISON.

Mr. BAIRD (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether it is the case that prisoners, convicted in Glasgow and interned in the prison at Barlinine, are systematically liberated in the rural district of Barlinine; whether he has seen a Petition, addressed to himself or to his predecessor in office, complaining of this practice; whether the Chief Constable for the county of

Lanark has reported that the practice is bad, alike in the interests of the residents in the district and of the discharged prisoners; and, whether he is prepared to take steps to put an end to the practice?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): It is true that, in accordance with recent arrangements made by the Prison Commissioners, the prisoners discharged from Barlinine Prison have been discharged at the gates of that prison. An important Petition has been received from Mr. William Cochran and other persons in the neighbourhood pointing out the undesirablity of this practice, and the Chief Constable of Lanarkshire has reported very strongly to a similar effect. The subject involves points of law as well as of policy, and I am at present in communication with the Prison Commissioners with a view to obtaining further information in order to arrive at a fit and proper decision in the matter. I can assure the hon. Member and the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), who has likewise interested himself in this matter, that it shall have the full consideration which so important a question deserves, both from myself and the Lord Advocate; and the result of my decision will be communicated in due course to the parties interested.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE MEDICAL SERVICE.

SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether young officers of Her Majesty's Indian Medical Service are sent to India without being instructed in ambulance drill, and are thereby placed at a great disadvantage with the officers of the Army Medical Department; and, whether there is any objection to this drawback to their efficiency as Military surgeons being remedied by their undergoing a course of instruction at Aldershot prior to their departure to India?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The option of attending the Aldershot course of instruction, which in August, 1882, had been given to Indian medical officers passing through Netley, was inadvertently withdrawn in April, 1884, on the introduction at Netley of a course of bearer company drill. This, however, will now be corrected; and as the Aldershot course must be optional for Indian officers a reference will be made to the Government of India as to the instruction in that country of those officers who have not passed the Aldershot course.

RETIRED MILITARY AND NAVAL OFFICERS—COLONIAL EMPLOYMENT.

SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, if any, what objections exist to the employment of retired Military and Naval officers in our Colonies; and, whether he can state the number of officers, Naval and Military, now employed in the service of the Colonies with the sanction of the Admiralty and War Office?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): There are no objections, in principle, to the employment of retired military and naval officers in our Colonies. The conditions on which such officers are to be allowed to retain their pay while in Colonial employment have recently been under the consideration of the Departments concerned, and it is expected that a decision may very shortly be arrived at. With regard to the second Question, a Return of the officers now employed in the service of the Colonies is in course of preparation for the House of Lords, and if the hon. Member desires to move for it, it can be presented to this House.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE VETERINARY ESTABLISHMENT.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether a reduction in the number of veterinary surgeons in India has recently been ordered; whether, if so, this reduction was recommended or approved by the principal veterinary surgeon in India; and, on which Country the cost of the reduced veterinary surgeons will fall, until they are absorbed on the home establishment?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): A reduction of the veterinary establishments in India has been sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council, in accordance with the recommendation of the

Government of India, who are of opinion that, in view of the introduction of the system of station hospitals and other changes, a smaller establishment will be sufficient. It is believed that this recommendation has not the concurrence of the principal veterinary surgeon. The Revenues of India will bear the cost of the supernumerary officers till they are absorbed.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—BALTINGLASS UNION—APPOINTMENT OF SUPERINTENDENT REGISTRAR.

Mr. BYRNE (Wicklow, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the board of guardians of the Baltinglass Union, county of Wicklow, were within their absolute legal rights in re-appointing Mr. J. R. Dagg to the office of Superintendent Registrar for the district of Baltinglass, under the powers vested in them by 26 Vic. c. 11, secs. 23, 26, and 27 Vic. 90, sec. 10; and, whether, on the other hand, the appointment of Mr. Middleton to the office of Superintendent Registrar by their Excellencies the Lords Justices was illegal; and, if so, whether he will take steps for the removal of Mr. Middleton, and the adoption of the officer selected by the Guardians?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Sir, this matter is at present under the consideration of my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland. He has directed further inquiry to be made. If the hon. Member will be good enough to repeat the Question in about a week's time, I hope to be able to give an answer.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—THE TRADE IN FISH.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether information is now being collected as to the total numbers of fish taken off the British Coasts, with the ports at which they are landed, in addition to the statistics published last year as to the quantity carried by railway; and, if so, from what date such information will commence, and when and for what periods it will be published?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside): The Board of Trade are now collecting Returns as to fish landed on the Coasts of England and Wales, and they have commenced the monthly publication of a summary of the Returns, which they propose to continue. The question of embodying this summary in the monthly Trade and Navigation Returns is also under consideration. One difficulty is in obtaining the Returns in time for publication with the usual monthly publication. In addition, there will no doubt be an annual Return at the end of the year, in which it is proposed to embody a general view of the fishery statistics of the United Kingdom, including a summary of the return of fish conveyed from ports by railway referred to by the hon. Member, the fishery statistics obtained by the Scotch and Irish Fishery Boards, and the statistics of boats and men now obtained by the Board of Trade and published in the annual Navigation Return. I hope when we have organized our Fishery Department we shall not confine ourselves to statistics, but publish an annual Report dealing with all matters relating to fisheries.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): Have the Government any objection to make a similar Return with regard to Ireland?

Mr. MUNDELLA: The Irish Return was made by the Irish Fishery Board. We can only give a summary of the Irish Return.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—OUTBREAK OF FEVER IN ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOLS, ASHFORD.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Is it true that the Board of Guardians of St. George's, Hanover Square, were recently compelled, by an outbreak of fever, to send a large number of the children from their schools at Ashford to other district schools; is it true that an offer was made to receive the Catholic children into Catholic schools, and was refused; and, will he inquire into the circumstances, and inform the House of the grounds of such refusal?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.): We are aware that, in consequence of an outbreak of fever at the schools at Ashford, certain children belonging to the St. George's Union were sent to other schools while alterations in the drainage arrangements were being made. On the 6th of last month we were informed that about seven Roman Catholic children had been sent to a school at which it was stated they had no opportunity of receiving instruction in their religion or of attending its services. The case of two girls was specially referred to. We communicated with the Guardians of the St. George's Union on the subject, and were informed that the mothers of the two girls had taken their discharge from the workhouse on the 6th of February, and that the children had been delivered to their care. All the other Roman Catholic children, we were told, were removed on the 12th of February to the Fulham Road Workhouse, where there is a paid Roman Catholic instructor, and a chapel for the inmates has been provided, and that arrangements had been made for sending the Roman Catholic children daily to the schools attached to St. Mary's Priory.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—INCAPACITY OF HOLDERS OF SPIRIT LICENCES TO SERVE AS JURORS IN CRIMINAL TRIALS.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that at the assizes held last week in Longford, jurors holding spirit licences were not allowed to serve on any of the several juries empannelled, although many of them are grand jurors at quarter sessions; and, whether, if it is the fact, the Irish Government will direct that in future persons holding such licences may not be put to the trouble, loss of time, and considerable expense, of coming from all parts of the Country to attend as jurors, when not considered to be worthy of that position by the officers of the Crown?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the rules for the guidance of the Clerk of the Crown prescribe that holders of spirit licences are not allowed to serve as jurors in criminal cases. I am informed that the rule is not carried out in all cases. No doubt there is something in the suggestion of the last paragraph of the Question which requires consideration.

LONDON HOSPITALS—THE HOMERTON HOSPITAL.

Mr. GIBB (St. Pancras, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the disclosures connected with the mismanagement of the Homerton Hospital, and to the general dissatisfaction with the administration and expenditure of the Metropolitan Asylums Board; and, whether he is willing to facilitate the appointment of a Royal Commission or a Select Committee of this House to inquire into the management and expenditure of that Board?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.): An inquiry was held last year by the direction of the President of the Local Government Board as to the management of the Homerton Hospital. The investigation was conducted by three of the Board's Inspectors, and extended over 39 days. The general result was that it was clearly shown that grave abuses, involving serious extravagance of expenditure, had arisen in connection with the hospital, for which, in the opinion of the Board, the committee, and especially the chairman of the committee, and certain officers of the managers were mainly responsible. The report of the inquiry has already been made public. The managers have made such arrangements as it is believed will prevent the occurrence of similar abuses in the future, and it does not appear to the Board that there would be any sufficient advantage in a further inquiry by a Royal Commission or Select Committee as suggested. It is due to the Board of Managers to add that the Metropolis is under a considerable obligation to them for the great services which they have rendered in meeting the emergencies connected with the outbreaks of infectious disease in London.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he was aware that great dissatisfaction existed in East London as to the inquiry into the question of asylums, and whether he would communicate with the Boards of Guardians of the Unions interested?

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir, I am not aware of the dissatisfaction to which my hon. Friend refers;

but if there are any grounds for the dissatisfaction, I hope the Boards of Guardians will communicate with me.

Mr. JAMES STUART said, they would do so without delay.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—SALARIES OF POOR LAW OFFICIALS.

Mr. CORNWALLIS WEST (Denbigh, W.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he can suggest any mode by which the salaries of officials connected with Boards of Guardians can be revised, in order to meet the pressure of rates in the present state of agricultural depression?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.): The Local Government Board were advised by the late Lord Chief Justice, then Attorney General, that a Board of Guardians are not legally empowered, even with the consent of the Board, to reduce the salary of an officer during the legal continuance of his office without his consent, unless the appointment or contract was in such terms as to reserve the right of altering the salary. But the salary assigned to an office can, of course, be revised when a vacancy occurs. It may be observed that a time of depression tends to increase rather than diminish the duties which devolve on the officers of Boards of Guardians.

LONDON HOSPITALS—THE HIGHGATE HOSPITAL.

Mr. GIBB (St. Pancras, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to a Report by Mr. Shirley F. Murphy, late medical officer of health for St. Pancras, from which it appears that one effect of the treatment of small pox in hospitals at Hampstead and Highgate during recent epidemics was to spread the disease, and thus endanger the health of that part of the Metropolis; and, whether, having regard to the fact that those hospitals are in the main roads to places of great public resort, such as Hampstead Heath and Highgate Woods, he is prepared to take any steps to prevent the use of those hospitals for small pox in the event of another epidemic?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.): The Highgate Hospital is an institution supported by voluntary contributions, in connection with which my Board have no jurisdiction. As regards the hospital at Hampstead, which is under the management of the Managers of the Metropolitan Asylum District, it has been the subject of an inquiry by a Select Committee and of expensive litigation. Since the legal proceedings terminated the Managers have secured an additional area of land in connection with the site. The hospital has not, in fact, been used for any small-pox patients since July of last year; and if in the event of any epidemic it should be necessary again to use it for small-pox patients it would only be for a very limited number, and in the cases only of patients who, from the acute nature of the disease, could not be removed to any hospital at a distance. The Report of Dr. Murphy has not yet been officially considered by the Managers, and, consequently, no steps have yet been taken to test the conclusions at which he has arrived.

THE EGYPTIAN EXPEDITION—SERVICE IN THE NILE EXPEDITION.

Sir JOHN COMMERELL (Southampton) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If arrangements will be made by the Admiralty for allowing all Naval officers who were engaged in the late expedition up the Nile, to count the time served there as services qualifying for promotion in cases where the present Regulations do not already provide?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Hibbert) (Oldham): This question was very carefully and thoroughly considered by the late Board of Admiralty, and a decision come to not to disturb the existing regulations issued under Mr. Childer's Order in Council of February 22, 1870. These regulations were specially framed to insure that officers should not be qualified by certain home and other appointments which did not give experience in command of a ship of war at sea until such experience had been gained. The regulations are in the best interests of the Service, and the present Board do not think it desirable to infringe them, more especially as the officers who would be immediately affected are in no way prejudiced by their being maintained.

JAMAICA—CONVICT OFFICERS.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If the convict officers who were transferred from the English Service to the Penitentiary at Kingston, Jamaica, in October 1883, elect to return home at the expiration of their three years' engagement, the Government will defray the expenses of their passages home; and, whether they will be reinstated in the Imperial Service?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): The officers in question were not engaged for three years, but received permanent appointments in the service of the Colony. They are, therefore, in the condition of all other permanent officers, and as such cannot claim to have the expense of their return passage defrayed by the Government. The second Question on the Paper is one which should be addressed to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary rather than to me.

THE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN ADMINISTRATION—PLACE OF INQUIRY.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any intimation of a feeling on the part of the Native community of India, that the proposed Parliamentary inquiry into Indian administration will be inadequate if it be carried on only in England, and if it be not supplemented by an inquiry in India independent of the Indian Government; and, whether the Government are willing to institute a thoroughly exhaustive and impartial local inquiry?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): A representation has been received from certain Associations in India praying that a Royal Commission containing English statesmen of front rank and competent Indians, but no Anglo-Indian officials, be appointed, which should take evidence in India. The Viceroy has been desired to inform them that it has been decided, according to precedent, to propose a Parliamentary Committee, and it is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to institute an independent inquiry in India.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) inquired on what day the subject would be brought before the House?

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, in reply, said, that a Motion for a Committee was made in "another place" by his noble Friend the Secretary of State yesterday; but until the names had been submitted to the House of Lords it would be impossible for a message to be sent to the House of Commons; but when that had been done, a Motion would be made on behalf of the Government for the appointment of the Committee.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE gave Notice that, in consequence of the answer that had just been given, he should, when the Motion was brought forward, move that no inquiry into the administration of India would fulfil the just expectations of the Indian people or satisfy that House which did not provide for a local investigation independent of the Government of India.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked whether any facilities would be given to Natives of India to come before the Parliamentary Committee free of expense?

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH said, that that would be a question for the Committee to consider when it had been appointed; but he imagined that there would not be any indisposition to grant any necessary facilities for the purpose of taking evidence.

INDIA (BENGAL)—THE PATWARI BILL.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Patwari Bill, now under the consideration of a Select Committee of the Bengal Legislative Council, will not have the effect, if passed into Law, of largely adding to the number of officials in Bengal, and of increasing the public burdens, which already weigh on the Native community; whether Her Majesty's Government will produce the whole correspondence on the question of Patwaris, including the Minute of Mr. Grote and the Memorandum of Mr. M'Neile; and, whether, before the final passing of the Bill, full time will be allowed for the translation into the vernacular of the report of the Select Committee, and its circulation among the classes interested, without regard to the retirement of the Government to the hills before the heats of summer?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Patwari Bill is to apply to one district only in Bengal, and the local Government believes that it will not increase the public burdens in that district. The Secretary of State does not think it advisable to produce the Correspondence, which is very bulky and highly technical. It is for the Bengal Legislative Council to take such steps as it may consider necessary for the due promulgation of information on the subject of the Bill.

NAVY—ARMAMENT—GUNS AND AMMUNITION.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he could, for the convenience of the House, state, before the discussion upon Navy Estimates, the amount proposed to be taken in the Army Estimates for the provision of guns and ammunition for the Navy?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I hope the Army Estimates will be in the hands of Members before the Navy Estimates are moved; but for the convenience of my noble Friend and of others interested, I may state that they include a sum of £1,000,000 sterling for naval armaments, and about £215,000 for gunpowder and gun cotton for the use of the Navy.

POST OFFICE—PARCEL POST TO FRANCE AND ITALY.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, When the Papers connected with the extension of the parcel post to France and Italy, promised by the late Postmaster General, will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I think the answer of the late Postmaster General must have been misunderstood. There are no Papers which would in the ordinary course be laid upon the Table; but if, when the Conventions between France and Italy have been completed, the hon. Member sees fit to move for Copies, they will be laid upon the Table as an unopposed Return.

FRANCE AND MADAGASCAR.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Treaty between the French Republic and the Queen of Madagascar?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): In accordance with the promise I gave to my hon. Friend the junior Member for Leicester on the 25th ultimo, the French text of the Treaty between France and Madagascar was laid on the Table in print on the 8th instant, and has been distributed to Members this afternoon.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in the event of the Members in charge of the Sunday Closing Bill being unable to procure an early opportunity for continuing the Debate on the Second Reading of the Bill, Her Majesty's Government will afford facilities for the Adjourned Debate?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): Yes, Sir; we will take an early opportunity when the Civil Estimates are being discussed to report Progress at or soon after 11; and we will put down my hon. Friend's Bill as the Second Order. But I can give no undertaking as to any stage except the second reading.

NAVY—COASTGUARD STATION AT ENNISCRONE.

MR. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty, in May 1882, leased a piece of ground at Enniscrone for the purpose of erecting a Coastguard Station there, and have since been paying rent for said site, though not yet built on; and, whether they could now commence the erection of the buildings, so as to afford employment to the people of the district?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): The site in question is held on lease dated 1st of May, 1882, and rent has been paid accordingly. The Admiralty have approved of the Coastguard station to be erected, and the buildings will be carried on during the present year, provided the sanction of Parliament be obtained to the Vote inserted in the Civil Service Estimates by the Irish Board of Public Works, with whom the matter rests.

DEPRESSION OF TRADE—OVERTIME IN GOVERNMENT FACTORIES.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, having regard to the present severe depression in trade, and the number of workmen unemployed, the War Office will abolish all systematic overtime in Woolwich Arsenal. and at the Small Arms Factory at Enfield, unless some absolute necessity should require a temporary resort to such overtime?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): In cases of urgency it is not possible entirely to avoid overtime. Even if limitations of space and plant did not forbid it, there are cases in which the difficulty could not be met by the employment of new and inexperienced hands. I can, however, assure the hon. Member that there is no desire to resort to overtime whenever it can be avoided.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will grant, as an unopposed Return, the Return relating to Woolwich and Enfield Factories on to-day's Paper?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he would be glad to consent to this Return with a few modifications, upon which he would consult his hon. Friend.

Viscount CURZON (Bucks, Wycombe) asked whether, in spite of the official announcement to the contrary, it was not really true that the Admiralty had given directions for the discharge of at least 400 men from Devonport Dockyard?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Hibbert) (Oldham): I am not aware of any such directions having been given.

POST OFFICE—IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, What was the result of the Memorial, having 900 signatures, recently sent to the Postmaster General from the clergy and people of Gurteen, county Sligo, calling attention to the fact that the letters for Gurteen arriving at Ballymote by the mid-day mail from Dublin, are detained there for twenty-one hours; and, whether the Postmaster General will make arrangements for a mid-day delivery in the western towns off the line of Railway; as, if not, the acceleration of the mails will be of no advantage to the people in these places?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): There is only one post a day from Ballymote to Gurteen which carries the night mail letters, the letters brought by day mail not being numerous enough to warrant a second post. The Memorial referred to, which has received careful consideration, prays that the night mail messenger may be kept back at Ballymote for the day mail letters; but it was found on inquiry that a very large proportion of the letters for Gurteen are brought by night mail, and that such letters would be delayed between four and five hours if the post were not despatched from Ballymote until after the arrival of the day mail, and for that reason no change has been made. A day mail delivery in the rural districts far removed from the line of railway in the county of Sligo would, I regret to state, entail much greater expense than the correspondence would warrant.

PARLIAMENT—DIVISIONS—WASTE OF THE TIME OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering that more than two hours of the working time of this House was occupied by the six Divisions taken on Tuesday night last, and also that in two of those Divisions the minority numbered less than one-sixth of the majority, he will make it one of the subjects to be considered by the Select Committee on Procedure; and, whether by amendment of Standing Order 187a, or by other methods, the time of the House may be further economised in arriving at its decisions?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): Yes, Sir; the subject will come before the Select Committee on Procedure.

ULSTER CANAL BILL.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, At what hour on Monday he would proceed with the Ulster Canal Bill?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): At any hour.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

RESOLUTION.

MR. DAWSON (Leeds, E.), in rising to move the following Resolution:—

> "That, in view of the existing depression of trade, and the large number of persons out of employment, this House is of opinion that the present is a favourable time for the Government to carry out certain valuable and necessary public works, more especially the formation of Harbours of Refuge, at various points upon the Coast,"

said, that he felt that some apology was due to the House for his having brought such an important subject before their notice so soon after his becoming a Member. The great necessity, however, which existed for doing something for those who were out of employment, and for those who were exposed to the perils of the Coast, would, he trusted, be held as an excuse. There were two ways in which the House might approach the consideration of this Motion — either from the humanitarian or from the business-like point of view. He wished the House to consider it not as a question of providing relief for the unemployed, but to consider whether if there were certain works which ought to be carried out at the present moment, and works which were necessary, this was not on other accounts a suitable and fitting time for such works to be carried out? They had heard from the President of the Local Government Board that it had been the practice of Her Majesty's Government to urge upon Local Bodies the necessity of carrying out works in their own districts; but his point was that there were certain works which could not be carried out by the localities alone, and which required the assistance of the Executive Government of the country. He believed that it had been agreed that some money ought to be expended upon the fortifications of the country; and, if that were so, this was surely a good time for the Government to carry out these works. The works, however, to which he more particularly referred were the formation of harbours of refuge at various points of the Coast. There were, roughly speaking, three kinds of harbours—purely commercial harbours, great national harbours of defence; and, thirdly, smaller harbours of refuge. With regard to the commercial harbours, these, he admitted, must be considered upon a commercial basis; and he did not ask the House to assert that they ought to be made at the expense of the State. The case, however, was very different ~~with~~ regard to the great harbours of national defence, which it was admittedly the duty of the Central Government to carry out. The East Coast of England, where an enormous proportion of our trade passed up and down, was particularly exposed in case of war to the attacks of foreign nations; and he had the authority of Sir Astley Cooper Key and Sir Frederick Evans for saying that there was not upon the East Coast a single harbour in which Her Majesty's ships could take refuge in case of damage. When one reflected upon the absolute necessity of our having the complete command of the sea to prevent our being starved into submission within a few weeks, it was alarming to think of the defenceless condition of the East Coast. From the Thames to Cape Wrath there were no fewer than 92 harbours, and of these only 12 had at this moment a depth of 8 feet at low water; while it had been declared on good authority that the very lowest depth at the entrance to a harbour ought to be 10 feet. The Government had resolved to carry out works at Dover; but why they had selected Dover in preference to Filey was one of those mysteries which they would probably never be able to fathom. Looking at the evidence of the various Committees that sat to inquire into the subject, there appeared to have been a great agreement of opinion in favour of Filey. But upon the present occasion he did not ask the House to express any opinion with regard to these large harbours. They would entail much delay in the preparation of plans and specification, and works of this kind would be practically worthless for attaining the object he had in view—

namely, the relief of present distress. What he wanted the House to consider was the subject of the small refuge harbours, which were greatly required, more especially on the East and Cornish Coast, along the Bristol Channel, and on the West Coast of Ireland. Repeated Committees had reported as to the pressing necessity of such harbours. So long ago as 1858 a Committee of that House reported that certain works of this nature were an absolute necessity, and recommended that a grant of £2,000,000 should be made to carry them out. In 1859 another Committee sat to report upon various sites, and recommended that £2,365,000 should be expended on certain works; and by referring to the pages of *Hansard* it would be found that in 1860 the House was asked to consider the question, and a Resolution was carried that it was necessary to give immediate effect to this recommendation of the Committee. From that time, however, down to the present, practically nothing had been done. He hoped, however, that the adoption of that Resolution might be of good omen, and that the Resolution which he was now bringing forward might also be adopted; but he trusted that the present Government would, in that event, not follow the example of previous Governments, and allow the Resolution to remain a dead-letter. In 1883 and 1884 a Committee, presided over by the right hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), sat, and reported that nothing had been done. The average annual loss of ships on our Coasts was between 3,000 and 3,500; the annual loss of property over £2,000,000; the average loss of life between 800 and 900. It was the duty of the country to try and prevent this enormous loss of life and property. The Committee of 1884 reported that there—

> "Is on certain parts of our Coast a great and preventible loss of property and life, which would undoubtedly be reduced by an increase of deep-water harbours, which may be accessible to vessels using them at all states of the tide."

The fishing population was deeply interested in this matter. A high authority had stated that the annual value of the British fisheries was £11,000,000, and the number of men actually engaged in the fisheries on sea besides those engaged in the fishing industry on shore was 125,000. This large population and this important source of national food and wealth were largely dependent on the proper supply of harbours of refuge. In an admirable speech which the right hon. Member for Berwickshire delivered in 1884, he called the attention of the House to the enormous loss of life in the great gale of November 1875, and again in 1881, when there were lost in one single day on the Coast of Berwickshire the lives of 191 fishermen. So great at present were the risks to which fishing vessels were exposed from the deficiency of harbour accommodation that the authorities at Lloyd's refused to insure them. He understood by the reply of the President of the Board of Trade to a deputation last Wednesday that it was the opinion of that right hon. Gentleman that it was of benefit to fishermen that there should be a deficiency of harbour accommodation, because such deficiency made the shipowners the more careful in the equipment of their vessels before sending them to sea. That line of argument would show that the best thing to be at once done was to abolish all lighthouses and other life-saving apparatus. It had been said that England would compare favourably with the nations of Europe in what she spent. What had the Government done in the last 25 years? During that time the Loans Commissioners had advanced about £2,500,000; but other countries had done almost as much. In the same period the following sums had been spent on the same object: — Holland £2,500,000, Belgium £2,700,000, Germany (excluding Wilhelmshaven) £1,100,000, Spain £1,720,000, Italy (without Spezzia) £1,500,000, and France £11,000,000; so that whatever this country might have done it could not compare favourably with other countries, considering its insular character. It might be argued by the Government that the public Treasury was not full enough to justify the expenditure of £3,000,000 on harbours of refuge, that being the sum said to be wanted by the Society for the Extension of National Harbours of Refuge. But, however empty the Treasury might be, such a sum would certainly be voted in a case of national emergency abroad. Why, then, should it not be voted in a case of national emergency at home? It might also be objected that the localities interested should bear the burden of construction. In many cases, no doubt, they would; but they should also be assisted by the Government, and loans should be made very easy. But in many cases the localities that most needed the harbours were just the very places that would be unable either to find the money or the security for a loan. In 1883 between the Humber and Cape Wrath there had been £1,377,000 lent to 11 harbours, with an income of over £2,000 a-year, and only £19,205 to five places with less than £2,000 income. In that district there were between 40 and 50 harbours relying mainly or entirely on fishing, and only about four of them had more than £2,000 a-year, and only eight had received loans. He also contended that the Loans Commissioners were most unwilling to make loans to private individuals or Companies, and he thought that should not be the case. In the four years ending March, 1881, the average annual amount granted was £68,000, while £250,000 was refused. If the harbours were necessary, and the people were willing to construct them, he contended that it was wrong for them to be sent empty away from the Loans Commissioners, because they were not entirely satisfied with the security which the poor fishermen were able to give. Grants of money should be made in such cases. One of these places that could not give security was Eyemouth, where the loss of 191 lives to which he had just referred occurred. These lives would have been saved had a proper harbour existed; and the reason why there was no such harbour was that the fishermen were unable to give the security required by the Loans Commissioners. The week before last 50 lives were lost on the Coast; yet no notice had been taken of the matter. Had 50 lives been lost in Burmah great excitement would have been manifested. He held that the construction of harbours of refuge was a matter of national concern, and that this was recognized in the country was shown by the Petitions supporting the project that had come from Nottingham, Lincoln, Bradford, Leeds, and other inland towns. Now, he would like to ask the House what would be the result which might be expected to accrue from the construction of these harbours over and above the saving of life? First, there would be an enormous development of the fishing industry, which it was estimated might be doubled with proper harbour accommodation. In 1856 Grimsby sent inland 1,500 tons of fish; but in 1881, with improved harbour accommodation, it sent inland 50,000 tons; and it was the same with many other places. One of the great mistakes the Government had always made in regard to Ireland had been to make grants for nets and boats, when they might have done much more good by providing better harbour accommodation. The Report of the Committee that sat in 1884 placed on record that nothing was more likely to lead to the development of the resources of Ireland than the improvement of the harbour accommodation of the country. If harbours were improved and increased in number the number of fishermen would soon be doubled, employment would be found by deserving persons, and the immigration of country people into the large towns of the Kingdom, which was so great a cause of distress, would soon diminish in its extent. As an illustration of this point, he might mention that in 1852 the harbour of Wick had over 1,000 boats employed in the fishing trade, and caught 80,000 crans of fish. At the same time the harbour of Fraserburgh had 190 boats, and caught 22,000 crans of fish; while Peterhead had 242 boats, and caught 16,000 crans of fish. In 1862 there was a difference of opinion between Wick and the authorities in London, the consequence of which was that the Wick Harbour works fell into disrepair, while Fraserburgh and Peterhead were busily employed in improving theirs. The result was that in 1882 Wick, instead of having 1,000 boats, had only 600, and caught 69,000 crans of fish against 80,000 in 1852, while Fraserburgh had come up from 190 boats to 900, and Peterhead from 242 to 822. These facts were sufficient to show that a great development of the fishing industry might be expected from improved harbour accommodation. There would be a further result, which was of a purely national character. A great deal had been said about the necessity of forming a large Naval Reserve of Naval Volunteers as a means of defending the Coasts of this country. Now, if the number of our fishermen was doubled, there would at once be a recruiting ground for the Navy, and for the formation of a Reserve, which would be an immense source of strength to this country in the event of a war. In the remarks he had made he had not ventured to specify to the House where harbours should be constructed; but he was quite satisfied that almost every Gentleman who took part in the debate would suggest a different site for such a work. He only wished to affirm the principle that these works were necessary, and would be beneficial; that being the case, they should be done at once. Some time or other such works must be done, and he contended that the present time in the condition of the labour market was a most suitable opportunity. Some of his friends had said the doctrines he had been advancing on the subject were of a Socialistic tendency. He did not think they were; but he knew that there had been former occasions when the Government of this country had given employment to distressed people. If a famine broke out in India at this moment, the Government would give its sanction to public works for its relief. In Ireland, also, in the famine years, for the purpose of giving employment, works were carried out, though many were absolutely useless. He admitted that it was not desirable that a Government should engage in operations which would of necessity clash with private enterprize. What he proposed would not have that effect, because, unless the work was of a paying nature, private enterprize would have nothing to do with it. But there were works which might, in a national sense, be so remunerative that, though not likely to attract private enterprize, a Government ought to undertake them. Something had been said about convict labour being employed in the course of time. But if they were to trust to convict labour for these works no person in that House would see the beginning of them. Dover Harbour would take 25 years; Filey would take a long time; and, unless they trusted to other labour, 30 or 40 years might elapse before the works which he had in view were taken in hand. For them convict labour was unsuited. They were too small to justify the outlay which would, in the first place, be required for the construction of barracks for the convicts. The Report of the Committee of 1884 was very strong against convict labour being made to subserve the construction of these harbours. At present we could not shut our eyes to the fact that there was an enormous amount of suffering among the working population; and, what was more, that the long continuance of this distress might pave the way for dangerous doctrines and opinions, to which some ears might be only too willing to listen. In London it was said that some 7,000 or 8,000 men came to the Docks every day looking for work, and went away without getting it. He had heard that something like 50,000 persons in the pool and the upper reaches of the Thames were out of employment, and that in Poplar, which used to be a perfect hive of industry, one house in four in the High Street, which was a mile long, was unoccupied. Birmingham, Liverpool, Sunderland, and many other large towns were also suffering enormously. It was impossible to give employment to all; but the Motion had been framed in such a way, by laying stress on the small harbours in various districts, that a great influx of labour would not be attracted into any one of them, and the labour of the districts themselves would be prevented from flocking into the large towns. Besides, the labour might be got cheaply. He was told that men who used to get 8*d*. an hour would now be glad to earn 3*d*. or 4*d*. He had to thank the House for the attention with which it had heard him, and to apologize for having trespassed so long upon its time. He trusted the Motion might receive favourable consideration; for it was designed to do something towards alleviating the distress which they beheld on every side and deplored, and to do so in a way that would especially commend itself to this nation, that owed so much of its power and wealth in the past, and must trust so much for its very existence in the future, to the welfare of its seafaring population. Believing, as he did, that if this Motion was carried it would be the means of relieving distress and saving a preventible loss of life at sea, he felt that he should not be doing his duty if he did not press it to a division. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Reesolution which stood in his name.

Mr. BORLASE (Cornwall, St. Austell) said, he rose to second the Resolution so ably moved by the hon. Member for East Leeds. He did so with the greatest gratification, because, at a time like the present, when it was supposed they were on the eve of a great Party struggle, it was very pleasant indeed to find that there was a subject like that which transcended mere Party politics, and on which both sides of the House might meet together in full accord to discuss the welfare of one class, and the life itself of another. The Resolution aimed at two things, and its object might be said to be assuredly noble. It was proposed to utilize the opportunity offered by the fact of so many hundreds of thousands being out of employment, to perform one of the greatest services it was possible to render to the cause of humanity in the land. Then the question arose whether his hon. Friend who submitted the Resolution was not attempting more than he could possibly perform; whether the two objects were really germane to one another; and whether the poor persons who at that moment were out of employment were the fittest and most proper to do this peculiar kind of work; and whether that employment would do anything to relieve the vast amount of pressure now brought to bear upon the Metropolis? To this last difficult question he thought there could be but one answer. When his hon. Friend asked him to second the Resolution, he said he would do so only on one condition—that it took up the line adopted last year by the hon. Member for Berwickshire, who had so truly pointed out that the small Coast harbours should, in order to be useful in saving life and property, be made deeper than they were. But if this work were to be done, it ought to be done by labour on the spot. If his hon. Friend pleaded that by work of this kind they would be relieving the pressure on the Metropolis, he ventured to think his hopes would not be verified. There was a vast pressure from the country into the Metropolis, which came for the most part, curiously enough, from the two centres where these harbours of refuge were required—namely, on the South-West and East Coasts. So far, however, as his hon. Friend's Resolution bore upon the granting of loans from the Consolidated Fund for the creation of those small harbours he was fully in accord with him, and so far he seconded the Resolution with pleasure. One of the most important documents contained in our Blue Books was a Memorandum published by the Board of Trade in 1864, and written in 1860, by Sir Thomas Farrer, who said that even then, 25 years ago, Committee after Committee, Commission after Commission, had inquired, and were inquiring, into the subject of lighthouses, harbours, and other means of preventing shipwreck. In 1857-8 a Select Committee was appointed; but it did not specify, any more than the right hon. Member for Berwickshire, any particular points of the Coast, but roughly indicated where those harbours were required, and suggested an expenditure of about £2,000,000. As to the mode of raising the money, the conclusion of the Committee was that, to some extent, the expenditure ought to be a national one, and to some extent local. In August, 1858, a Royal Commission was appointed to complete the inquiry of the Select Committee. It was intended that this Commission should indicate the particular sites; but it did not do so, confining itself to a statement of the broad basis upon which it was desirable to proceed. It recommended that when there was an entire or virtual absence of local interests or local industry to be benefited, where the advantage conferred was exclusively on the passing trade, the cost ought to be borne by the public funds. The Commission recommended eight different districts for the construction of harbours, and an expenditure of £4,000,000 in all, of which £2,390,000 was to be borne out of the Consolidated Fund. When the fishing and trading interests were considerable they recommended a loan. A Resolution was passed in the House of Commons in 1860 which called upon the Government of the day to carry out these recommendations as speedily as possible. The Commission expected to raise £1,625,000 from local sources; but there was nothing in the evidence to justify such an expectation. When the Committee came to consider his (Mr. Borlase's) own county, the people of which were poor, they proposed to provide Cornwall with two harbours—one at an expenditure of £400,000 at St. Ives, and another at an expenditure of £40,000 at Padstow. He need hardly say that in neither one case had the recommendation of the Commission been carried out. He saw that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in reply to a deputation upon this subject, had stated that he had not been at the Board of Trade long enough to have ransacked the pigeon-holes on this subject; and he (Mr. Borlase) hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman came to reply to those representations he would reply from his heart, and not from the pigeon-holes of the Department. Whether the pigeon-holes were Liberal or Tory, it was always the same pigeon that came out of them. He (Mr. Borlase) contended that they were not subsidizing trade in any sort of way in what they were asking, or that they were actuated by any consideration of the value of the vessels which were lost. They asked merely that life might be protected. It was asserted that vessels were ill-found, and that to provide harbours of refuge would encourage unscrupulous owners to send their vessels to sea improperly fitted. They might depend upon it that until the principle, somewhat modified, perhaps, but still the principles of the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, were put into practice, ill-found vessels would be sent on voyages, whether there were harbours of refuge for them to go into or not. But it was on behalf of the fishing vessels for which he was there chiefly to plead. All interested in fishing, he thought, must feel the deep debt of gratitude which they owed to his right hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks); and the House itself must feel a deep debt of gratitude to him for having presided over the Commission which brought together such a mass of evidence on the subject—evidence that was invaluable, though not exhaustive. What his right hon. Friend pleaded for in 1880 he (Mr. Borlase) pleaded for now. It was for the deepening of a number of little harbours, which would not cost a great deal of money, but which, being now mere tidal harbours, were traps for the unwary. Those harbours should be deepened to 10 feet, or he would say a little more, in order to provide against the dangers arising from what was now a back swell. The Commission presided over by his right hon. Friend issued its Report in July, 1884, and recommended the creation of a number of small harbours at distances from each other of about 40 or 50 miles, and also of other places of refuge, and the application of public funds to the purpose; but it did not indicate the particular places where such works should be undertaken. He need not detain the House by quoting from the Reports; but it was impossible to suggest that loans would be of any use whatever in nine-tenths of those places. The reason was that where the physical conformity of the shore was rugged and dangerous, with high and beetling crags, there usually the land inside was bleak and uncultivated; and the resident population, as in many parts of Cornwall, consisted of humble fishermen who were utterly unable to provide money to meet such loans. They had had within the last day or two the advantage of hearing what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had to say about this matter. It appeared from what he said that he had been much troubled already for money; that he had been approached by a considerable number of deputations; and that he expected to be approached by other deputations, all asking for millions, which must be obtained from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He (Mr. Borlase) did not know what other people had been asking for money; but he felt certain that the right hon. Gentleman need fear no ill-will on the part of the British taxpayer if he allowed a sum of money to be devoted to the object mentioned in the Resolution. Whether the taxpayer lived in the middle of the country or upon the shore, there was no subject more dear to the minds of Englishmen than the welfare of our sailors. Whether they judged popular feeling in this matter by our poetry, by our national ballads, by pictures exhibited in the galleries, or, if he might come to more recent times and say, by popular pieces put on the stage—there was one performing in the Strand then—in every case they found evidence of a desire to do all that could be done to preserve those in peril on the sea. Then there was the question about going to the Treasury. It was an extraordinary thing that trade could be subsidized by foreign wars; that the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, the War Office, the Admiralty could approach the Treasury without any fear of being sent empty away; but when it was a question not of deliberately subsidizing trade by taking life, but of indirectly helping it by saving life, not a penny could the Home Departments ever get from the Treasury. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that on this point public opinion was ripe for action. He should like, if he might be allowed to do so, not to indicate any particular spot in Cornwall, but to say a word about the whole county generally. He approached this question with a deep feeling of responsibility. He came from a county which had just 200 miles of Coast, from the Lizard Point, round the Land's End, to Hartland, the most wild, desolate, and bleak Coast of England, and around which there was not one single harbour which was not a tidal harbour. The prevalent gales on that Coast were from the North-West, and in that case it was a lee shore all the way. He thought if the President of the Board of Trade had lived all his life down there, and had seen some of the wrecks he (Mr. Borlase) had seen, he would not make some of the excuses which he had made in reference to this matter. He did not think he would make the excuses about subsidizing trade if he had seen, as he (Mr. Borlase) had seen, nine bodies washed into one little cove there, or that he would say harbours of refuge for the purpose of saving life were of no use whatever. He wished the hon. Baronet the Member for West Cornwall (Sir John St. Aubyn) was present. He certainly could have confirmed what he (Mr. Borlase) had stated. He would have been able to tell them how—he believed it was in 1866—there were 14 wrecks lying around St. Michael's Mount, in Mount's Bay—wrecks ranging from that of a barque to a small fishing smack. They were all well found; and it was because of the intensity of the gale, and that they had no harbour to flee to, that they were wrecked. On the Coast of the Lizard there was one spot where, within a limit of 6½ miles, there were nine wrecks in one year, and in one case 24 people out of 25 were drowned, and that within the reach of the voices of those who were on shore. Money was wanted, and money could only come from the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman had mentioned a universal panacea which they had all found so useful at the General Election—the Local Government scheme. That was a case in which they could not wait for that scheme. There were three ways only in which these harbours could be constructed—(1) by the employment of convict labour; (2) by loans; and (3) by grants from the Exchequer. He had given up all idea of having convict labour, because he had learnt how impossible it was to employ convicts in small places on small works, without greatly increasing the cost of those works. If the question of loans were relegated to the new Local Government scheme, he thought they might bid farewell to it for a considerable time to come. Then they were left, last of all, face to face with grants from the Treasury. That was what he pleaded for, because it had been recommended by two Committees of that House and one Royal Commission; he pleaded for it because they had precedents for it. They had a precedent for it in the case of £250,000 which their Irish Friends would tell them was taken out of the Irish Church Surplus to construct harbours in their country. Then he believed an enormous sum of money had been spent some time ago on the Skerries Lighthouse, and other considerable sums had been spent on lighthouse accommodation. That was precisely on all-fours with the demands which he made. Returning to the Resolution, he could not, as he said, recommend it on the ground that it would do anything to help the unemployed of London; but he believed they could find plenty of unemployed on the spots where these harbours would be necessary; and he believed that to a certain extent, and by commencing works of that sort in the country, they would prevent any future pressure being brought to bear on London. He believed the period of adversity had turned or was turning, and that in six months or a year many industries of this country would be in a better condition than they were at present. They only asked for this as a temporary, and not as a permanent subsidy; and they asked for it with the double purpose of doing great service to humanity and of employing those who were willing and anxious to be employed in the country districts of the land.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in view of the existing depression of trade, and the large number of persons out of employment, this House is of opinion that the present is a favourable time for the Government to carry out certain valuable and necessary public works, more especially the formation of Harbours of Refuge, at various points upon the Coast,"—(*Mr. Dawson,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.) said, his hon. Friend the Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall (Mr. Borlase), in the very interesting and sympathetic speech he had just made, had confined himself almost exclusively to that part of the question which dealt with the intrinsic advantages of harbours of refuge. His hon. Friend, no doubt, spoke with authority, as representing, to a large extent, a maritime constituency consisting of a population of fishermen, who were entitled to the sympathy and the interest of the House as being among the most energetic, industrious, and deserving of all the classes of the population in the United Kingdom. But the argument of his hon. Friend went to this—that it was at all times the duty of a Government, out of Government money, to provide harbours of refuge around the Coast; and he was candid enough to say that he would not urge it upon the House with any idea that if these works were undertaken they would have any considerable effect upon the prevailing depression. The hon. Member, however, who introduced the Motion had called in aid the existing want of employment in order to justify his calling the immediate attention of the House to the matter; and it was on that account that he ventured now to intervene for a few minutes between the House and the President of the Board of Trade, whose Office was more directly concerned with the main purport of the question. At the same time, it was one in which he himself had always taken a deep interest, and he hoped he might be allowed to say very briefly why he could not accept the views of his hon. Friend the Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall. In the first place, the advocates of works of this kind had never been able to agree among themselves on several very important points. They had not been able to agree as to what kind of harbours the Government should construct—whether, for instance, great harbours of refuge involving enormous expenditure, and which could only, by the physical necessities and financial considerations, be made in a few places, or a number of small harbours — not deep-water harbours—constructed at every prominent point along our Coasts. They had not been able at all to agree as to the places suitable for the construction of these harbours; but when they had gone into detail it had been found that every Representative of a fishing station or a port put forward his special claim for his particular district as being superior to all the rest. Unless the Government and the House were prepared to lay down that in all places which made out any claim harbours should be constructed at the national expense they would give great offence. Then there was the third point on which he found disagreement. What was the object for which these harbours were to be built? Were they to be built in order to save life, or for the advantage of property and trade? [An hon. MEMBER: Both.] The House would see that that was important. If they were to be built for the advantage of trade and commerce, then it became a matter of consideration whether trade and commerce should not bear the expense, and why a particular trade or commerce should be benefited when no other trade demanded similar assistance from the Government. The only ground, in his opinion, upon which there was a claim for national assistance was that those harbours would lead to an enormous diminution in the loss of life at sea. He wished that was the case; but he had convinced himself, by studying all the literature on the subject, that there was no reason to believe that any harbour that could be built would materially affect the loss of life. He believed the creation of harbours, as a matter of national importance, would have a most stimulating effect on the fishing industry, and prove of advantage to the Mercantile Marine; but he did not believe that it would lead to any considerable reduction of loss of life at sea. Let him point out why he said that. Anyone who would look at the wreck charts would find that the loss of life around the Coast was greater on those portions of the Coast already provided with harbours than on those parts entirely without them, thus showing conclusively that something besides harbours had to do with this matter, and that the conditions of loss were not removable by the erection of harbours. Then, again, it had further been found by careful examination that the loss of life within 15 miles of the Coast was small in proportion to the total loss of life at sea. The greater part of it took place under circumstances in which a harbour could not be of the slightest advantage. Even with regard to loss of life on the Coast and within 15 miles it was found that the great proportion was due to causes altogether independent of the existence of harbours. A great many losses took place in an offshore wind, during exceptional gales, as in the case of the disaster at Shetland, where some 100 brave fishermen lost their lives under circumstances in which it would have been absolutely impossible for them to have made any harbour of use. They were caught in undecked boats, and they went to the bottom. For these and other reasons, he said, it had been found that the proportion of loss of life at sea had not been appreciably affected by the existence of harbours, or if it was affected it would be to a very small extent indeed. If even that loss of life was to be affected, he might, to use the language of his Predecessor, Mr. Milner Gibson, say—"You must find some means of towing a harbour at the back of every ship." Unless they had a harbour actually on the spot, convenient to the ship at the moment when it was in danger, it was of as little use for the purpose of saving life as if it were 100 miles away. Therefore, he did not think a case could be made out on the humanitarian ground for State assistance. But he believed a case could be made out on commercial grounds, and that State assistance the State had always been willing to afford—that was to say, upon anything like a local guarantee, the State had been willing to advance money at very low rates of interest for the promotion of such works. In doing that, he thought it had done all it could wisely do. When they called in the assistance of the Local Authority they had the advantage of local knowledge, supervision, and management in the creation of the works, and they also got a responsibility which gave them some assurance that the money would be wisely and usefully expended. If the State were to undertake the work they would have very little security that the money would be well and economically expended; harbours would very likely be put where they were not wanted, and neither trade nor anything else would be benefited. He would proceed to the matter which had brought him on his legs—namely, the hope in which his hon. Friend had indulged that if these works were sanctioned by the State at the present time they would be a relief for the existing distress. He was very sorry that he had not been able to receive such information on this subject as he could have wished. That was not his fault. He was glad to see his Predecessor in the House. Up to the time the late Government left Office no inquiry was instituted by the Department, and the inquiry had to be commenced from the moment that he accepted Office. He sent out letters immediately to all the Boards of Guardians in the Metropolis, and then to all the Vestries, then to about 100 Provincial Boards of Guardians, then to a great number of private individuals likely to afford information; and, lastly, a very important correspondence had taken place with the leading trade unions. The general results he could state in a few words, and he did not think it necessary to trouble the House with figures. The Returns of pauperism, whether in the Metropolis or in the country, showed a slight increase, an increase over the last two years on the whole of less than 5 per cent, as compared with the last year. The Returns exhibited the distress as partial; it existed only in certain Unions in the country and certain portions of the Metropolis. Although it was an increase upon recent years, it was a great decrease on some previous periods. In 1870 the total number of persons in receipt of Poor Law relief in the Metropolis was 160,000; whereas, at the present time, it was about 100,000. It had been as low as 86,000 in the course of the 17 years, and it was important that the House should bear in mind that the population of London had, during that time, enormously increased; so that he believed it would be found that the amount of actual pauperism in the Metropolis, and probably in the rest of the country, was less per 1,000 than it had been for a great number of previous years. That was all the information he could get as far as pauperism was concerned, and from that point of view the distress was not very exceptional, and did not require exceptional measures. The Boards of Guardians expressed an opinion that under the present law, and with the present facilities, they were quite capable of dealing with the question; and they hoped—a sentiment in which they would all agree—that as the distress had been increased by the extraordinary severity of the weather, when the weather became milder the exceptional distress might disappear. Now, if that was all, he did not think they had much cause for alarm; but he thought it necessary to pursue his inquiries further than the Poor Law Authorities, because he was under the impression, which, he was sorry to say, had been fully confirmed, that there was a great deal of distress among the better class of artizans and labourers, which could not and did not come to the knowledge of the officials of the Poor Law Guardians. Nothing was more wonderful or more admirable than the way in which the better class of working men in the United Kingdom shrank from any resort to the Poor Law, undergoing the greatest privations, amounting almost to actual starvation, rather than have recourse to what they believed to be degradation. It had been found that the greatest difficulty of the Guardians was to induce by any means this class of persons to disclose their circumstances. At the same time, the opinions he had received were almost generally to the effect that the distress among the class to which he referred, who were, ordinarily, in continuous employment and did not generally apply for pauper relief, was now very great, and had been increasing. He confessed unless it diminished, if it even continued, it would be a matter for the most serious consideration of the Government and the House what steps were to be taken to relieve it. He, for one, had no idea of pretending that the House and the Government were not responsible for some measures to deal with this distress. Then the question arose whether a proposal such as that now before them would be of advantage to those whom it was intended to benefit? State works of every kind always laboured under this disadvantage—that they were uneconomical, for the reasons which he had stated in connection with harbours. Moreover, another serious objection to them was that of necessity State works must be local—that was to say, the State could not undertake large works in every locality, but only in a few. Therefore the relief given by such works would be confined to a few districts. He could assure hon. Members that the existing distress was not confined to London; it was almost universal throughout the country; and in every district and in every Union there were persons belonging to different trades, skilled artizans as well as unskilled labourers, who were at the present time in want of employment. Therefore, what was necessary, if they were to deal with it effectually, was that the works should be undertaken in every Union; and if the State were now to undertake works, he thought there would be the greatest dissatisfaction throughout the country if these works started only in one or two localities. But if the works were required, and must ultimately be undertaken in each locality, then he could not see what reason there was why the State should interfere. The responsibility both of initiating and managing them ought to rest on the Local Authorities, who had certainly the power of managing them better and cheaper than could otherwise be done. If the works were to be universal, there would be no advantage in the State undertaking them. The locality must, of course, pay its fair share, and it would be much better that it should pay directly, and have the control and management of them. Therefore, his hope and belief was, that the ultimate remedy for exceptional distress of the kind they had to deal with was to be found in the increasing activity of Local Authorities, which he believed had already been very considerably stimulated, and which he hoped further to stimulate, and which might, no doubt, be assisted by liberal terms in the shape of loans from the State for those purposes for which loans were provided. But when the hon. Member opposite suggested that a great harbour at Filey, for instance, or at some other part of the Coast, would be in itself an assistance to the unemployed, he thought the hon. Gentleman really could not have worked out the problem.

MR. DAWSON said, that he had expressly confined himself to the question of the construction of smaller harbours.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN said, that the hon. Member had spoken at some length upon the question of works at Dover and Filey; and he had thought that it had been more particularly with regard to works of this description that the hon. Member had been pressing his Motion on the Government. ["No!"] But whether they were dealing with two or three great harbours on the Coast, or with 30 or 40 smaller harbours, in all cases the same thing would happen. In the first place, they would have to call in a certain number of skilled labourers. Harbour work was not unskilled work. Employment such as under-water work, for instance, required persons to be trained for it for a long time. Therefore, what they would be doing by abnormally increasing this kind of work would be to bring into a particular trade a number of persons who would not otherwise be brought into it. Sooner or later this work would cease, and then there would be a surplus of workmen in a trade which had been artificially stimulated. But the amount of labour which was now seeking employment, and which could be used on harbours, would form a very small proportion indeed of the total expenditure in wages. And how was that labour to be brought to the spot? The hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Dawson) spoke of 7,000 persons who were daily applying for work at the East End. He (Mr. Chamberlain) thought that if the hon. Gentleman were to apply to them not 1 per cent would accept his offer. ["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen who said "No" knew nothing whatever about the conditions of this very peculiar population. He could tell them of a Relief Committee that offered to 135 of these men extra work at 2*s*. 6*d*. a-day in sweeping the streets. Only 15 accepted the offer; and of the 15 only 11 appeared at the work, and only five remained at it. There were a number of persons—a floating population—who would not accept fixed labour of that kind. And as to the population they were most desirous to benefit—skilled artizans and others, who were out of their regular employment—many of them could not undertake harbour work if it were offered to them. He had got a most touching account of a case in point. In the Prescott Union, where there were a great number of watch-movement makers out of work, the Guardians had opened a stoneyard for their advantage, and what was the result? These poor fellows had explained to the Guardians, and the Guardians supported their representation, that if they were set to stone-breaking their whole facility for their work would be absolutely and permanently destroyed, and that when trade revived again, as they hoped it might, they would be useless except for the lowest kind of labour. And what was true about the watch-movement makers of Prescott was true also of the jewellers of Birmingham and the engineers and fitters, workers in the textile factory, with whom fineness of touch was of the greatest importance, and people of that description. Thus the class for whom the greatest consideration was necessary would be absolutely without any benefit from the proposal of the hon. Member. But there were other difficulties as well. How were these works to be conducted? Did the hon. Member propose that the Government should itself undertake to carry out the works for 40 or 50 different harbours throughout the country, to send their own engineers down in each case to superintend the works, and their own officers to supervise the workmen? Because if he did not, and if they were to be conducted, as they were at present, by contractors, he might be quite certain these contractors would not take the class of people for whom he wished employment. These could only get employment under special circumstances, by making it a condition that only these men should be employed; but their work would not be so valuable as that of persons accustomed to it. That was another practical difficulty which he thought would seriously interfere with the advantages expected from this proposal. Another point was that a long time would be required for making the plans and estimates of these works. There was absolutely no kind of engineering work at the present time so difficult as the making of harbours, and, unfortunately, about which so little was known, many of the harbours which had been designed having proved utter failures; therefore the greatest care and consideration were required for the plans and estimates before such works were undertaken. If they were to spend 18 months or two years in preparing plans for these harbours—and he sincerely hoped the hon. Member did not contemplate a continuance of the distress for that time—he assured him that they would before that time have to find some other remedy. He did not think it necessary to carry this argument further, except to point out one consideration which was really of great importance. The hon. Member proposed that for the first time the State should undertake the work of private enterprize. The hon. Member told them there were some precedents in his favour; but he had to go for them to India and to Ireland, both of them countries in which exceptional circumstances had alone justified the intervention of the State, and both of them countries in which, he was sorry to say, there was at present no efficient and satisfactory system of representative government. But the hon. Member did not tell them there was any precedent in the United Kingdom; and, as a matter of fact, there was none. Of course, there would be in everybody's recollection the case of the distress in Lancashire at the time of the Cotton Famine. The number of people applying for relief in that county at that time went up from 69,000 to 248,000; and in consequence of the utter cessation of work in large districts immense numbers of artizans were thrown out of regular employment. It was true, the State on that occasion gave assistance to the Local Authorities by lending money on terms which, at that time, were exceptional. These terms had since been made general. It was by the assistance of these loans that the Local Authorities in the case of the Lancashire Cotton Famine were able to deal with the distress, and to establish relief works which became necessary. And that was, as he had already pointed out, the form of relief which would be best calculated to deal with the distress, and which he submitted as an alternative to the proposal of the hon. Member for Leeds. But if the State were for the first time to make an exception, and to undertake public works of a kind which were now, and had been for a long time, undertaken and carried out by private enterprize, let the House consider the serious consequences which would immediately follow. They would put a stop absolutely to all private enterprize in the United Kingdom. Take this one question of harbours. In the course of the last 20 years in 17 ports alone of the United Kingdom there had been spent by private enterprize £23,000,000, and these ports did not include London, Bristol, and some other large places. That was nearly double the whole amount of money that had been spent by the six other great maritime nations of Europe, which had all had recourse to State aid as a means of providing harbours. Now, if localities knew that they could obtain more harbour accommodation, or that there was a chance of obtaining harbours at the expense of the State, was it likely that this expenditure would continue, or that any fresh expenditure would be undertaken? He firmly believed that if the Motion of the hon. Member were passed, and the Government were now to give it effect, that the first result would be that within 12 months there would be more people thrown out of work who were now employed, or likely to be employed, in harbour works by private enterprize, than any number which the State could possibly provide for. For these reasons, although he sympathized most heartily with the desire of the hon. Gentleman both to provide for the safety of our seamen and to provide for the relief of those who were temporarily in distress owing to the present depression in trade, he could not invite the House to accept the Motion.

MR. E. W. DENISON (Whitby) said, the House had had a very serious and important admission from the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chamberlain), to the effect that the distress in the country was almost universal, and, further, that the distress was of a most aggravated character. This statement, he thought, no one would be inclined to question. Neither would it be disputed that the depression in trade had been followed by the usual consequences—fall of profits, reduction in wages, and increase in the number of unemployed. The distress being very great, something must be done for its relief. The unemployed had, so far, borne their hard lot in an excellent spirit; but too great a demand must not be made upon their patience. It should be remembered that an idle population tended in time to become a criminal population; and they were early taught that for idle hands there was mischief found to do by a certain personage. Men without employment accepted suggestions, pondered over ideas, and contemplated actions which they would have regarded with abhorrence in days when, to-morrow, work was certain, and to-morrow's bread assured. At the present time the air was tremulous with agitation, and there was little doubt that we were on the border land of a vast social upheaval; and it was better that, if it were to come, it should come in a peaceful and Constitutional way than by force and violence. It did not require the French Revolution to teach us that starving men were not apt to use rose-water. It was necessary, therefore, either to remove the causes of the existing depression, or to counteract its effects. Great was the power of that House; but he was well aware that forces beyond the control of the British Parliament regulated trade and commerce, though, undoubtedly, its action could affect those forces for good or for evil. Certain large projects which would have been beneficial to trade were abandoned when Lord Salisbury ceased to be Prime Minister. Further, the agitating zeal of some hon. Members on the Ministerial Benches was much calculated to shake that confidence without which there could be no successful trade. The only way to relieve the prevailing distress was to find employment for those who were unemployed. They did not ask for charity, but for work, which should be of service both to themselves and to the State. The hon. Member who had brought forward this subject had pointed out one direction in which this work might be supplied. Everyone who knew the North-East Coast was aware that it was a Coast of iron, which rose up out of the sea in an unbroken and terrible wall. Driven by the stress of the North-East gales, the seamen had no haven in which to take refuge, and unless they kept away from that inhospitable shore must perish. He had no hesitation in saying that hundreds of lives and many ships might be saved if there were a harbour on that Coast; and any relief work which would save life and property would amply repay the original outlay upon it. The President of the Local Government Board said it would take a long time to prepare plans for harbours; but the plans for a harbour of refuge on the North-East Coast were already prepared, and were the sanction of the Government given the work could begin to-morrow; and this statement held good for other parts of the country, engineers having plans for dealing with every conceivable place where harbours might be constructed; and as to Local Authorities borrowing money, it would be necessary first to create the Local Authorities, and it would take a year or more to constitute them. He was greatly surprised to find that the President of the Local Government Board, who had been described as "the cherub that sits up aloft, to watch over the life of poor Jack," should oppose this Motion, which, if carried into effect, would do so much for the safety of life at sea. One of the right hon. Gentleman's arguments was of the most extraordinary character. He said that distress was universal, but that the relief which public works would give was only partial. If this argument were carried to its legitimate conclusion it would close the boxes at the Mansion House, and would button up our pockets. It would forbid us to give a shilling to the man who was starving on our doorstep, because we could not give shillings to all the starving men in all the streets of London. According to the right hon. Gentleman, if they could not help all they must not help anyone. Legislation, too, would be greatly curtailed if only those Bills were to pass that redressed all the grievances of all the people in the United Kingdom. Then the right hon. Gentleman dwelt upon the great things to be expected from private enterprize. But if they were to wait until private enterprize invested money in harbours of refuge such harbours would never be constructed. Portland and Plymouth Breakwaters would certainly never have been raised above the waves by private enterprize. The supporters of the Resolution before the House did not ask the House to do anything extraordinary at this time of distress which it would not be well to do any time. Were they to commit themselves to the doctrine that they were to refuse demands which were right and reasonable because a concession to such demands might hereafter lead to demands which were unreasonable? The question was, could they do anything which would, at the same time, help the unemployed, and be of public advantage? The President of the Local Government Board asked the late Government what was their policy as to the unemployed? He had now to answer that question himself, or was the answer to be reserved until April 1, when the secrets of every Ministerial heart were to be made known, and the contents of Pandora's box were to be disclosed? At all events, they had a right to ask whether the views of the Government were in accordance with those of the Foreign Secretary, who lately advocated the curtailment of the hours of labour? Those views were essentially Socialistic. They were identical with the views of the speakers at the Trafalgar Square meeting, which put a thorn into the side of the Home Secretary. Were those views to be adopted by the Government? At present they stood in this position—that one of their prominent Members had borrowed the Socialistic clothes at the time of the late Election, and then, when they came into Office, they prosecuted the Socialist leaders. Gentlemen on the Front Bench had, no doubt, their dreams of immortality. They could not trust for that to their legislation or to their speeches. Their legislation might be undone, and their speeches forgotten—but there was one thing to which they could trust—that was to the honour which was gained by those whose names were carved and engraved on public works. So far as hon. Gentlemen opposite had gone, history could only recognize their genius for destruction. If they cared in the least about their future reputation, they ought gladly to agree to a Resolution which would enable them to give proofs of constructive ability. Bearing in mind the urgent need that existed for relief works, he had been astounded to hear that the Government intended to oppose the Motion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) said, that the hon. Member who had brought forward the Resolution had apologized for taking charge of so important a subject. He felt sure that everyone who had listened to the hon. Member's speech would agree that no such apology was needed. The President of the Local Government Board, in his reply to the hon. Member, had shown himself opposed to the construction of harbours, and appeared to think that harbours were of very little use indeed, except for commercial purposes; and that they would hardly at all serve the purpose which the hon. Member had in view—namely, the saving of human life. The right hon. Gentleman pointed out that in localities where harbours most abounded loss of life mostly occurred. That view was in direct opposition to the opinion of the Committee of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire was Chairman in 1884; for in the Report of that Committee it was stated that the great loss of life and property at sea would be reduced by an increase in the number of deep-water harbours accessible to vessels at all states of the tide. One statement the right hon. Gentleman had made was of so extraordinary a character that he could not let it pass without comment. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to be of opinion that it was highly desirable that County Authorities should borrow money for the purpose of constructing harbour works; and he intimated that it was not necessary to wait for the new Local Government scheme, leaving the House impressed with the idea that there was but little hope of the early production of that scheme. That County Authorities should be allowed to borrow for the purpose under consideration was a most extraordinary doctrine. The magistrates in Quarter Sessions constituted the only authority that could possibly exercise the power; and to encourage a body, which, however public-spirited, was not, and did not profess to be, representative, to burden counties with any charges for purposes, however useful, was a doctrine which he did not expect to hear in that House, and least of all from the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had charged him with not having instituted inquiries as to the extent of the distress during his tenure of Office. As a matter of fact, he did cause inquiries to be made, and he received from the Local Government Board Inspectors throughout the country Reports on the condition of the population. From those Reports he had gathered that it was not among the people who ordinarily applied to the Poor Law Authorities for relief that distress of an exceptional kind existed. The President of the Local Government Board had committed himself to some propositions which might be very embarrassing to him in the future. The right hon. Gentleman said (1) that it was chiefly among the artizan and skilled labourer class that distress prevailed; (2) that this class could not, from the character of their training, take advantage of ordinary relief works, such as making harbours and carrying out sanitary improvements; and (3) that the Government were responsible for dealing with the distress of these persons.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: I said both the House and the Government were responsible.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Exactly so. The House and the Government were bound to deal with the distress of those classes; but not in the way of sanitary works and analogous undertakings carried on by Local Authorities. How, then, did the right hon. Gentleman propose to deal with them?

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: I thought I had made that perfectly clear in my speech. I said I relied, at all events for the present, upon the stimulus which I thought had been given to Local Authorities to carry out the very kind of works of which the right hon. Gentleman has spoken—namely, sanitary and all other kinds of work connected with the usual business of Local Authorities.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, the right hon. Gentleman had undoubtedly dwelt upon the utility of that class of works, and in that part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech he concurred; but in another part of his speech he had pointed out the inefficacy of public works to meet the case of skilled artizans; and if their case could not be met by sanitary works executed by Local Authorities, what scheme of relief had the right hon. Gentleman in his mind? The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the case of Prescott. How were the watchmakers of that town to be relieved if, as the right hon. Gentleman acknowledged, they could not take advantage of harbour or sanitary works? What scheme was the right hon. Gentleman hatching by which he would give relief to this most deserving class of persons? Two, and only two, methods of meeting the distress could be conceived. One was that the Local Authorities should themselves at once take in hand the watchmaking industry, and the other that the Government should have recourse to fiscal expedients with the view of protecting that industry from foreign competition. He need hardly say that he did not recommend either course, nor could he conceive of any Government making such a proposition; but if neither of those expedients were to be adopted, what possible scheme could the right hon. Gentleman have in view? Turning now to the main proposition contained in his hon. Friend's Motion, he agreed with the President of the Local Government Board. He agreed that only very partial, if any, relief could be afforded by the construction of harbours to the class whom they chiefly desired to benefit. The distress might be diminished in the localities where such work was instituted; but to the great centres of industry, which were the scenes of the most acute distress, no relief would be brought. Then, supposing it were determined to construct harbours, by what means were the authorities to select for employment upon the work those most in need of it? They were too apt to forget that the money they were spending was not created by a *fiat* of that House, but was itself drawn largely from the wage-earning class; and where it was not so drawn, it was drawn from that capital which would go to support the wage-earning class. His hon. Friend represented Leeds. How could the construction of a great harbour of refuge on the Coast of Cornwall affect his hon. Friend's constituents? Almost the only way in which they could be affected would be by their having the privilege of paying for it. Therefore, though by constructing such a harbour they would possibly diminish the congestion of labour in Cornwall, they would be doing so at the cost of the very class whom they desired to benefit. But while it was unquestionably true that to undertake works for the sake of giving employment would not benefit but injure the working classes, it was also true that if the erection of these works was in itself desirable now was the time to carry them out. Depression in trade was accompanied and marked by a general lowering of wages; and, therefore, if it were the fact that harbours were required in the public interest, there could be no better moment for constructing them, for in that way they would possibly relieve local distress, and they would certainly construct them at less cost to the public Exchequer. The House and the country had no reason to complain of the manner in which the debate had been conducted. No nobler subject could be offered for their consideration than the relief of distress; but there might be temptations to rashly adopt measures which might appear for the moment to diminish the acute symptoms of the disease, but which would in reality only aggravate them. He was glad to see, by the prevailing tone and by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, that there was no danger of falling into that particular error. But while the right hon. Gentleman rightly pointed out that, in the interests of the labouring classes themselves, anything in the nature of State public work would be folly, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider whether this was not the proper opportunity for carrying out the harbour works which had been so often recommended by Commissions and Committees. If the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade could give any indication, however faint, that he would favourably consider the very limited proposal of the Committee of 1884, he hoped his hon. Friend behind him would think that by his admirable speech he had got all that he could expect, and that he would not put the House to the trouble of a division.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton), said, he wished to give his reasons for voting against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leeds in the event of its being pressed to a division. There was no more dangerous tendency at the present time than the tendency on the part of many Democratic advisers to urge upon those who accepted their counsel that it was the duty of the Government to provide, in seasons of distress and misery, for such distress and misery by special Government action. An hon. Member who supported the Motion said that the unemployed asked for work, and if we wished to relieve the distress it must be by employing the unemployed. It was a dangerous doctrine to teach that it was the duty of the Government to provide employment at all. He submitted that that was not, and ought not to be, one of the functions of Government; and that if such a function could be discharged with advantage it was only in countries where despotic institutions prevailed, and there was no incentive to individual effort. The kind of claim which was made in this Motion on behalf of the poor was one which, if acceded to, would do them more irretrievable and lasting mischief than any other kind of ill that could be done them. If they taught people that when they were hungry the Government had food for them and work for them, they would give them the right to expect, when hungry, that the Government would fulfil their promise. They had seen, within the last few days, a special tendency on both sides of the House to complain that reductions were being contemplated in great Government works; and these complaints had been made quite independent of the consideration whether the reductions were well or ill-advised. They were complained of solely on the ground of the prevailing distress. But on that ground they might justify any extravagance. That which Government works did was to relieve only, in the slightest degree, and very temporarily, the hungry few, while by their addition to expenditure they created a permanent approach to hunger on the part of the many. The great difficulty they had to contend against was the possibility that this country would have less produce-earning ability in the struggle with other nations. They had to face enormously increased Expenditure year by year, and with this the increase of indebtedness; for although it was true that the National Debt had nominally decreased, they had side by side with that an increase of the Local Debt to an amount exceeding any reduction of the National Debt, and the aggregate of the Local Debt was to him a National Debt, which the nation had, in some fashion, to acquit itself of. If the proposal for one kind of works were acceded to on the ground stated, there was no defence against similar proposals for the other kinds of work. But his objection was simply this—that Government interference destroyed and neutralized the self-reliance and individual action of the Local Authorities. It was only from these that they could get redemption; and Governmental relief of the moment was a permanent paralysis of the nation.

MR. J. A. BLAKE (Carlow) said, he wished to urge upon the House the necessity which existed for the construction of harbours of refuge along the Coast of Ireland. The question was one that had been already very fully considered. In 1857 there was a Committee of that House which fully considered the matter, and they came to an unanimous Report in favour of such works. That Committee was followed by a Commission, including men of authority on questions connected with the sea and engineers; and they recommended certain harbours of refuge, of which two were to be on the Coast of Ireland, and a half-dozen on the Coast of England. In 1883 a Select Committee was appointed, of which he was a Member, and again the necessity and advisability of having such works carried out was pointed out and agreed to. He contended that no Member of the House could consider the subject with any care, or have regard to the necessities of the case, without arriving at the conclusion that there was grave and crying necessity for the construction of these works. Some of the most leading nautical men in the Kingdom had been examined at the inquiries to which he had alluded, and expressed themselves in favour of these harbours of refuge. It was not true that the absence of the latter would result in sailors remaining more constantly at their work at sea; and it was also untrue that the question of insurance afforded an argument as against the existence of such harbours; and there was no doubt in the world that hundreds and hundreds of lives would be saved if such ports of refuge existed along the Coasts. Having been an Inspector of Fisheries in Ireland for many years, he could bear personal testimony to the fact that the construction of such harbours would be productive of incalculable advantages to the fisheries' industry, and that was surely a most important consideration. The right hon. Gentleman the late President of the Local Government Board had dwelt very largely upon the desirability of these works for the purpose of relieving distress. He confessed he sympathized very strongly with the existing distress; but he would have preferred that the consideration of these harbours should have been put forward on other grounds. He wished to touch upon the question of a harbour at Waterford. Where such harbours were most desirable, from an Imperial point of view, they conferred very little local benefit. The evidence taken before the Committee that considered this question showed that, from an Imperial point of view, there could be no more important site for a harbour of refuge than Waterford. Ireland had paid far more than her share to the Imperial Exchequer; and he thought he was justified in saying that Ireland would be satisfied to take back some of the millions which England owed her in the form of works of the kind contemplated in the proposition before the House. He had no hesitation in saying—and he spoke with considerable experience on the subject—that both in the direction of humanity, as well as of the maritime interests of the United Kingdom, there could be no outlay of public money more advantageous than a judicious expenditure upon harbours of refuge along the Coast.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, that in the Report of the Committee in 1884 and 1885 he thought it was conclusively shown that not only was it desirable that harbours of refuge should be provided on different parts of the Coast, but that of all the points on the Coast the Coast of Cornwall was most in need of such harbours, and most in need of such consideration, if only because of the great poverty of its inhabitants. He could not help feeling, however, that the arguments used by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, and the junior Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), were really unanswerable. While they had a perfect right to insist upon the necessity for carrying out these harbour works in the interest of the seamen, as had been so often recommended by Commissions and Committees, he thought they were trailing a herring across the path, if he might say so, when they linked with that suggestion the question of providing work for the unemployed. In his own mind, he thought those who represented maritime constituencies should assist those who were the backbone of the first line of defence of this country—he referred to the seamen, who were in many cases practically disfranchised, and had no direct representation, and who in many instances were obliged to be away from their home during the time of a General Election. He, for one, was not disposed to go to the length proposed by some hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, who demanded these undertakings of the Government because of the distress existing in the country at the present time; but he should like to point out that the establishment of these harbours of refuge—small harbours, not great national harbours, like those at Dover and Cardiff—would constitute remunerative labour in the best sense of the word, because such harbours would tend to develop the fishing industry, and consequently to increase the food supply of the country; and if, at the same time, they had the courage to put down those pernicious "rings" which existed in some places, and which caused tons of fish to be destroyed in order to keep up the prices, they would be conferring a great boon upon the poor of our large towns. The evidence given before the Committee presided over by the right hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) showed conclusively that, in the opinion of the best authorities, the establishment of a harbour in Cornwall—at St. Ives for instance—would be a national undertaking in the widest sense of the word, and in no sense a merely local matter. But what he wanted to impress upon the House was the fact that if they set the unemployed to work all round the Coast at the present moment, they would not in a few years be any better off than they were now. They had the figures of the Local Government Board to show that, according to the statistics of pauperism, the condition of the people was not much worse now than in previous years; and, indeed, it was no use shutting their eyes to the fact that this condition of things was chronic. If that were so, as undoubtedly it was, where was the use of starting relief works, or raising Mansion House Funds, for the purpose of temporarily staving off what was recurring year after year? £70,000 or £80,000—what was it? A mere drop in the bucket—a flake in a snowstorm. As John Stuart Mill had said, what was required was more distribution, and a larger remuneration of labour; and these, in his (Mr. Conybeare's) mind, were the great *desiderata* for meeting the existing evil. They did not act sufficiently upon the principle that the labourer was worthy of his hire.

MR. SPEAKER said, he must call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the subject before the House. It was the establishment of harbours of refuge round the Coast, and the employment of the population upon them. They were not discussing the general question of pauperism.

MR. CONYBEARE remarked, that he was endeavouring to show that, in connection with this question of the establishment of harbours of refuge, they had to consider—and it had been considered at length by hon. Gentlemen who preceded him—the general question of destitution. ["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I call the attention of the hon. Gentleman to the fact that he is out of Order in not confining himself to the Question before the House.

MR. CONYBEARE said, he had to apologize for having travelled beyond the record, and he would not pursue that line of argument. He only wished to point out that in proposing to establish harbours of refuge they really did not meet the great social difficulties which faced them. Such works could at the best be only palliative, and in the course of a few years after they had finished all their undertakings they would find themselves in just the same difficulties that they were in now.

MR. GILES (Southampton) said, he did not desire to argue this matter upon the side issue of finding employment for the unemployed. As the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said, the construction of harbours of refuge involved very difficult engineering problems. In these works many skilled engineers and skilled artizans; but only a small portion of the present unemployed labourers would be required. Whatever labour was employed, it would be of advantage to the unemployed; and in these times of destitution every little helped. Now, the Government had established a very good precedent by commencing a harbour of refuge at Dover, although there might be some doubts as to the necessity of a harbour of refuge at that place, it being so near to the Downs, which formed a natural harbour for the Channel. There were many other places on the Coast where harbours of refuge were much more required than at Dover; and he suggested that the Government should consider the question in a broad and comprehensive spirit, and not confine their attention solely to Dover. The Government had at public cost provided ships to protect the nation; and he maintained, therefore, it was part of their duty to provide harbours to protect the ships. Of course, he fully admitted that when they came to determine the different localities in which harbours of refuge should be made, they would have conflicting interests on all sides to contend with. To-night an Irish Member had advocated the making of harbours on the Irish Coast. The Representative of a Cornish constituency had advocated the construction of a harbour on the Cornish Coast; and a Gentleman from Yorkshire had advised the Government to construct a harbour on the Coast of

Yorkshire — he supposed at Filey. Despite these conflicting interests, he thought the Government would be perfectly justified, and he thought the public would not grudge the expense, in following out the precedent they had established by the commencement of a harbour of refuge at Dover, and establishing similar harbours of refuge elsewhere. Much had been said in the course of the debate about the necessity of small harbours. It was well known that small harbours were particularly necessary on the North-East Coast, in connection with the fishing trade; and, although he quite agreed it was not the duty of the Government to provide funds for the construction of harbours in the interests of localities, he thought some assistance, by way of loans from the Imperial Exchequer, ought to be given to localities which were struggling to make harbours for themselves. That was a subject well worthy of consideration; and he trusted the Government would without delay give their attention to it.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, he thought it was very dangerous for Parliament to endeavour to relieve temporary distress by means of public relief works. He was fully persuaded that there had been times of more serious distress than that which existed now; and he believed that constant reference to distress in the House of Commons only tended to increase distress, because it taught people to depend upon the House rather than on themselves. It was not wise to relieve distress by expending public money, because that money came from the people who were just above the class who were driven to relief. The opinion prevailing upon the Opposition Bench was that the only way to relieve distress was to expend public money in its relief; and he had no great desire to nurse poverty. What he wished was to get rid of it. What they ought to do was to set to work manfully to relieve the causes which led to destitution; and his own belief was that the future relief of distress was to be found in an increased cultivation of the soil; and a very remarkable illustration of the end of State relief of the distress was afforded in France. Constant attempts were made by the late Government of France to relieve distress; and the consequence was that the country had been almost landed in the position of being crushed by the weight of poverty. The greatest danger to the commerce of England was in loading the country with obligations of debt we should have some difficulty in getting rid of. There was no doubt that in the future the great commercial contest would be fought out by England and America; and it appeared to him that in view of that contest we ought to endeavour to lessen our national obligations, rather than to increase them. He had no great faith in the construction of harbours by the State; but he had faith in the provision of harbours by Local Authorities, who, understanding the wants of the district, could spend much more carefully than the State. He protested against the idea of relieving the distress by increasing our obligations in the shape of constructing harbours of refuge out of the national funds.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.) said, he thought that this question should not be considered merely from the point of view of the distress which undoubtedly existed amongst the working classes, but also with reference to the question of the lives of seamen. The providing of harbours of refuge for the purpose of saving the lives of seafaring men was one of the most important matters which could engage the attention of the House. The reasons upon which he would base his claims on behalf of Waterford Harbour were not local reasons merely, but the much broader reasons of national necessity. The Report of the Commission, which had already been laid upon the Table of the House, showed that in one year alone no fewer than 32 vessels had been sighted in distress on the Waterford Coast and on the South Coast of Wexford. Many of those vessels were wrecked. The harbour was at present of quite a sufficient depth for the trade of the port, but was quite insufficient as a harbour of refuge for the English nation's great shipping; and this was, he believed, a point of great importance. The Royal Commission had spoken in the following terms concerning this harbour:—

> "Looking at the many advantages possessed by this harbour (Waterford), which occupied an important point on the South-Eastern angle of Ireland, near the entrance to St. George's Channel, we concur with the Committee of the

House of Commons (which had reported in favour of it) that it is most desirable that these great natural advantages should be turned to account, and a sum of money laid out in the deepening of the bar."

The Report, further, went on to say that the conversion of Carlingford into a harbour of refuge, and the improvement of Waterford for the purpose of making it a harbour of refuge, with the excellent natural harbour of Cork, would provide ample accommodation between Lough Strangford and Wicklow, and diminish the casualties amongst the numerous shipping passing through the Irish Channel. He believed that if the views of that Commission were carried out they would be able to provide accommodation for ships of all tonnage at a comparatively small outlay at Waterford. The dredging of the entrance to Waterford Harbour at the bar would enable the biggest ships afloat to lie in there in any weather. A great ironclad was nearly destroyed at Waterford a short time ago, as also the *Germanic*, a Transatlantic steamer, which had been unable to get over the bar, and which had, therefore, to be taken by tugs to Liverpool in very bad weather, on account of breakage of the shaft. An outlay of £50,000 would be sufficient to do all that was required—a small sum when the vast importance of the work to be done and the benefits which would accrue to the shipping of the English people were considered. On these grounds, he believed he had established a strong case for the improvement of the harbour of Waterford, not upon local but national grounds.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said, he had not intended to take part in this debate but for some observations of the President of the Local Government Board with reference to harbours of refuge. As one who had had practical experience of these matters, having spent four years before the mast and a year behind the mast, and having had his own life saved by a harbour of refuge, he believed these harbours were very much wanted. He represented a county to which, if this Motion were carried, it would be certain to apply. At Wick there was a natural harbour, which only required a breakwater to be one of the finest harbours of refuge in the Kingdom. It was in a place where a harbour of refuge was wanted probably more than anywhere else in Great Britain, since from the Moray Firth to the Orkneys there was no harbour, even for a fishing barque. There was, moreover, a considerable trade there from the East of Scotland to the Atlantic, and also a considerable trade from the Continent to the East of Scotland. Time after time Commissions had reported in favour of forming a harbour at Wick. The cost would be at most £250,000, which amount would have by this time been saved in the value of shipping lost, besides the loss of many lives between the present time and the time when the work had been recommended by the Harbour Commissioners. Only last year, he believed, there was as much money lost as would have provided a breakwater across the mouth of Wick Bay. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board seemed to think that harbours of refuge were of no value; but he thought that if the right hon. Gentleman would take a trip round Scotland he would change his opinion. Many sailing ships were lost by having to make for distant harbours of refuge against head winds, going ashore owing to their leeway. Not only would a great harbour be of great value locally, but it would also be valuable in a national sense. It would provide a refuge and accommodation for large ships, and for the fishing boats that carried on work there. There were in this part of the Coast a large number of small harbours which had been constructed under old Acts which were now practically useless, because the herring and other fisheries now required larger boats, and a little more money expended on them would again render them useful, and would have the effect of preventing many of the people engaged in the fishing industry from leaving, as they were now compelled to do, and going into the large towns, there to swell the number of unskilled labourers, and augment the distress which prevailed in these centres. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that the money in connection with the construction of harbours would be spent principally upon skilled labour; but he had himself seen the making of a good many harbours; and, notwithstanding the authority of the right hon. Gentleman, he knew that the great bulk of the money was not spent upon skilled labour, but upon the labour of those who excavated by spade and shovel. In his opinion, money could not be better spent than in the direction proposed. It would, practically, be a method of insurance against the loss of life and valuable property. The present condition of the country in this respect was not very creditable to us. Almost every other civilized country spent 10 or 20 times as much on works of this kind as we did. It was not at all creditable that while they could get so much money from Parliament for purposes that were not useful—for foreign wars and Colonial aggression—it was so difficult to get money in order to promote the comfort of the people and increase the wealth of the nation. He had very great pleasure in supporting the Resolution of the hon. Member, which, if carried, would, in his opinion, not only go a long way towards preventing a number of men from being driven from their homes and adding to the amount of unskilled labour in towns, but would also prevent a great destruction of valuable life.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, he did not altogether agree with the theory that the State was bound to find work for the unemployed. If that view of the State's obligations were to prevail, there would be no end to the demands that would arise. He also thought that if, by way of relieving distress, the Government started works all over the country, many of them would turn out valueless, and thus public money would be wasted. But when there were useful works to be carried out, it was desirable that the Government should proceed to carry them out at a time when there was a dearth of employment, and when labour was cheap. He thought that the Government might very well, in times of distress such as the present, expend £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 a-year on useful public works. He would not advocate the making of useless harbours for the sake of giving employment. But if certain harbours were urgently needed, now was the time to make them. He was a Member of a Committee which recently inquired into the question of harbours, and which was presided over by the present Comptroller of the Household (Mr. Marjoribanks). This Committee reported in favour of three harbours of refuge for the East Coast—one for Cornwall, and two on the Irish Coast. He could not see why, when the House had appointed a Committee which went fully into the question, they should not give effect to its recommendations. The Committee was, no doubt, a Committee of the last Parliament; but, practically, it was a Committee of this Parliament. If they did not proceed with all the harbours suggested, they ought to commence with one or two of them. It was a remarkable fact that they were building a harbour at Dover which was not recommended by the Committee. In doing that, he considered they were throwing over the Report of the Committee. It was said that the construction of such harbours as these would not give any work to men who belonged to the class of the unemployed. But the hon. Member who had just sat down had shown that they would; and he himself, after some experience, could corroborate that view of the matter. He held that when localities were desirous of constructing harbours their efforts ought to be aided by an apportionment of Imperial funds. Many places were quite unable to defray the cost of the work themselves. Galway, for example, had exhausted its resources in an abortive attempt to construct a harbour. If assistance were given to that town the work might yet be completed. That it was very desirable that Galway should have increased harbour accommodation was shown by the evidence given before the Committee in 1884 by all the naval officers consulted. With free labour the harbour could be constructed at a cost of £100,000, and with convict labour at a cost of £30,000 or £40,000. He suggested that when competing claims should be set up by neighbouring seaport towns, a Commission might be appointed to decide where the harbour should be constructed. The President of the Local Government Board had raised the objection that there was no settled agreement as to the kind of harbour which should be built. Of course there could be no such agreement, because the character of each harbour must depend upon the conditions of the locality and upon the uses to which it would be put. Ireland use to receive £8,000 a-year from the Treasury for the purpose in question; but for the last three years the money had not been given. He would only add that he hoped there would be a division on the question, and that the House would recollect that the issue was really whether they should rescind the Report of the Committee which had devoted so much time and care to this subject.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, there was no generosity so great as that of A when he thought that B ought to give something to C. The question of a national harbour was an entirely different question from that of the construction of a commercial harbour, which was the subject under discussion; and he did not think it was necessary to come to the State to aid merely commercial harbours. He had the honour of being the Chairman of the Tees Conservancy Commissioners, and he could say that they had improved their rivers and built piers at the cost of upwards of £500,000, and not a single penny of it had come as a gift from the State. All of it had been raised by means of local sources, or was in course of repayment to the State. The money, or rather part of it, had been borrowed from the Public Works Loan Commissioners; some of it at 3½ per cent; but that rate of interest had been increased to 4 per cent. His only complaint against the State was that this additional ½ per cent had been added to the rate of interest. The people who had made the Tees what it now was relied only upon themselves; and he considered that there was no community so poor that could not contribute something towards the construction of a harbour which their trading interests required. An hon. Member had spoken in favour of constructing harbours of refuge; but that was not a matter which was fairly before the House. The Tees was used as a harbour of refuge; its trade had been increased, and the river had been deepened, so that from a depth of 3 feet 8 inches at low water spring tides they had now a depth of 21 feet and 16 feet rise of tide, enabling commercial vessels to enter the port at any time of tide, and at high tide water for the largest ships. The Conservators of the river had done what they could to meet the existing distress in the country by putting on a number of men out of employment; but it was a mistake to suppose that any great amount of unskilled labour could be employed on this class of work. On the Clyde about £1,500,000 had been spent, he believed, on the river, and, in addition, some £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 on other works. All that was done by local money. And so it was with the improvements on the Tyne, where some 200 or 300 vessels usually took refuge, having scarcely any dues to pay. If money was to be given away, he would ask whether it should not be given to those who helped themselves, rather than to people who had done nothing in the way of helping themselves? If Gentlemen came to that House and asked those who had built their own harbours without aid from the State to help them with public money in building theirs with State-found money it would be a very one-sided proposal. He intended to vote against the Motion of the hon. Member for Leeds, and he had given this explanation in order that his vote might not be misunderstood. He hoped, however, that the hon. Gentleman would be satisfied with the discussion, and would not insist on going to a division.

MR. YEO (Glamorgan, Gower) said, that the question before the House had been discussed almost from every point. All agreed that harbours of refuge were necessary, not only on the Eastern Coast, but for the Coast between Bristol and Swansea. He rose to say a word on behalf of those ports that could not help themselves. Wherever it could be shown that dangers existed, it was only sight that we, as a maritime nation, rhould see that, as far as possible, our sailors were saved from the dangers which beset them. One hon. Gentleman who had spoken had mentioned hundreds and thousands of pounds spent in deepening the harbours in the locality he represented. He (Mr. Yeo) could also speak of hundreds and thousands spent in harbour improvements in the locality in which he lived; but his point was this—that in those particular localities there was a large existing trade, which justified this large expenditure, and which enabled the Local Authorities to borrow money upon the security of the tolls, and thus to enter on a large outlay of this kind. But there were other localities in which that condition did not exist; and his contention was that they, as a nation, were not only justified, but it was a duty laid upon them to do their part towards making those localities safe. With all deference to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, he contended that the construction of harbours of refuge were desirable not only on strategic and humanitarian, but on economic grounds. Statistics told them not only the number of lives lost, but of millions of money—about £2,000,000 annually—squandered on our Coasts. Was it not inconceivable that, after the Report of the Commission that the loss of life and the loss of property would be greatly reduced if these harbours were constructed, no steps whatever had been taken to carry out that recommendation? A great deal of stress had been laid that night upon the necessity for deepening and improving the small harbours round the Coast. He did not deny the importance and the claims of those small harbours, for the improvement of which Imperial assistance was asked to supplement local effort; but he would remind hon. Gentlemen that there was another class of harbours in connection with which no such question arose. Looking back to the Report of the Royal Commission, they would find that that Report recognized that there were large national harbours which it behoved the nation to provide. He would appeal to the Government, and ask them to set about that work. One wondered sometimes at the zeal shown by the Government in thinking that the shipowners of the country should do their duty. That zeal on the part of the Government was commendable; but while they were looking for the mote in the eyes of the shipowners, they forgot all about the beam in their own eyes. He said the duty of the nation was to provide these national harbours, and he regretted that the President of the Local Government Board should have given it as his deliberate opinion that these harbours of refuge would have no effect in saving life. He thought it was a poor compliment to the Committees and the Royal Commission that the right hon. Gentleman should express an opinion in direct conflict with the views of a number of practical men. Common sense would seem to convince one that the construction of these harbours would result in the saving of some lives; and, for his part, he was rather tempted to accept the opinion of a body of practical men than the individual opinion of any one Gentleman, however well-informed, or however high his position.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, he believed that anyone who had taken cognizance of the facts put before the House by so many speakers must feel that by acceding to the Resolution they would be doing good by both hands—on the one hand, to sailors, by providing a refuge from the perils of the sea, and on the other hand to labourers, providing a refuge from sheer destitution. Different parts of the United Kingdom had been brought under the attention of the House. The claims of the English Coast, East, South, and West, had been supported; but there had been only slight notice given to Ireland. But the South Coast of Ireland, with which he was well acquainted, had special claims. It was the point to which the great commercial traffic between the United States and Great Britain tended, and where harbours would be of the greatest advantage. On the South Coast of Ireland there were many points which could each be turned to account, notably to the advantage of the fishing industry, which the House had been told was of the highest practical importance; and, if that was so, there was no part of the Kingdom where the fishing interest more deserved the fostering care of a benevolent Government than in the South of Ireland. Along the whole Southern Coast of Ireland, outside and beyond those harbours which nature herself provided, there was no harbour actually constructed by man. On the English Coast harbours abound; but very little money, indeed, had been spent on Irish industries, and scarcely anything to promote the fishing industry. In these times of depression and semi-starvation he held it to be the stern, imperative duty of every man having the welfare of his country at heart to pay attention to this subject. In Ireland this would be followed by the most beneficial results; for he was sure that the South Coast of Ireland presented many points that might be turned to practical account. He sincerely hoped that the debate would bear good fruit, and that the subject would not be shelved indefinitely.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he must compliment the hon. Member for Leeds (Mr. Dawson) upon the able statement he had made to the House. The question was one which interested and excited the sympathies of hon. Members, whatever might be their nationality. Every hon. Member, he was sure, sympathized with the desire to relieve the distress of people on land, and to prevent loss of life at sea. But he hoped in this, as in all things, the House would be practical, and would arrive at a sound conclusion. With respect to harbours, his hon. Friend the Member for the St. Austell Division of Cornwall (Mr. Borlase) had told him not to ransack the pigeon-holes of the Board of Trade, lest he should find in them something relating to this question left by his Predecessors. He could honestly say that he had found nothing left by his Predecessor which indicated that any sort of progress had been made in the matter. He agreed with the introducer of the Amendment that mercantile harbours ought to be provided by mercantile communities. The hon. Member had, however, spoken on behalf of a smaller class of harbour. He entirely sympathized with the hon. Member in the desire to do everything that could be done, not only for the Mercantile Marine, but also to promote the great fishing industries of the country, and to insure the safety and the lives of our seafaring population. But when a request was made that these works should be done by the State itself, it should not be forgotten that there had been an enormous expenditure all round our Coasts on small harbours during the last 20 years, and that this expenditure had been met by loans from the Government, which were being paid back with rapid punctuality and regularity. When one fishing community was paying for its harbour, and meeting its engagements with regularity, how could they propose that another fishing locality, which was, perhaps, a rival to the other district, should have its harbour made for it without any cost or responsibility whatever? The community which was discharging its duty and helping itself would be taxed in order to assist the community which was not helping itself. The Committee had recommended that loans should be made on easy terms to districts where harbours were necessary, and that such districts should be encouraged in that way to construct their own harbours. That, in his opinion, was the proper course to pursue. He should like to call the attention of the House to the evidence of a gentleman than whom no one was better acquainted with the interests of the fishing industry and the great need of harbours round the Coasts of the United Kingdom—he meant Mr. Spencer Walpole, who occupied the position of Fisheries Commissioner for many years. When before the Committee he was asked a question as to whether the construction of fishing harbours ought to be undertaken by the localities or by the State, Mr. Walpole stated that he very strongly held the opinion that the construction of such harbours ought to rest with the locality and not with the State. He was asked whether he could give any reason for that conclusion, and he said that, in the first place, the construction of a harbour always tended to increase the value of property in its neighbourhood; and, therefore, that if the State should construct the harbour the whole community would be increasing the value of the property of a small section of it. That was a strong argument, for within his own knowledge land which had been worth only £10 an acre by the construction of a harbour became worth £1,000 an acre. If the value of property in the neighbourhood of a harbour was so enormously increased, the owners of that property ought to come forward and contribute to the construction of the harbour. In the next place, Mr. Walpole said that it would be almost impossible for the State to provide harbours on all parts of the Coast, and that it must of necessity give the preference to some districts over others. Then, again, Mr. Walpole said that he thought the granting of State aid discouraged the local people from making the efforts they would otherwise make. If it were once understood that the State was going to construct harbours, no locality and no private individual would ever construct one for themselves, but would wait and hope to obtain a State grant. That was perfectly true; and while he thought it extremely desirable that this harbour accommodation should be provided, he thought that the proper course was to aid Local Authorities as far as possible in providing the accommodation for themselves, and he did not think that the accommodation should be provided by a direct grant in favour of one locality at the expense of another. A remark which he had made to a deputation with reference to shipowners being more vigilant had been somewhat misunderstood. What he said was only a quotation from his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board when President of the Board of Trade, who stated that the greater loss of life at sea was rather due to improper equipment or to unseaworthy vessels than to any lack of harbour accommodation. By far the greater loss of life round our Coasts was beyond the 15 miles limit, and therefore independent of harbour accommodation. All the evidence went to show that the loss of life among fishermen was not due to lack of harbours, but that the greatest loss arose at sea. It was shown by Mr. Gray, of the Marine Department of the Board of Trade, that in seven years there were 605 British vessels lost, with a total of 1,565 lives. Four hundred and three of these lives were lost within a limit of 15 miles of the shore, 454 lives were lost somewhat beyond the 15 miles limit, while 708 lives were lost at sea. It appeared, therefore, that out of 1,565 lives lost in seven years 708 were totally unaffected by want of harbour accommodation. It had been admitted that the State works ought not to clash with private enterprize; and it seemed to him that Mr. Spencer Walpole's evidence showed that these grants could not be made without clashing with private enterprize, and without putting a stop to private enterprize, and that they would, therefore, hinder rather than aid the object they had in view by making State grants. The next question was whether, if the Government decided upon making a number of these harbours at once, it would assist the distressed classes now unemployed, and, if so, to what extent it would do so? He had consulted Sir John Hawkshaw on this subject, as he was an authority upon harbour questions and a most experienced man. When he asked Sir John Hawkshaw how far the construction of harbours would help the unemployed classes he said that he did not believe that they would be able to find employment for any of the distressed classes in London, but that they must get the unemployed classes from the neighbourhood of the harbours. Then it would be a year, or a year and a-half, before the harbours were begun, for surveys and plans of the district would have to be made and skilled men accustomed to blasting operations employed to clear the site, and it was more than probable that before the harbour could be made homes for the workpeople would have to be built. Sir John Hawkshaw said that the tunnel which had just been completed under the Severn required 3,000 men to be employed, and their first duty had been to spend £50,000 in building houses for the workmen. It would be a long time, therefore, before men could be got at work. In the next place, as strong, hardy men would be required for work on the harbours, he did not see how the unemployed classes of the towns could be employed. The largest amount which it had been suggested should be spent on the construction of harbours was £6,000,000, extending over a period of six years. That would be £500,000 a-year, and what amount of employment would £500,000 a-year give? The wages of the labouring classes of this country amounted to between £300,000,000 and £400,000,000 a-year. The £500,000 it was proposed to spend would have to go, to a large extent, to pay for skilled labour, for engineering talent, and for supervision, and very little would be left for the employment of unskilled labour. The £500,000 a-year for the purpose of giving employment would be, therefore, a mere bagatelle, merely a drop in the ocean. If they wanted to employ labour they could do it very much more effectually than by voting money in that House for the building of harbours. Let them remove the restrictions which Parliament had put upon the subscription of capital for useful enterprizes. Only yesterday a deputation waited upon him with reference to the employment of £1,500,000 upon the construction of a railway between Derbyshire and Yorkshire, in which a seven mile tunnel would occur. The Midland Railway Company guaranteed a minimum dividend of 3 per cent upon the capital; but the difficulty was that the House would not allow interest to be paid upon subscribed capital during construction, and it was impossible to obtain the capital without. He maintained that the House, by passing the Resolution of Tuesday last, with reference to the Manchester Ship Canal Bill, allowing capital to have free play, did more to promote the objects in view than it would by passing any number of Resolutions of this kind. Sir John Hawkshaw had assured him that, supposing the Government were to propose such an enterprize, nothing could be done in less than a year and a-half. A Bill would require to be brought in, private property would have to be taken, and the whole scheme would have to be planned; and before all that could be done, the Government hoped, at least, that the present distress would be a thing of the past. He had consulted another great authority, Sir Robert Rawlinson, of the Local Government Board, and that gentleman declared that the last thing the Government should do was to contemplate the employment of men with a view to relieving distress among the industrial classes. Let them stir up the Local Authorities. The Local Authorities would do these things much better than the Government, because they knew exactly who were in a distressed condition and the kind of men to employ. He ventured to say they had two or three speeches in the course of the evening that had contributed not a little to the value of the debate. He had never heard his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board make a better speech; the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Manchester (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had, with admirable force, given the House some sound doctrine; and there had been a speech delivered from below the Gangway by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) especially, which every Member of the House should welcome, and none so heartily as those who called themselves the Conservative Party, for it contained a sound principle, on which it was to be hoped the government of this country would always be conducted. It was an excellent thing when a man in the position of the hon. Member for Northampton told the working classes not to look to the Government for employment, but to their own organizations and to their own local governments; and to maintain that character for independence, which, after all, had always been the pride of the English working classes, and which was the best safeguard against Socialism. He ventured to warn the House against the attempt to relieve distress by employment afforded by the Central Government. Let them look at France. From the baneful system of State employment, begun under the Empire, that country had never been able to shake itself free. Only the other day he observed that on the mere rumour of fresh works being started by the Government, 100,000 immigrants from the Provinces came flocking into the capital, many of them to go away disappointed, and many to remain to swell that wretched *proletariat* which was the terror of the French governing classes. What was wanted in this country was more temperance and thrift; and while he did not want to say one word that should be thought mockery in this time of distress—for he, and every Member, sympathized with the distressed condition of the people—yet, after all, they must hope that from this present adversity they would pluck the bright jewel of virtue and honesty and independence, and that they should learn from this lesson the great value of sustaining the national character on the old lines of self-help and self-reliance. He would promise this to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dawson)—that he would give the most careful attention to the Report of the Committee, and would do whatever he could to help the classes for whom he had interested himself—the fishermen and the seamen—not only to promote their industry, but to preserve their lives. If he failed, it would not be for want of sympathy, or from want of will to render such help as was within his power.

Mr. DAWSON said, that after the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman he should be willing to withdraw his Motion.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman had dwelt on the propriety of neighbourhoods which required harbours of refuge relying on their own resources for their construction. That might be all very well for England; but the circumstances of Ireland prevented her people from relying on self-help. The owners of property in that country never came forward to bear their share of any burthen for the benefit of the locality with which they were connected, and with which it might be reasonably expected that they would identify themselves. It was well known that in the Eastern parts of Ireland, where harbours of refuge were required, people in the different localities had been quite willing on every occasion to come forward and bear their part of the expenses. This was notably so in the case of the large works commenced and completed at Arklow and other places; but it was quite useless to ask the Local Government Board to assist in works of this kind in those districts of the West of Ireland, where the people were starving, and where the poor rates had been raised to the very highest pitch. The speeches which had been made to-night by his hon. Friend the Member for Carlow (Mr. Blake) and his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) had been pointed more to the expenditure of public money in the districts where the people were unable to bear any share of the expenses, rather than to those prosperous and rich districts on the East and North-East Coasts of Ireland in which harbours had already been constructed. He assured the House that it was through no want of inclination on the part of the poor people in those localities that they did not contribute to the expense of constructing the harbours; it was simply because they were utterly unable to do so. Lately, he himself had occasion to serve upon a committee of gentlemen in the South of Ireland who had undertaken the task of providing fishing boats for the fishermen of the South-Western Coast. These gentlemen, out of their own pockets, undertook to supply large boats, costing from £600 to £800 each, to the fishermen on the Coasts of the counties of Cork, Kerry, and Waterford; but the fishermen positively refused to become responsible for the boats, for the simple reason that there was no fishery harbour along the whole Coast line in which they could safely anchor the vessels upon the return from fishing. That was one of the proofs the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board asked for, that the people of the locality were anxious to help themselves. The Irish people had been constantly taunted with coming for grants from the Imperial Parliament; but it had been proved here, during the last few weeks, that instead of the Irish people always coming as beggars to the Imperial Parliament they were contributing far more than their share of the Imperial taxation to the Exchequer, upon which they made such futile claims from time to time in favour of useful measures, such as those contemplated in this discussion. He thought that the principal point which had been advanced by Irish Members in favour of the strengthening of fishing harbours had been unnoticed by many speakers. The Irish Representatives did not appeal to the House to construct fishing harbours for the mere purpose of providing temporary work. They took a more far-reaching and wider view of the matter than the mere temporary employment of idle hands. It had been seen that wherever in Ireland harbours had been constructed for the benefit of the fishing traffic an excellent traffic had been established, and thriving localities had arisen all around the harbours. Buildings had been erected for the curing of fish, and the result was that in all of those places which were formerly dependent upon the poor rates, which were never more than a few weeks removed from the point of starving, there flourishing communities had sprung up, and there was no such thing known as poverty or starvation. That was the reason the Irish Members regarded it as their imperative duty to press the question upon the right hon. Gentleman with the pertinacity with which they had done that evening, and not merely for the purpose of providing a few months' work for men who were now out of employment. He did not think the argument which was used by the two right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Ministerial Bench was one which ought to be allowed to weigh very much with the House—namely, that it would take a couple of years at least to provide the plans and specifications and estimates for these harbours of refuge. There was an old adage, "Where there's a will there's a way," and another, "There are none so blind as those who will not see." If the Representatives of the Treasury in the House were actuated by a sincere wish to see these works commenced they could in a very few days—not weeks or months—provide the estimates and specifications necessary for the small harbours, which only required upon then an outlay of £40,000 or £50,000. He knew one harbour, that of Ballycotton, in the county of Cork, which would only cost something like £20,000 or £30,000. The pier was not completed yet; but it had been pushed forward so very rapidly lately that the fishermen of that place were able to use it to a very large extent. Only by today's post he had received a letter from the pastor of the parish, acknowledging the great benefits which had been derived by the fishermen of the district through the harbour, though the work was not yet completed, and also acknowledging that the people of the district were in a large measure indebted to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald) for the grant which was given to them by the Government for the harbour. It was by the construction of other harbours like that at Ballycotton that the greatest amount of good could be done for the fishing industry in Ireland, and not by the construction of large harbours of refuge, which would cost something like £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 sterling. Such costly harbours might be wanted in England; but in the case of Ireland what was wanted was a series of small harbours such as he had referred to. He trusted that the President of the Local Government Board and the officials of the Treasury would turn their attention to this subject, and be able to see their way to meet the views which he (Mr. Lane) and his hon. Friends had expressed in regard to the harbour accommodation on the Coasts of Ireland.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — NOTICES OF QUESTIONS.—RESOLUTION.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON (Essex, Epping), in rising to move—

> "That, pending the judgment of the House on the Report of any Committee appointed to consider the Business of the House, it shall be an Order of this House;
>
> "That Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them vivâ voce in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained,"

said: I am anxious that the House should allow me, for a few moments, to bring before it the special question of which I have given Notice. Now, Sir, I am quite aware of the force of the argument which may be raised against this Motion—namely, that the Government having proposed to constitute a Committee to inquire into the whole question of the Procedure of the House, it is, therefore, premature on the part of any hon. Member to approach the subject in a fragmentary manner in an endeavour to grapple effectively with it. The branch of the subject, however, to which I wish to call attention is one upon which there is practical unanimity in the House. I believe that the disadvantages of the present system have shown themselves to be so great within the last few years, that the House will have no difficulty in arriving at a unanimous decision concerning the need for improvement. The object of my Motion is, if possible, to prevent what has really become a great waste of public time. There can be no doubt that the Questions put in this House have assumed, in recent times, a most inordinate length, and there can be little doubt that the Forms of the House have been much abused. Formerly, it was always understood that the Questions should be submitted to your judgment, Sir, in order that you might eliminate anything of an argumentative nature in them, or anything outside the limit of a proper Question. But the habit which has been adopted within the last few years has been to place Questions before the House without due Notice, thereby escaping the supervision of yourself and of the Officers of the House; and by that means many Questions have assumed that argumentative character which it was originally intended not to allow. I propose my Motion with a view of putting a stop to this irregularity in our proceedings, and to bring back the Questions to the form formerly adopted. I believe the adoption of the Motion which I have ventured to place on the Paper would leave the Questions very much in the position which they occupied until recent years. Perhaps I may be allowed to show the House how these Questions have grown in modern days. I can remember the time when, in the ordinary practice of the House, it was very rare to see on the Notice Paper more than 20 Questions. I have here a list showing the remarkable way in which they have grown. Up to 1874 there was hardly an occasion when that number of 20 was exceeded, and the House proceeded with the real Business of the evening at a reasonable hour. On the 23rd of June, 1874, the number of Questions rose to 37. In 1880 they rose to 44 on one occasion, and later in the same year to 47. In 1881 the number of Questions was 57; in 1884 the number rose to 61; in February of that year to 63; in April of the same year the number was 72; in November, 1884, the number rose to 87; and in December the number was 78. In March of the present year the number, on one occasion, was 77; while yesterday the number was 86. Not only has the practice of putting Questions grown immensely, but there has arisen another practice of putting a number of supplementary Questions which spring out of the answers given, with the object of arguing against the view drawn out by the original Question, thereby becoming a sort of speech, and involving a great waste of the time of the House. I believe that this is contrary to the spirit in which Questions should be brought before us, and certainly constitutes a great waste of the time of the House. Hon. Members are aware that, in recent times, the House did not begin Business till 5.30, or even later; and I venture to think they will agree with me in saying that Questions have, in fact, grown to be an abuse of our proceedings, and of the legitimate opportunity which undoubtedly ought to be afforded of making inquiries on important subjects of Ministers. To remedy the abuse, I think it is not necessary to wait for the decision of the Committee on Procedure; and the Motion which I have placed on the Paper is that all Questions should be submitted to you, Sir, or to the Officers of the House, without being read *vivâ voce* in the House, unless your consent should have been previously obtained. I will not detain the House further, because I believe that there is great unanimity on the subject; and I have ventured to bring it forward because I believe that the House has the remedy in its own hands, and may, to a very considerable extent, remove the grievance of which we complain. I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): I beg to second the Motion; and before the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer rises to reply there is one point to which I should like to call his attention. I know there is a legitimate complaint on the part of the Government of the great waste of time which takes place in reference to putting Questions on Mondays and Thursdays, which are Government nights; and what I wish to ask is, whether something cannot be done in order to secure that Questions shall be answered more generally on Tuesdays and Fridays than upon Government nights? Friday is a semi-Government night; but it not unfrequently happens that no Government Business is transacted on Fridays, and it seems to me that it would be for the convenience of the Government to substitute Tuesdays and Fridays for Mondays and Thursdays. Now, I understand that there is an indisposition on the part of Members of the Government to answer Questions on Tuesday nights. I am informed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke), when he was Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, particularly requested the hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool (Baron H. De Worms), who was then Member for Greenwich, to address his Questions on Government nights, because, in that case, he was sure to be present. The consequence is that a whole string of Questions is put down on Government nights; while the Paper on other nights is comparatively free. I should have thought that the Government would rather object to their time being occupied, instead of that of private Members, and it is with this object that I have called attention to the matter. I certainly shall support the Motion which has been moved by my right hon. Friend. I believe there will be great unanimity upon it, and I hope the House will adopt it, without waiting the decision of the Committee on Procedure.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them vivâ voce in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained,"—(*Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): I will first answer the Question which has been put to me by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and I can assure him that the Government have no feeling whatever as to the putting of Questions on Government nights. If they have any preference on the subject—not that I am entitled to express any preference on their behalf—it would be rather in favour of Questions being asked on private Members' nights. I do not know who is the informant of the hon. Member as to the desire of any Member of the Government in regard to the putting of Questions; but the doctrine, as I have always understood it, is that it is the duty of every Member of the Government to be here at 4.30, and to remain until the rising of the House, and I believe that in whatever capacity we may serve we always fulfil that duty, and it is not within my knowledge that any Members of the Government have departed from that rule. In regard to the Motion, I can express my entire concurrence with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, though it is a delicate matter for a Member of the Government to express an opinion upon, as they are the victims in the matter. It is not for them to complain. Everybody must feel that the growth of Questions is a serious evil, and that it has made a very serious inroad upon the Business of the House. When I first became a Member of the House there were few Questions put, and those only on really important subjects. It was rarely that they occupied a quarter of an hour; whereas they now frequently take one and a-half and even two hours. It is, of course, for the House to judge what steps they will take in the matter. The Government have no authority to intervene, or to dictate to the House in any way upon the subject. If I may venture to allude to what takes place outside the House, I must say that I cannot but observe that in the newspapers the Questions occupy very often twice as much space as the rest of the report. So long as the newspapers thus encourage the practice it will continue. Personally, I should be glad to see a return to the old practice, when none but really important Questions were asked. Everybody will agree that some Questions are much more important than others; but it is not so much the actual Question as the preliminary canter which is objectionable. There is generally a sort of hostile counter-Question, and then Questions are asked one against the other, which not only occupy time, but excite a certain amount of warmth of feeling. As to the substance of the right hon. Gentleman's Motion, it is well-known that the Government have intended to submit a proposition to the same effect to a Committee of Procedure; and, therefore, if the House is generally in favour of the Motion, I shall be happy to support it. If the first clause of the Motion were omitted, and the last sentence were agreed to, it would become a Sessional Order, and would read thus—

> "That Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them *vivâ voce* in this House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained."

I would appeal to the House to adopt the latter part of the Resolution; because, if it becomes a Sessional Order, it will conduce to the saving of time, and will prevent the fighting Questions and the counter-Questions which we all deprecate, and which have become such an irregularity in our proceedings. In that form I shall be happy to support the Motion.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I am delighted to hear that it is the duty of the Members of the Government to remain till the rising of the House; but I am afraid that it is a rule—as it was shown to be last night—more honoured in the breach than the observance. I have listened with pleasure to my right hon. Friend behind me (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), and I have no objection whatever to the main part of his Resolution. Indeed, our own proposals went further, and required that some kind of classification of Questions would be made. But the Committee will deal with the whole subject, and will consider any proposals which Her Majesty's Government may think it proper to make. I will only venture to say this in regard to Questions put in the House—that although they may not form part of the most important Business of the House, yet, at the same time, it must be admitted that they excite a great deal of interest, for at no time during the evening is the House so full. Therefore, though we may be extremely anxious, as far as we can, to classify Questions, the House would not be very willing to limit the right of addressing Questions to the Government of the day. I hope, too, that the Government will remember that the time of the House is occupied, not merely by the Questions put, by also by the answers given, which I trust the Ministers will make as concise as possible.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I do not rise for the purpose of making any special comments of my own, but merely to say that I think some of the remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution, and from hon. Gentlemen who have taken part in the discussion, deserve a better answer than they have received. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman who leads the Opposition to talk about the classification of Questions; but it must always occur to hon. Members who represent Irish constituencies that, for many years, Question time has been for Ireland the most important time of the House. But Questions which are of the greatest interest and importance to hon. Members from Ireland and their constituencies may not appear of equal importance to the Authorities of the House, or to those right hon. Gentlemen who have very much the direction of the Business of the House. The privilege of putting those Questions is the only possible means at our disposal for bringing serious grievances to the notice of the House, and of frequently getting them redressed. Unattached, as I am, to either of the great Parties in the House, I feel bound to take this opportunity of protesting, in the strongest possible way, against the theory being accepted by the Committee which is supposed to deal with the Rules of Procedure in the House that Questions, although they may occasionally swell to a considerable length, at any time result in the waste of the time of the House. There was one striking observation which fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was that he had noticed that the public Press devote a larger space to reporting Questions and answers than to the other political Business. Now, in the course of some years spent in political life I have noticed that the public Press is very much in the habit of reporting what the public want to read; and no better proof can be given than that mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman that the public take a greater interest in the Questions and answers than in the speeches of hon. Gentlemen. So far, therefore, from adopting the advice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it would, on the contrary, be only reasonable and right that the Committee to whom we are about to refer the Rules of the House should take into their consideration for their guidance what the action of the Press is. I think, also, that we might, with benefit to ourselves, notice what part of our proceedings is reported at the greatest length, and get an indication from it of the importance which the public attach to our proceedings. I will only add, in conclusion, that if the practice of asking Questions in this House has had an extraordinary development, it is due to the fact that the House is becoming steadily more and more democratic. There is a larger section of private independent Members who, while they continue upon certain great issues to follow the Leaders who sit upon the Front Benches, are not content to do nothing but vote. After the first year, or even the first few months of the new Parliament are over, it will be found that the only way for a Member not high among political Parties of the House to direct attention to a grievance and to get it remedied is by asking Questions.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I entirely agree with the observations of my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon); because I think that if we curtail the Questions we shall be curtailing the Privileges of the House. It is not the use, but the abuse, of Questions that is objectionable. There has, however, been a reason for the multiplication of Questions of recent years, and that is the persistent encroachment upon the rights of private Members which was made in the last Parliament by the Government. If you attempt to dam up water in one direction it will burst forth in another; and, therefore, pressure has been put upon hon. Members to bring forward grievances in the shape of Questions. But the object of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Epping Division of Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) is to do away with a manifest public nuisance; and I think the House will concur with my right hon. Friend that the nuisance is one which ought to be checked. No one wishes to curtail the right of Members to question Ministers; otherwise Ministers would soon become despotic. Much of the abuse of questioning is not in the Questions themselves, but in the ambiguous manner in which they are answered. At the same time, there are, undoubtedly, a large number of Questions which are purely of local interest; and I think the House will agree that if anything is to be done we ought to insist that they and the answers should be printed and circulated. [*Cries of* "No!"] My hon. Friends say "No;" but there are a large number which are of interest only to a small number of Members—probably not more than 100 persons—out-of-doors. And ought a small Question, which concerns 100 in number of individuals, to stop the whole Business of the nation? It will be quite possible to preserve the right intact, and at the same time to lessen the time occupied by frivolous, local, and unnecessary Questions. I have already suggested whether it would not be possible for you, Sir, of your own motion, to take the initiative, and direct certain Questions and answers to be printed without a distinct order from the House. There can be no kind of objection to that course, and I think it would be a useful proceeding if it were adopted.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I agree with my hon. Friend (Mr. Cowen) in one respect and disagree with him in another. There is nothing surprising in finding the two Front Benches agreed on such a Motion. If Ministers had their way they would gladly assent to any Motion for putting an end to Questions altogether; for it is one of the most irksome proceedings of the House, in the opinion of Ministers. I do not think, however, that the convenience of Gentlemen who are liberally paid to devote themselves to the public service, or their opinions, should be conclusive on the present question. I disagree, however, with my hon. Friend on another point. He has spoken of local Questions, and I find that a strange misapprehension exists on this subject. It is precisely to that class of Questions known as local Questions that it is necessary to attract the force of opinion in the House and the country. In matters of Imperial policy relating to some matter within the common knowledge of the Empire there is not much danger of harm. The danger is when some Jack in Office in a remote locality tramples on the rights of the people. It is exactly where there is no free current of public opinion in Ireland that Members ought to appeal to that publicity which the House and the Press of the nation provide. I invite hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway and in all parts of the House to consider this as a question, and to regard it as one which affects the well-being and the right of their constituents. Although hon. Members may rush at the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, they may find, in the end, that they have come to a hasty conclusion, and, when it is too late, that they have given up one of their most valuable rights. I must say I think, in regard to the Motion before the House, that it is a matter which had much better be left to the discretion of the House than settled by any hard-and-fast rule. I think, Sir, if you were questioned on the subject, you would admit that your attention has already been drawn to the practice of reading out Questions in advance. A short time ago I was obliged to call attention to the practice resorted to by certain Orange Members of reading out Notices of Questions of a vexatious and frivolous character; and when, in the face of the House, I appealed, Sir, for your judgment, you stated that you desired to have the opinion or action of the House upon this practice of reading Notices of Questions in advance. Since you were pleased to deliver that opinion from your place, the Orange Members have been reduced to dumbness. No one Member of the Orange Party has ventured to read out a Notice of a Question. Then, I think, Sir, that your opinion may be left to fructify in the minds of hon. Members before we are driven to adopt so severe a measure as this. Then, in the second place, we are waiting for the decision of the Committee on Procedure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) wishes to carry the matter still further, because he wishes to leave it in your hands to classify the Questions.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I proposed that it should be referred to the Committee on Procedure.

Mr. SEXTON: I apprehend that all Questions of this nature should form part of the subject referred to the Committee; and the right hon. Gentleman is, I believe, to be a Member of the Committee which it is proposed to nominate to-night. Therefore, it is hardly fair that he should take upon himself to anticipate the work of a Committee of which he is to be a Member. There are to be 33 Members of that Committee, and I trust that this, as well as all other questions in regard to the Procedure of the House, will be left to it, and that the House will not be placed in the absurd position of arriving at a conclusion which may turn out to be contrary to that which the Committee may adopt.

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick): I dissent altogether from the views of the hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton); and I should be glad, if I were in Order, to move an addition to the Motion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Epping Division of Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson), to the effect that the Standing Order should not only extend to such Questions as he suggests, but that Mr. Speaker should be authorized, or a Committee should be appointed, with authority to distinguish between Questions that are local and Questions that are Imperial, and that local Questions which could be answered very much better by the Department should be answered by the Department, either by communication or letter from the Minister in charge of the Department, whereas Imperial Questions should be answered by Ministers in the House. Many of my constituents write to me on matters of local interest, and I have always found, on going to the Department, that I could get a much better answer than I should have got if I had put the Question to a Minister in this House. I also find that the answer obtained in this way did not take up more time than the preparation of a Parliamentary answer; but there was a considerable amount of practical convenience gained both in the information supplied to my constituents, and in saving the time of the House by preventing unnecessary Questions from being put to Ministers. I think, therefore, there ought to be some means of distinguishing between local and Imperial Questions, so that local Questions might be answered by the Department and Imperial Questions in the House of Commons. We have had since the new Parliament assembled some 60, 70, and even 80 Questions asked of the Government in the course of a single day. But how many of them are Imperial Questions? The bulk of them are local Questions, which would be much more satisfactorily answered by the Department. The suggestion I would make is that a Committee should be appointed to consider what Questions should be put in the House from day to day, and to distinguish and divide them between Imperial and local Questions. Then I think that the Standing Order proposed by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Epping Division of Essex would do much to stop the plague of Questions now inflicted upon us. In olden times there used to be a deluge of Questions before Easter and Whitsuntide; but that was accounted for by the fact that hon. Members were about to leave town for the holidays; but the deluge now begins from the commencement of the Session. I think that such a Committee as that which I have suggested would do a great deal to stop the evil, and to give the House more control over its Business. And there are other matters which may be usefully referred to this Committee—for instance, the question of balloting for precedence in regard to Motions. I might say a good deal about that, for it is a practice which is, undoubtedly, liable to great abuse. In a local paper I happened to read the other day, it was asserted that certain hon. Members had combined together in order to avail themselves of the ballot in favour of a particular Motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is travelling away from the Motion before the House. The Motion is—

> "That Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them vivâ voce in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained."

The hon. Member will see that that Resolution has nothing to do with the question of balloting for priority.

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR: Well, Sir, I feel that I was on the border land, and almost beyond the limits of the debate before the House, and I bow at once to your decision; but I hope the House will consider the feasibility of the proposal I have made—that there should be some means whereby the Questions should be divided into Imperial and local Questions. I hope the Select Committee on Procedure will take up the subject, and consider it with the view of making some provision with regard to it.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): I cannot concur with the speech of my hon. Friend who has just sat down, because there must be a great difficulty at all times in determining what is an Imperial and what is a local Question. For instance, only yesterday there was a Question on the Paper which was of immense consequence to my constituency; but, at the same time, it might fairly be considered an Imperial Question. Nevertheless, that Question might have been put aside as a local Question if a Rule of this sort were adopted. I think, however, that this is an appropriate time for discussing the subject, because the Committee on Procedure is about to be appointed; and it would be prudent, I think, to enter into these questions so as to obviate any little difficulty that may hereafter arise. Therefore, I trust that I shall not be considered entirely out of Order in view of the importance of the question. I quite concur in the remarks which were made by my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen) that the Questions are becoming more numerous in consequence of the difficulty in procuring days for private Members. I have had for some time on the Paper of the House a Resolution upon which I propose to discuss the Rules of Procedure. That Resolution, in my humble opinion, would not only meet the point which has been raised to-night, but also many other important questions in connection with the Rules of Procedure. The effect of that Resolution is that no Questions of any kind should be put on the Paper for Mondays and Thursdays, unless declared by the Speaker to be of an urgent nature; and I would also propose that the House should commence its Business promptly at 4 o'clock on Mondays and Thursdays, without the interposition of Private Business.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is going away from the Question before the House.

MR. PULESTON: I bow, Sir, at once to your decision; but I thought it was a matter which was germane to the Resolution before the House. I will simply add that I quite concur, as far as it goes, with the expression of opinion conveyed in the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet; and I will only take this opportunity of expressing a hope that the question may be carried further, and that the Government may see their way to indicate to the Committee that the Motion I have on the Paper may be considered to be a practical solution of the difficulty.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.): I earnestly trust that if there is to be anything done in the matter it will not be in the direction pointed out by the hon. Member for the Partick Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Craig-Sellar).

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): There is a question, Sir, which I desire to put to you, as to what will be the effect of agreeing to the Resolution as it stands—whether, at Question time, any oral Question whatever can be put—as to the conduct of Business for example? It would appear to me that, if this Resolution be carried, no Question can be put, unless Notice of it has been given in writing beforehand.

MR. SPEAKER: As I read the Amendment upon the Paper, it refers to Notices of Questions intended to be asked at Question time on a future day; and, according to the strict interpretation of the Resolution, no oral Question could be put without Notice at Question time, unless with the consent of the Speaker.

MR. BRADLAUGH: The question I wish to put relates rather to a number of Questions, which are frequently asked, as to the conduct of the Business of the House for that particular night, and perhaps the following night. There would scarcely be an opportunity of consulting you, Sir, upon such questions.

MR. SPEAKER: In that case no Notice of the Question would have been given. That is how I understand the Amendment.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): Before we go to a division, there is a question which I should like to put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I understood him to suggest that the first branch of the Question should be omitted, and also that the last sentence should be left out. [SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): No!] It would be a moot point whether that ought not to be done, although I am not disposed myself to support the general proposition contained in the Amendment of my right hon. Friend (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson). I think there ought to be some liberty allowed in extreme and urgent cases for Questions which may spring up without Notice; and in the event of my right hon. Friend so framing the Amendment that it would permit all Questions of urgency to be put without Notice I shall support it.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I fancy that the right hon. Baronet who moved this Resolution cannot have given due consideration to all the circumstances of the case. I am am sure that he has given full consideration to the question of Procedure, and he is certainly one of the most painstaking Members of the House; but, as I read the Amendment, Notices of Questions are to be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, and it may mean that no Question whatever can be put unless Notice in writing is given of it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must state to the hon. Member that Questions without Notice are a different matter. The Amendment only relates to all Notices of Questions; and I understand the Amendment to apply simply to the giving Notice of Questions which it cannot be expected should receive an immediate answer which may be irregular in form, and may contain impeachments against individuals—Notices which would, undoubtedly, be rejected at the Table, but which are given orally, and appear in the Papers.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I object in the strongest manner to any decision being taken upon so important a question to-night. The whole question of our Rules of Procedure is about to be referred to one of the strongest and most experienced Committees ever appointed by this House. I understand that the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) is to be Chairman of the Committee, and that the Leader of the Opposition will be a Member of it. Surely such a Committee will be able to arrive at a satisfactory decision upon the whole matter, and this must necessarily be one of the questions discussed and decided by the Committee. I should be very sorry if the House were to come to a snatched and hurried conclusion upon the question now. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has intimated that he intends to make a proposal before the Procedure Committee which will fairly include the subject dealt with by the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet, as I am informed he intends to propose that a Committee should be appointed by Mr. Speaker for the purpose of classifying and controlling the Questions.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: That was one of the proposals contained in the Rules of Procedure submitted by the late Government at the opening of Parliament.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I understood the right hon. Baronet to repeat that proposal to-night. No doubt, it is one of the questions which must come before the Committee on Procedure. Then why enter into a small portion of a subject like this now when there is no actual necessity for doing so? I think that it would be grossly disrespectful to the Committee we are about to appoint if we were to pass this Resolution; and in order to give the House a better opportunity for consideration I will move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. T. P. O' Connor.*)

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I hope that the House will decide the question without an adjournment of the debate. Every hon. Member must have noticed the growth of the practice of giving verbal Notice of Questions containing matters of argument and controversy. Allow me to remind the House that although the Committee on Procedure is about to be appointed——

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question now before the House is the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): Before a division is taken, I hope the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington), who, I understand, is to be Chairman of the Committee on Procedure, will pardon me if I make an appeal to him on a small matter, and ask him simply to say whether it is right that this question should be decided before the Committee meet?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Question is that the debate be now adjourned.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, N.E., Rossendale): The question of who will be the Chairman of the Committee on Procedure will rest with the House itself. The question now before the House is an extremely small one, and I should have thought it possible for the House to arrive at a decision upon it. I am sorry that there should be any necessity for limiting in any degree the right of putting Questions in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must remind the noble Marquess that the Question now before the House is that the debate be now adjourned.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: All I wish to say is that the Question before the House appears to me to be an extremely small one, and I do not see that a sufficient reason has been given why the debate should be adjourned, or why the House should not decide upon the question at once.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 54; Noes 235: Majority 181.—(Div. List, No. 29.)

Words *added*.

Original Question put, and *negatived*.

Resolved, That Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them vivâ voce in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ARREARS OF RENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—MR. HENRY M'DOUGALL, AGENT OF THE GORMANSTOWN ESTATE, CO. MEATH.

RESOLUTION.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.), in rising to call attention to the case of Henry M'Dougall; and to move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of the Government to institute a prosecution of Mr. Henry M'Dougall, agent of the Gormanstown estate in the county of Meath, Ireland, who recovered money under the Arrears Act in a case in which no arrears were due, either under the section of the Arrears Act which is concerned with such cases, or for perjury,"

said: I feel it will be my duty to trespass on the time of the House for a short time for the purpose of drawing attention to the facts of this case. My principal object is to ascertain whether the administration of justice in Ireland is to be above suspicion, or whether it is to be merely used as an instrument of oppression in the hands of an unscrupulous agent. I believe I shall be able to show that the recovery of money by Mr. M'Dougall in this particular instance was a clear swindle, because no arrears were really due. The facts of the case are not in dispute. The Arrears Act of 1882 provided that before any arrears could be recovered certain formalities must be observed; and, among other things, it was enacted that both landlord and tenant should make an affidavit to the effect that certain arrears were due. The Act further provided that anyone making a false affidavit should be punishable, on conviction, with fine and imprisonment, and experience has shown that this provision was not unnecessary. Swindling of the description contemplated by the Act of 1882, in Section 7, has been discovered of recent years in several cases, and it is a remarkable fact that the criminal in every instance—at least, within my knowledge—has been among that class of persons who, in Ireland, are perpetually talking of the dishonesty of the Irish tenant, and the necessity of reforming the Irish laws. The discovery was first made in the case of Mr. Henry M'Dougall. M'Dougall, unfortunately, has had under his control upon the Gormanstown Estate, in the county of Meath, a considerable number of tenants. Some of those tenants, through the operation of the villainous system of rack-renting which has been carried on for so many years in Ireland, in order to screw out the interest on the debts of bankrupt landlords, naturally fell into arrears which they could never pay. Others, by the manful exercise of thrift, which the landed proprietors have never even pretended to commiserate, have continued to this day to pay the landlord up in full. But both of these classes were equally fish to the net of the landlords' agent. Whether a tenant owed rent, or arrears of rent, or not, Mr. M'Dougall, as I am informed and believe, made all of them inducements to swear that they owed rent; and, moreover, he himself swore that they were in arrear. One of these tenants happened to be a man named Francis Carolan, and he discovered the real nature of the act he was called upon to perform in the attempt of M'Dougall to obtain arrears of rent under the Arrears of Rent Act. He absolutely declined to be a party to the fraud, and having, in a striking manner, manifested his objection, he was brought, in an ostentatious manner, before a magistrate to make an affidavit that arrears of rent were due on his holding. But, in the presence of the magistrate and of other tenants, he declined to make such a declaration, on the ground that it was false. Even that does not seem to have prevented M'Dougall from getting the arrears he claimed from Francis Carolan. This, Sir, I think, is an astounding fact, which it is the duty of the Land Commission to inquire into and explain at once. M'Dougall got the money, and from the day on which he made the false affidavit—namely, the 9th of December, 1882, down to November, 1885—he never said a word or gave a hint that he had been guilty, not only of perjury, but of fraud the year before. But, in November last, the matter fell into the hands of my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance), who has the reputation in Dublin and throughout Ireland of being a man whom it is dangerous to attempt to deceive. The moment it came into the hands of my hon. Friend M'Dougall was detected, and he has himself supplied the best proof of his guilt by refunding the money which he had fraudulently obtained three years before. Having done so, he found it necessary to make some excuse, and the excuse he gave was that some clerk of his had omitted to make certain entries in the ledger. He also said he had several hundred cases to deal with, and that he had not had time to take the pains in the case which it would be necessary in ordinary cases to take; and he added that he made some sort of restitution to the tenant by crediting him with the omitted half-year's rent. It seems to me—and I think the House will agree with me—that the last point of M'Dougall's defence is no answer at all to the charge made against him. A common highwayman in this country would think it a very capital arrangement if, by refunding the money he had stolen, he could avoid a prosecution, and escape the consequences of his guilt. Now, as to the other points, I must confess—and I say it frankly—that if it were true that M'Dougall had carelessly and negligently performed his work for the benefit of the tenants, and had not really had time to examine into the matter, I would be inclined to let the matter pass, and say no more about it. I would attribute it to an act of ignorance on his part, and I should say that probably he intended to be honest, but in the multitude of business transactions he had not time to be so. But, Mr. Speaker, the point in this case is that before this man got the arrears of rent his attention was specially drawn to the facts by the action of the tenant to which I have already referred. I will read a very short extract from an affidavit which has been made in this case by Francis Carolan, the tenant. He says—

> "I further say that I was asked by the bailiff of the said Henry M'Dougall to attend before a magistrate for the purpose of obtaining money under the Arrears Act, and at the time I was not aware what the Arrears Act really meant; but when I discovered I had to swear there were arrears due I refused to do so, and walked away from the magistrate and the other tenants."

Now, surely that was an incident which ought to have weighed with M'Dougall—which ought to have made him pause and examine his books to see whether a mistake had been made by himself or anyone in his behalf. That is not all. Francis Carolan was the one tenant on all the estate who never owed any arrears. He was the one tenant whom M'Dougall could never have suspected to be in arrear. He had always paid his rent to the day; and even before M'Dougall had been warned by the action of Carolan himself he could not possibly have suspected that this tenant was in arrear. M'Dougall got the money from the Arrears Court, and, as I have already said, from the time he got the money, in December, 1882, down to last November, when he was brought to book by my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance), he never said one word, or gave one hint, that he had got the money under the Arrears Act. The whole circumstances seem to me to be totally inconsistent with the absence of criminal intent on the part of M'Dougall. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes), however, could not see anything wrong in the conduct of M'Dougall. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had a keen scent for "Boycotters" in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught; but he had neither nose nor eyes nor ears for the land shark and grabber of the Gormanstown estate. His counsel, Mr. Coll, was interviewed, but all to no purpose. All he would consent to do with regard to the charmingly innocent M'Dougall was to write to the Land Commissioners and request them to get him kindly to explain whether he had any explanation to offer. I have not great experience in this House. ["Hear, hear!"] Some of the hon. Gentlemen who cheer me ironically perhaps have quite as little; but I cannot help characterizing this conduct on the part af a Law Officer of the Crown as extraordinary. I imagine that this conduct will, in the eyes of the House, appear still more extraordinary when I read a letter which was addressed by my hon. Friend (Mr. Chance) to Mr. Coll, the Crown Solicitor of Dublin, and, of course, read and answered by the right hon. and learned Gentleman. This is the letter—

> "You will remember that some time ago I laid the papers in this matter before you with a view to a prosecution of M'Dougall. You then refused to prosecute, but asked my permission to lay the papers before the Land Commission. Subsequently you informed Mr. Friery that you did lay the papers before the Land Commission, and had not since received from them any instructions; and on your suggesting that M'Dougall had probably made some mistake, Mr. Friery undertook to give several cases in which M'Dougall received money for arrears when none were due, and that if you gave an undertaking not to prosecute the tenants who were deluded into making the joint affidavit that such arrears were due the information would be given you. No letter was received from you since, and on the 14th instant I wrote to the Land Commission to know what had been done; and, to my astonishment, I have received a letter, stating that, at the request of the Attorney General, M'Dougall was asked for an explanation, with the result that he refunded the money. I now require to know if it is the intention of the Attorney General to prosecute M'Dougall under the section in the Arrears Act which deals with such cases, or am I to assume that he declines to take any further proceedings in the matter?"

The letter is dated the 16th of January last, and it was answered by the right hon. and learned Gentleman—or, at least, by Mr. Coll—through the late Attorney General's direction, with an intimation that he saw no reason to change his previous opinions. Here was an offer which, I think the House will agree with me, ought to have set the Criminal Law in motion against M'Dougall. I hold in my hand now a list of 11 cases—and I beg the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) to the fact —in which I am informed there are receipts now in the office of my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny —receipts given in M'Dougall's own handwriting, and which receipts show that in every one of these 11 cases M'Dougall received money under the Arrears Act through fraud. I may mention that in one of these cases he received the money through the false oath of a man who was not a tenant at all; and that, in another case, he did not commit a fraud upon the Government, but upon the tenant. In order to get the money he was obliged to swear, in 1882, that all the arrears for 1881 were wiped out; whereas now I understand the hon. Member for South Kilkenny has in his office in Dublin a receipt from M'Dougall, bearing date February 23, 1883, for rent due in March, 1881. That is to say that, having got from the Government money on the representation—the false representation—that all the arrears in 1881 had been wiped out, he comes, two years afterwards, upon the unfortunate tenants for the very arrears which he had sworn had been wiped out. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General would not inquire into these matters; it would have been too disagreeable, I suppose, to M'Dougall, the Loyalist. I have every reason to say that hundreds of thousands of people in Ireland will believe that if M'Dougall had been a Nationalist tenant instead of a Loyalist land agent he would now be in gaol, instead of being allowed to roam through the country committing crime and outrage by extracting infamous rack rents and burning the houses of victim tenants. I do not think anyone will be found to say it is a good thing to teach the Irish people that dissolute criminals may go free simply because they belong to the so-called loyal classes. The action of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General in this case seems to me to be little short—if it is at all short—of a public scandal. The administration of justice, marked by such incidents, is, in my opinion, more calculated —infinitely more calculated—to bring law in general in Ireland into contempt than any number of speeches which could have been made in the course of 12 months in opposition to the Executive Government. I assert, without any hesitation, that it is such incidents in the administration of justice in Ireland as these which have made Dublin Castle stink in the nostrils of the Irish people, and which have made law in Ireland and its instruments to be regarded, not with veneration or respect, but with disgust and indignation. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary to repair the omission of the late Attorney General for Ireland, and, by prosecuting M'Dougall, to prove that British law in Ireland has terrors not only for the poor and humble, but also for the rich and the high-placed, some of whom are to be numbered amongst the prime factors of crime and disorder in that country. I beg to move the Resolution which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of the Government to institute a prosecution of Mr. Henry M'Dougall, agent of the Gormanstown estate in the county of Meath, Ireland, who recovered money under the Arrears Act in a case in which no arrears were due, either under the section of the Arrears Act which is concerned with such cases, or for perjury."—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. HOLMES (Dublin University): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. Member who introduced this matter to the notice of the House has not merely made an attack upon Mr. M'Dougall, but has added to it a very strong and emphatic attack upon myself, I trust the House will allow me to say a few words before the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) interposes in the debate. I must ask for a certain amount of the indulgence of the House in reference to this matter, for the case of Mr. M'Dougall was one of many hundred cases that came before me during the seven months that I held Office; and it is very difficult for me at the present time, without having access to the official documents, to recollect all the facts and circumstances connected with it. At the same time, being reminded to a certain extent by what the hon. Member (Mr. Clancy) has said to-night, and being further reminded by an answer of the Chief Secretary on a former occasion, I think I can recollect sufficient, for my present purposes, of the case that was brought before me. Before I go further I desire to say that whoever Mr. M'Dougall be, or whatever his position in the country may be, I never heard of him either before this transaction or since this transaction, except in connection with this present proceeding. He has been referred to by the hon. Member who moved this Resolution as one of the loyal classes. Whether he be a Loyalist or a Nationalist I do not know, for I never heard his name before I heard it in connection with the proceedings to which reference has been made. That being so, I may call the attention of the House to the fact that under ordinary circumstances, where the Attorney General is called on to interpose in a prosecution, the person who has within his knowledge the facts of the case takes steps, either by summons or by warrant, to have the matter investigated before a magistrate, and to have information taken in the ordinary form. Under no circumstances does it become the duty of that Court to return the person so charged for trial if it thinks the case has not been sufficiently established. Well, in this particular instance it so happens that that step was not taken; but what did occur was that in the year 1885 there was brought before my notice in an informal manner certain transactions which occurred in 1882. Now, it appeared to me, on looking into the matter, that the charge was made against the man, not for receiving money himself, because I believe it is true that Mr. M'Dougall never put a single penny of the money in his own pocket, but for making certain statements by virtue of which his employer received a sum of £3 10*s.* or £3 15*s.*, and it occurred to me that under the circumstances it would be rather a harsh step, without further inquiry, to prosecute this gentleman. [" Oh, oh!"] I use the word gentleman in the way I use it in reference to any other person who is brought to my notice under similar circumstances. Well, inasmuch as the whole transaction had occurred in the Land Court, it seemed to me that the Land Commission was the tribunal which ought to investigate it. Accordingly, I got the Crown Solicitor, who transacts business for the Attorney General, to send the matter to the Land Commission for the purpose of having it investigated. Well, Sir, in due time I got a communication from the Land Commission, to the effect that this Mr. Henry M'Dougall was the agent, I believe, of Lord Gormanstown and other persons; that he had no less than 1,500 tenants in reference to whom applications were made under the Arrears Act; that the names of these tenants were set out in long schedules; and that upon Mr. M'Dougall's attention being called to this particular case he admitted he had made a mistake in putting the name of Carolan forward. It was explained that the payment by this particular tenant had not been posted up in the ledger by the clerk who at the time was in Mr. M'Dougall's employment. The explanation seemed to me satisfactory, and, under the circumstances, it struck me that after an interval of three years it would be a most extraordinary proceeding to institute a Government prosecution. Accordingly, I intimated that, having regard to the Report I had received, I saw no reason whatever for the Attorney General to intervene. But it was perfectly open to any person, no matter who he might be, to bring this man before the magistrates to have the matter fully investigated, and to have the adjudication of a tribunal upon it. A letter has been read by the hon. Member, written on a later occasion, in which the writer, the hon. Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance), said he would give instances of some other tenants who were in a similar position, provided an undertaking were given by the Crown Solicitor that the persons should not be prosecuted for joining in making a false affidavit. When that was brought to my notice, I gave the answer which I have given on every single occasion on which any suggestion of that kind was made to me during my term of Office—namely, I would make no terms whatever with any person who alleged he was party to a crime—I would make no terms whatever with him as regards the giving by him of any evidence upon the subject. If such a person chose to give evidence, well and good; but I would not be a party to making with him an antecedent agreement, a course which seemed to be most injurious to the administration of justice. Allowing that a mistake had been made in this case, which was one of 1,400 or 1,500 which had to be dealt with, it seemed to me not a case for a prosecution, at all events, without those preliminary investigations before a magistrate which are commonly made in such circumstances. I am very sorry I have been obliged to trouble the House with this explanation. Cases of this kind came before me frequently, and I assure the House that again and again I have interfered to prevent the prosecution of peasants in Ireland for perjury, because it appeared to me that the offences were committed in ignorance or in mistake; and exactly upon the same principle I acted in this particular case, without knowing anything at all about Mr. M'Dougall's antecedents.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I do not desire to trespass for any great length of time upon the attention of the House, although this is a case of very considerable importance. I do not think it is necessary for me to add anything to the very clear statement made by my hon. Friend the Member for the Northern Division of the County of Dublin (Mr. Clancy), who knows the details much better than I do. I know, however, the character which Mr. M'Dougall bears. I know what the people think of Mr. M'Dougall. [*Laughter.*] Mr. Speaker, I have noticed a most extraordinary inclination on the part of some hon. Members to laugh; but I put it to hon. Members opposite, is it, or is it not, a matter for importance, if people look upon a given man as a tyrant? It may be subject for laughter here, but it is not a subject for laughter in Ireland. I maintain that it is of the greatest importance in a case of this kind to know how the people of the country regard the man whose conduct is complained of. I listened with surprise and astonishment to the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes), that, though he has lived all his life in Ireland, he has never heard of Mr. M'Dougall. We all remember the recent occasion on which the right hon. and learned Gentleman, at a critical moment in a critical debate, forgot the date of a recent shocking murder. The right hon. and learned Gentleman seems to be able to forget anything that does not suit his purpose. Sir, it is an astonishing fact that any man who has lived in Ireland for any length of time, and more especially a man who has had to do with the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland, should never have heard of Mr. M'Dougall. I have heard frequently of the gentleman. I have nothing to do with the administration of the Criminal Law in Ireland; but I am in the habit of travelling about the country, and I regret to say that anybody who travels in certain districts in which this gentleman's sway extends is sure to hear from the people of his reputation. I recollect that when, on a very recent occasion, I was in the houses of some of the people who have the misfortune to live under M'Dougall, one man said to me with the greatest earnestness—"Is it true that M'Dougall is in the hands of the police?" If hon. Members had seen the delight pictured in that man's face, they would have easily understood the feeling of the people towards Mr. M'Dougall. The right hon. and learned Gentleman unconsciously let the cat out of the bag when he said it would have been a rather harsh step to prosecute a gentleman. What our friends asked him to do was not to prosecute this man for the sake of the amount—the £3 10*s*.or the £3 15*s*.—but to prosecute him because he had violated the law. The people believed that Henry M'Dougall had violated the law, and they believed, moreover, that the man could violate the law with impunity as long as such Gentlemen as the late Attorney General for Ireland were at the head of the Government; they believed that while the machinery of the law was put in motion against poor peasants this land agent could set the law at defiance. It was not a question whether M'Dougall gained £10, or £15, or £100 by this violation of the law; but it was whether he had knowingly committed the violation. If it could be shown, as we say it could, that he had wittingly and knowingly, not in this single case alone, but in 10 or 11 cases—indeed, we do not know in how many other cases out of the 1,500 with which he had to deal—broken the law, we cannot understand why the late Attorney General for Ireland should refuse to institute a prosecution. Let me say that I think it a strong argument in favour of there being a prosecution that there was this widespread feeling amongst the people that the man had broken the law. If he had made a mistake, he certainly ought not to have objected to a prosecution, because he would have had an opportunity of clearing his character. The right hon. and learned Gentleman wound up by saying, in a very impressive way, that he would make no terms whatever with the person who was ready to confess he was party to a crime. I am not sure that the right hon. and learned Gentleman has always carried out that principle. We know that the Irish Government are ever ready to make terms with such men, and that they are ever ready to put large money rewards into the hands of informers against the unfortunate tenantry. We find that now, when dealing with a gentleman, a totally new principle is introduced—they will not accept the evidence of a peasant against a gentleman; but they are quite ready to accept the evidence of a peasant against a peasant.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): It is not very easy for the Attorney General for Ireland, or for anyone who has been Attorney General, to surprise an Irish Member; and I confess that the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) did not surprise me when he said he did not know whether M'Dougall was called a Loyalist or not. We all know that Irish officials have so much work that they never stop to inquire what are the politics of any person against whom complaint may be made. I shall not dwell upon that point; but I must observe that the right hon. and learned Gentleman's plea that he has not been able to obtain exact information appears a lame and faltering one, in view of the fact that this Motion has been on the Paper a fortnight. Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman wish us to understand that the present occupants of Dublin Castle would have refused him access to official documents? We know that when once a man in Ireland finds his way to Dublin Castle he very easily finds his way to return to it at any time; and if the right hon. and learned Gentleman had really desired in the last fortnight to investigate the figures and facts of this case, I am sure his learned and courteous Successor would have afforded him every facility to do so. As a reason for not being acquainted with the facts of this case, the right hon. and learned Gentleman pleaded that he had had to deal with many cases of this kind. Why did he never prosecute in any of them?

MR. HOLMES: I did not say cases of this kind. I said I had to deal with several hundred cases; but the cases bore upon every branch of the Criminal Law.

MR. SEXTON: I suppose the rest of the cases had to do with Nationalists. The right hon. and learned Gentleman suggested that the complainants might have proceeded by way of summons. He knows very well that in Ireland, in cases of this kind, there must be initiative action by the Crown, or there would be no action at all; when the responsible officer stands up and says the Crown will take no action at all, that is equivalent to saying there would be no prosecution. Was there ever heard, in a deliberative Assembly, such an argument as that this swindler is not to be prosecuted because he did not put money into his own pocket? Are we to understand that fraud is to be condoned by the Law Officers of the Crown because the perpetrator of the fraud does not pocket the profit of it? Mr. M'Dougall was the agent, and did not pocket the rent; but will the right hon. and learned Gentleman deny that M'Dougall pocketed the poundage, or the percentage on the amount of the collection? But whether he did or not profit by the transaction makes no difference in the case. ["Oh, oh!"] Is it the view, then, of hon. Gentlemen who adorn the Benches above the Gangway, that a man may commit frauds with impunity provided he does not pocket the proceeds? Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to understand the plea that M'Dougall made a mistake. Francis Carolan, the tenant, refused to make an affidavit that he was in arrear; and, therefore, it is perfect nonsense to say M'Dougall confounded the case with any other. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland says he had a great many cases to deal with in the course of the seven months he was in Office, and that as he looked at the case through a telescope at Dublin Castle he had no opportunity of close examination. [*Cries of* "Order!"] There is nothing wrong in speaking about a telescope. My hon. Friend near me, the hon. Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance), who will, if necessary, enlighten the House on the subject, was the solicitor for the tenant in the case. He is here, and informs me that it was, practically, a contested case; that the tenant went into Court to prove his inability to pay his rent; and that the presumption was that Mr. M'Dougall must have closely examined the facts and figures of the case. M'Dougall was a party to a series of 11 affidavits, in some of which it was stated that arrears were due, so as to enable him to make a raid upon the public money. Some of the affidavits proved that arrears were satisfied up to the date the Act prescribed they should be satisfied; and as soon as the affidavits had served his purpose, Mr. M'Dougall turned round and proceeded against the tenants for the arrears he swore had been satisfied. Will anybody say that could have been a mistake? He first committed a fraud on the Government, and then turned round and collected the arrears from the tenant. Well, the late Attorney General for Ireland has given us an effective proof to-night of the hollowness of the code of morals which governs the proceedings of the Law Officers in Dublin Castle. He admits that evidence was tendered to him, evidence of the tenants—we say 11 tenants are ready to offer evidence against this man; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman is indignant at the idea of his making terms with persons who are parties to a crime. He considered that such terms with such people would prove injurious to the administration of justice. Now, I ask any Member in the House whether the administration of justice is more injured by the refusal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to bring these cases into Court, so that fraud may go unpunished, or by the acceptance of the evidence of one class of the criminal parties to secure the conviction and punishment of the other? I maintain it would be less injurious to the administration of justice that one class should be punished than that all the offenders should go unpunished. He will not accept the evidence of any person who has been a party to a crime. Why is there not the same rule applied when a gentleman, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman called Mr. M'Dougall, is concerned, as when a peasant is concerned? When there is a gentleman in the question, the Crown officials will take no steps; but when a peasant has been the accused party, what have they done? By day and by night Crown Solicitors have gone into the cells of the prisoners and induced them to turn Queen's evidence. We know that convictions have been procured by the acceptance of evidence of those who were tainted with crime. We know that men have been threatened with the penalty of the scaffold if they would not give evidence. If that is to be the rule with one class of criminals it ought to be the rule with all. Certainly, I think there never was a case in which Queen's evidence ought to have been more readily received and sought than the case which has been brought to the notice of the House tonight. It is a most instructive commentary upon the principles which have hitherto governed the administration of justice in Ireland, that only a very few days before the right hon. and learned Gentleman prepared the great speech in which he asserted that the ordinary law was not sufficient for the punishment of peasants he refused to put the ordinary law in force against what he calls a gentleman.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle): It was said in the early portion of this evening's proceedings that it was indispensable for hon. Gentlemen from Ireland to have the opportunity of bringing the affairs of their country from time to time before the attention of the House, and from that doctrine I do not now dissent. But I have felt, since the hon. Member (Mr. Clancy), who has made this Motion, began his speech, what I have often felt before in the House—that there is no place in the world less fitted to discharge the functions of a Court of Justice than the House of Commons. We have not all the facts before us, and we are not all, perhaps in so judicial or impartial a frame of mind as to enable us to arrive at a proper and just conclusion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) assumed that I should interpose in the debate; but I hardly see what part I have to take in it. The answer which I gave to the hon. Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance) on, I think, the 25th of last month, really summed up all I have to say on the subject. It was to the effect that if the hon. Gentleman has the material on which the Government could found a prosecution, it surely is his business to bring that material before the Attorney General (Mr. Walker). If it is so brought, I can promise, on behalf of the Irish Government and of the Attorney General, that it shall be considered. This invitation was addressed to the hon. Gentleman now more than a fortnight ago, and I do not quite see why he should have taken the course of bringing the subject before the House in this form, instead of bringing it before the notice of the Law Officers.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I think the right hon. Gentleman is labouring under some misapprehension. I did not ask any Question on this question, and I got no answer.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I ought to have said the hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy). Upon the information at present before the Government there does not appear to be evidence of criminal intent on Mr. M'Dougall's part; but if a case can be made out the Attorney General for Ireland will consider it. That is the offer I made the other day, and by that offer I still abide.

Mr. CHANCE: The right. hon Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) commenced his speech by saying that there was no place less fitted to discharge the functions of a Court of Justice than the House of Commons. I think there is one place less fitted, and that is Dublin Castle. I was rather surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that there was no evidence of a criminal intent on the part of Mr. M'Dougall. It seems to me that he would not have made such an observation if there had been any Law Officers on the Treasury Bench. I should say that if a person stole a watch from the right hon. Gentleman the

Crown officials would not pause before arresting him. There would be no suggestion of an inquiry as to the existence of a criminal intent. In this case it has been admitted, not only by the late Law Officers, but by Mr. M'Dougall himself, that the money was obtained, and that he had no right to obtain the money. Is it not a question for a jury whether there was any criminal intent on his part? I think it is. Moreover, I think a jury would be more fitted to ascertain whether or not there was any criminal intent on the part of Mr. M'Dougall than the Law Officers of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to withdraw my Amendment. I will take care that the information in the case is laid before the Government.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Supply—Committee *deferred* till *Monday* next.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 10.]

(*Mr. Mayne, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Sexton, Mr Sheehy.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title).

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): Mr. Courtney, I beg to move that you do report Progress. I think, considering the importance of the measure, and having regard to the number of Amendments on the Paper, it would be well if the Government were to see their way to afford an opportunity of bringing this Bill on at an hour when we can properly discuss it. There is no hostility on this side of the House to the principle of some of the Amendments, or to the principle of the measure; but we feel that it deals with some questions which will certainly raise a prolonged discussion, and one which we cannot hope to finish at this late hour of the night. I am sure we shall all be glad if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) will undertake to use his influence with Her Majesty's Government to induce them to give some facilities for the consideration of the Bill at a reasonable hour—say, not later than 12 o'clock. I have no wish that the Bill should be postponed *sine die;* but I feel that if it be pushed on at this hour of the night the result cannot be satisfactory either to those who support it, or to those who have Amendments to propose.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle): I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Brodrick) that there are a great number of important Amendments on the Paper, and that this is rather a late hour to bring on the discussion. No doubt the discussion will occupy a very considerable time; therefore, so far as the Government are concerned, we are quite willing to acquiesce in the postponement of the debate. At the present moment it is impossible for me to name a day when the discussion can be resumed; but I think I can promise, on behalf of the Government, that we will do our best to find an occasion on which the Bill can be suitably considered. Of course, I cannot promise that it will be made the first Order; but it shall be brought on at a comparatively early hour.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I think it is well I should say that the Irish Members strongly object to the adjournment of the debate. We sat here for hours last night, through the debate upon the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill—sat here until 2 o'clock this morning—in the hope that this Bill might be taken. I am bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) also sat here with great patience and self-denial. The hour became too late to take the Bill; but it is now an hour earlier. I regret the Motion made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Guildford Division of Surrey (Mr. Brodrick), for I can see no reason for it. I ask the Committee to remember that the second reading of this Bill was passed without a division. There was almost perfect unanimity. The hon. Gentleman himself admits there was unanimity of opinion concerning it, and how he reconciles that admission with the belief that there will be a prolonged discussion upon the clauses is more than I can fathom. Besides, his interest appears to be new-born, because the solitary Amendment on the Paper in his name only appeared this morning. I trust the Committee will consent to take the Bill now. Later in the Session we shall, no doubt, have matters of the greatest importance to occupy our attention.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton) must recollect that it is quite possible to assent to the second reading of a Bill, and yet feel that the Bill requires very long and careful discussion in Committee. One of the proposals of the late Government with regard to the Business of the House—a proposal which it is understood the present Government are prepared to consider very favourably—was that all contested Business should cease at 12 o'clock. I do not think it is at all reasonable to commence this important Business at 1 o'clock in the morning. Hon. Gentlemen must recollect that, after all, this Bill has in its progress up to the present time been singularly fortunate. It has been read a second time, and the Session is still young. It has reached a stage when it is impossible to block it; and therefore, if the adjournment is carried, I cannot see that there will be any difficulty in bringing on the discussion at an early date. Hon. Gentlemen have the pledge of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) that the Government will do their very best to bring the Bill on at a reasonable hour; and, that being so, I hope no objection will be raised on the part of hon. Members from Ireland to the Motion to report Progress.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): If both Parties are agreed as to the desirability of an adjournment of the debate the Government will offer no opposition. At the same time, as we are not able to hold out any definite prospect of the renewal of the discussion, I think the Committee might go on for another hour, and see how it gets on. I hope hon. Members below the Gangway will not press the Bill on to any undue extent.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot believe that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt) was in the House when the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) spoke. We heard nothing from the Chief Secretary of these alternatives; we heard nothing of these precedent conditions to the acceptance of the Motion for Adjournment. We understood the Chief Secretary was prepared, on behalf of the Government, to agree to the Motion to report Progress, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not recede from the position he so categorically took up.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I spoke after consultation with my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I had a Notice on the Paper for a Return, but it was blocked by the hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton). I shall certainly insist upon dividing on the Motion to report Progress.

Viscount CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) seems to be very fond of throwing over his Colleagues. Early in the Session, upon the Employers' Liability Bill, he stepped in exactly as he has done to night, and reversed what a subordinate Member of the Government had announced.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: There are no subordinate Members of the Government.

Viscount CRANBORNE: That makes matters all the worse. The Chief Secretary for Ireland announced his assent to the Motion to report Progress; but down came the Chancellor of the Exchequer, threw over his Colleague, and seemed surprised that we find fault with him for behaving in such a manner.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I have only one remark to make. I think the statement just made by the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) is one of the most extraordinary I ever heard. We heard the other day a speech from the hon. Gentleman in favour of the Labourers' Act, and now we find that because a Return of his is blocked by the hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton), he is going to take revenge by going to a division, and by destroying, perhaps, the only chance which we may have this Session of passing the Bill. If the hon. Member thinks he is going to pose before the labourers of Ulster as their friend, and then blocks this Bill, the labourers of Ulster will know of it.

MR. BRODRICK: I regret the species of intimidation which is practised by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. The Committee have every right to discuss this question in the interests of this country, as well as of Ireland, at a proper time of night; and this lifting of a sword, so to speak, over the heads of hon. Members from Ulster, is one of the most monstrous attempts to intimidate this Committee that can be made. I really must be allowed to say a word as to the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt). We are quite familiar with the system which the present Government pursue. One of them enters into an arrangement, and then another comes forward and breaks it up. When the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) has pledged the Government to use their exertions to bring this Bill on at a reasonable hour, and when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was not present——[Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I was present.] Then I am still more surprised at the utter disrespect he has shown for his own Colleague. We really do expect that the right hon. Gentleman will show some degree of respect for the undertakings which have been arrived at. Here we are, not one word of hostility to the measure having been said up to the present; but I must point out that if the Motion to report Progress is made the occasion for a long and angry discussion, the only effect will be that every Irish Bill from now to the end of the Session will be blocked the very moment it is put on the Paper. We have foregone the right which we might have exercised, had we been desirous of doing so, of blocking this Bill. Under these circumstances, and considering the good feeling shown by the Committee upon the subject, I do hope the Chancellor of the Exchequer will reconsider his demand. His refusal will only lead to a protracted discussion on the question of postponement, which may occupy the whole of the time he proposes to give to-night to the consideration of the measure.

MR. HOLMES (Dublin University): I wish to appeal to hon. Members below the Gangway not to press this Bill forward to-night. I laboured as hard as anyone in the House last Session in regard to this subject, and I regard the present measure as containing some very valuable improvements of the Labourers' Acts; but, on the other hand, I think that some of its provisions require very deliberate discussion. I would, therefore, suggest that, as it is now 1 o'clock, and as the discussion of the clauses of the Bill will take some hours, we should be allowed to report Progress. If hon. Members go on now, they may not have concluded their labours by 5 o'clock in the morning; and I do not think they will desire to adopt such a course as that on the present occasion. We have the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) that he will bring the Bill on upon a Government night, and I will promise hon. Members every assistance in my power towards bringing it on at an early hour. It would be unreasonable, under the circumstances, to insist upon the Committee continuing at this hour. I am anxious that this matter should be fully and freely discussed; but I think this is not the hour to discuss it.

MR. JOHNS (Warwick, Nuneaton): I trust that the Committee will excuse me for rising to discuss this matter——

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): The hon. Member must confine his remarks to the Question that I now report Progress.

MR. SEXTON: It appears to me that the majority of the Committee want to go on. No one has spoken against continuing, except the son of an Irish landlord who is hostile to the Bill altogether. I have to thank the right hon. and learned Member the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) for his support; but I cannot understand how it is that he is willing to go on at 2 o'clock in the morning on some other occasion, but is unwilling to go on at 1 o'clock this morning.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): It appears to me that it is unreasonable to us to go on to-night. This Bill affects the interests of a large class of Irishmen whom we represent, and therefore we wish to have an opportunity of airing their grievances before the Committee. I do not mind the hour; but I do not think we can fairly ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to keep a House to discuss this matter at such an hour. I think, however, that we might expect the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) to be a little more explicit in his promise as to bringing the Bill on on a future occasion. The clauses will not take long to discuss if the Government can find a night; and, for my part, I am only too anxious that the matter should be threshed out without delay. If the hon. Member for the Guildford Division of Surrey (Mr. Brodrick) wishes to put obstacles in the way of the Bill being discussed, all I can say is that the Ulster Members are perfectly prepared to discuss it at any time, although we prefer that it should come on at an earlier hour.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* —Ayes 75; Noes 132: Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 30.)

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Construction of Act).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston): I think really that we have reached an hour at which it is desirable that we should report Progress. I do not think that there is any objection to the taking of the clause which has been proposed; but I think that we are now arriving at that part of the Bill which deserves considerable discussion. I, therefore, beg to move that you do report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) intimated that, after having taken the sense of the Committee, he and his Friends would not now oppose the Motion.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): The Committee knows perfectly well that if a certain number of hon. Members in this Committee insist upon continuing to repeat Motions for the adjournment at 20 minutes to 1 o'clock, it is simply wasting the time of the House to resist them. Already more than half-an-hour has been wasted which might have been devoted to transacting the Business of the country; and, therefore, I cannot recommend the Committee to waste their time in discussing Motion after Motion of this character.

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): The waste of time has been wholly due to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself. In deference to his usual Friends below the Gangway here, he chooses to throw over his own Colleague, and the result is that he finds hon. Members are not inclined to submit to such a course. Besides, it appears from the division just taken that we are in no less a minority than we usually are; and, therefore, we have a right to ask that this Bill shall not be proceeded with at this late hour. The waste of time is solely due to the attitude of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and I must say that, if this is a sample of the waste of time which is to go on as long as the right hon. Gentleman remains in charge of the Business of this House, the result is likely to be serious. I think that hon. Members from Ireland will do well to enter into communication with the Government as to bringing on this measure at a proper time; and, in the meantime, I beg to support the Motion that you, Sir, report Progress.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): All I am desirous of pointing out is what the real nature of the proceedings we are now witnessing is. This Bill is one on which there was never any intention to hold much discussion. There is no argument at all before the Committee why we should not have gone on doing what we could until 2 o'clock. So far as I can observe, even amongst the hon. Members returned from Ulster, a large section are opposed to this obstruction—for that is the only name it can be called by. In point of fact, it is really worth observation that of the Members from Ireland there are not above three who are not willing and anxious to go on with this Bill. It is perfectly absurd to make observations about difference of opinion between the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We know what that difference of opinion is. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who has always shown an anxiety to meet the views of the Irish Members—["Hear, hear!"] English Members cheer that in an ironical manner; but I do not think it is any disgrace for an Irish Chief Secretary to attempt to please the people of Ireland. At any rate, I do not think that the present Chief Secretary will think it a disgrace. The right hon. Gentleman is always considerate; but I think he has stated what is somewhat beyond his powers. He is not the Leader of the House of Commons. He said he would endeavour to bring on this Bill on some future day at an early hour. Then, probably, after consulting with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he came to the conclusion that it would be outside his power to do this—or, at any rate, that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and that we had better go on with the Amendments as quickly as we can. What happens? Why, an English Member who has no real standing at all in this matter—for the Bill does not apply to either England, Scotland, or Wales—a Member who has no standing in the matter, except one that we thoroughly understand, who sits here to represent not his constituents, but his class in Ireland, comes forward to do what that class has systematically done, not only here but in Ireland—namely, obstruct measures intended for the benefit of that country. It is merely for the sake of pointing out the nature of this obstruction that I have said these few words.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I wish to say one word with regard to my statement assenting to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite. I assumed—and I had reason for assuming—that the hon. Gentleman had understood from Irish Members that the adjournment would not be disagreeable to them. That being the case, I said Her Majesty's Government would accept the adjournment. I said more, and I repeat it now—namely, that if an adjournment takes place, Her Majesty's Government will do their best to bring the Bill on on an early day and at as early an hour as possible. It might have to be a late hour; but it would, at any rate, be the earliest hour possible.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): I hope the few words that have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman will have thrown a calming influence over the Committee. I think the Leader of the House indulged in a very superfluous attack upon us on this side of the House when he said that we desired to obstruct the Business of the House. [Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I did not say so.] I was amused when I heard the Irish Members describe a Motion for the adjournment of the House at half-past 1 in the morning, as "Obstruction."

MR. DILLON: I said, obstruction of particular measures.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Obstruction of particular measures is, of course, obstruction. I would make this proposition to the Committee—that we should proceed with the Bill until we have disposed of Clause 2, and that we should then stop before we come to controversial matter. That, combined with the promise of the Government that they will find a day when this Bill can be brought on at a reasonable hour, ought to satisfy hon. Gentlemen that there is no desire to obstruct the Bill.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): It is useless for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to persist in the face of so many Gentlemen opposed to proceeding with this Bill to-night. It is useless, also, I think, to characterize what has taken place. Every Member of the House must have his opinion of it, and will not need any statement from me to educate him. Here is a Bill that is one of urgency in Ireland, because it deals with matters which are taking place every day there. It affects the homes and the welfare of the labouring population of Ireland; therefore the vast majority of Irish Members are anxious to go on with it. If we are compelled to submit to-night—no; not compelled, for they are not strong enough to compel us—but if we do submit, I trust the Government will find us such reasonable opportunity of dealing with the Bill some other night as will place us beyond the reach of such an attack as has now been made.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am not sufficiently well aware of the engagements for next week to be able to fix a particular day. I can only say that we will endeavour to carry out the undertaking of my right hon. Friend (Mr. John Morley) as well as we can. I cannot go further than that at present.

MR. SEXTON: Then we will pass Clause 2.

MR. TOMLINSON: Under the circumstances I withdraw the Motion to report Progress.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Amendment of 46 & 47 Vict., c. 60, s. 5, as to certificate of sanitary offices).

Motion made, and Question, "That Clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Johnston*,) put and *agreed to*.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

——o——

INFANTS BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. FIRST READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill relating to the guardianship and custody of infants. I may explain that the object of the measure is to give mothers a voice in the guardianship and custody of their children. The Bill was discussed at considerable length in the House of Lords last Session, and passed that House.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): May I ask if this is the same Bill as that which was before the House last year?

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: Yes.

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, The LORD ADVOCATE, Mr. Secretary CHILDERS, and Mr. BRYCE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 139.]

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE,

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedure do consist of Thirty-three Members."

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): I do not rise to object to the nomination of this Committee. It is an admirable Committee in many ways; but I should like to point out that it consists almost entirely of one section of the House—that is to say, Gentlemen in Office, who have been in Office, or who wish to be in Office. These are all admirable men, no doubt; but it seems to me that there is an entire want of commercial men on the Committee. I should like to know why the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) is not upon the Committee? This inquiry will not only affect the Procedure of the House; but it will also have to do with the arrangements of the House. It is contemplated to make an alteration in the Kitchen arrangements, and I think, therefore, that some private Members might have been appointed to take part in the investigation. There are Members who devote themselves to the Business of the House, and others who spend a great deal of time in other avocations, and these, amongst whom are not a few connected with the Legal Profession, should, I think, have been allowed some voice in this matter. Although, no doubt, the Report of this Committee will carry great weight, we must feel that the body is composed almost entirely of one section, and private Members will have a right to criticize the Report in many respects. If the Committee reports in the sense indicated by the Resolutions of my right hon. Friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), I shall reserve freedom to myself to oppose those propositions when they come before the House.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): I would observe that it is useless to appoint a Committee on such an important subject as this, unless it is thoroughly representative. It is always usual in cases of this kind to appoint upon the Committee some of those who have paid special attention to the subject in hand, and who are interested in it. I entirely concur in the remarks of the hon. Baronet who has just sat down. I think it would not be at all satisfactory to confine this Committee to hon. Members who will not have the entire confidence of the House. If you do that, your action will only lead to unnecessary discussion, which might be avoided by making the Committee thoroughly representative.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I am sorry that there is no Ulster Representative of the Conservative Party on the Committee. We are a small Party, no doubt, but we represent a large interest and should have a voice on this Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedure do consist of Thirty-three Members:—The Committee was accordingly nominated of:—Marquess of HARTINGTON, Sir WALTER BARTTELOT, Sir ARTHUR BASS, Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH, Mr. BRIGHT, Dr. CAMERON, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. DILLWYN, Mr. DUFF, Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE, Sir JAMES FERGUSSON, Sir JOHN GORST, Mr. GOSCHEN, Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, Mr. T. M. HEALY, Mr. HOLMES, Mr. ILLINGWORTH, Mr. LEAKE, Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY, Sir JOHN MOWBRAY, Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, Sir RICHARD PAGET, Mr. RAIKES, Mr. RYLANDS, Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH, Mr. CRAIG SELLAR, Mr. SEXTON, Mr. WILLIAM HENRY SMITH, Mr. STANHOPE, Sir HUSSEY VIVIAN, Mr. WHITBREAD, and Mr. WHITLEY, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Nine be the quorum.—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

SUPPLY—REPORT.

Resolutions [11th March] *reported.*

First Two Resolutions *agreed to.*

Third Resolution *postponed.*

Subsequent Resolution *agreed to.*

Postponed Resolution to be considered upon *Thursday* next.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (PROVINCIAL SITTINGS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Whitley, Bill to provide for Provincial Sittings of the High Court of Justice in certain populous places, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Whitley, Mr. Forwood, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Hutton, Lord Claud J. Hamilton, Mr. Mather, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Agnew, Mr. Powell Williams, and Mr. E. R. Russell.

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 15*th March,* 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Continuance * (31).

Royal Assent—Freshwater Fisheries (Eels) [49 *Vict.* c. 2].

DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS.

RESOLUTION.

LORD **STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL**, in rising to call attention to the Report of Mr. Childers's Committee, and to move—

> "That in the opinion of this House responsibility for the unfortunate occurrences of 8th February devolves on Her Majesty's Government collectively and not on any single branch of the executive,"

said: My Lords, I offer an apology to the House for not having appeared a week ago upon this Notice. In times like these, we ought no doubt to be superior to ailments; but those which affect the voice must often render men incapable of speaking. Whatever may be thought of any Motion now submitted, it will be granted that some further reference to the disturbances on the 8th of February was inevitable. The discussion which arose on the 18th of February, although neither uncalled for nor uninteresting, took place when no question was before the House, when no document existed, and when scenes of violence and pillage were too recent to admit of cool examination, accurate reflection, or practical conclusion on the incident which led to them. In the other House of Parliament there has been a more regular debate, although it turned upon a rather fanciful proposal to hand the Metropolitan Police over to a control which is not in existence. Now, the proper object is to ascertain responsibility for what occurred upon the 8th of February, and thus to guard against a similar calamity. Beyond the alarm which is created among the middle classes, beyond the obvious blow to capital and commerce, beyond the manifest encouragement of tumult in the Provinces, it has been mischievous abroad, by leading foreign countries to look upon Great Britain as a State too much divided in itself, and too much on the verge of change, or even of convulsion, to be powerful. The event, of course, is magnified by distance, and we may know a great deal better. I will now inquire into the lesson which the Blue Book seems to furnish. That lesson is, that the unfortunate occurrence with which all present are familiar may be traced to the collision of two bodies in Trafalgar Square. Without one, there would not have been the animus of riot. Without the other, there would not have been the numbers to create it. It is clear, in the first page, and also from the evidence of Colonel Henderson, that the Government were fully warned as to the prospect. Indeed, it appeared in the public papers on the 5th of February that the Social Democrats had resolved upon assailing the platforms of the working men out of employment. The working men explained it to the authorities. It rested with the Government to secure the absence of one body or the other. There is an Act of Parliament, the 57 *Geo.* III. c. 19, s. 23, by which their interference would, at least, have been supported. If the Act of Parliament was doubtful—it does occasionally happen—the Common Law would have sufficed. It has been explained by Mr. Justice Holroyd, that assemblies formed to excite terror and use force—and such was the assembly of the Social Democrats—may be regarded as illegal. I do not dwell upon that part of the subject, as, after the hour of appeals, your Lordships will not like to sit judicially any more than the House of Commons is fond of being in *Nisi Prius*. If the Common Law was otherwise interpreted it was still open to the Government, as guardians of the public safety, to exceed the law, and gain a subsequent indemnity. There is no course more justified by precedent, or open to a statesman. During the whole of the last century, to relieve Dissenters year by year, it was resorted to. It was resorted to by the great Lord Chatham, in his second Government, to provide against a scarcity. In our age it has been employed in memorable instances—as regards the Bank Charter Act of 1844—with a view to avert commercial panics or to mitigate them. But still the end was otherwise attainable. From the complexion it has reached, the members it embodies, the influence of Her Majesty's Government over the Social Democrats is far from inconsiderable. A grave expression of opinion thrown into a message would have very possibly succeeded. But if the Social Democrats, in spite of such advances from a genial quarter, were inexorable, another plan was open. The unemployed labourers, who had communicated with the Government, who had evinced their deference and loyalty, might have been warned that, by appearing at Trafalgar Square that day, they would do worse than nothing for their admirable object. It ought here to be added that the necessity of averting the collision of adverse bodies on a given area has long been recognized officially and acted on. Some years ago, when Lord Palmerston was First Minister, the partizans of Garibaldi, who were English, and his opponents, who were Irish, proposed to meet in Hyde Park at the same moment, and were prohibited by Mr. William Cowper, who was at the Board of Works and did not wish Italian campaigns to be repeated or rehearsed upon the Serpentine. But, much more recently, Lord Spencer has acted on that principle in Ireland, and averted the collision of Orangemen and Nationalists. There was nothing startling or original in the preventive course which might have been adopted. The unavoidable arraignment therefore is, that the Government foresaw the peril and declined to avert it. The defence of Colonel Henderson may be that no efforts of the Metropolitan Police can guard against the movements which arise when hostile bodies have encountered one another. The defence of Mr. Childers may be even more plausible—that he was wholly unaccustomed to the Home Office. The Government collectively have no defence whatever. To them belongs the origin of the disturbance. With a large choice of measures, with ample power to avert, they deemed it wiser to permit it. I do not mean that they are all equally responsible. Far from it. The great responsibility belongs to the First Minister, on grounds which easily present themselves. The First Minister appoints the Secretary of State for the Home Department; and, therefore, if that Secretary of State is inefficient, the First Minister is culpable and guilty. Who asked the right hon. Gentleman to send Mr. Childers to the Home Office? The General Election did not designate him for the function. The public did not clamour for that particular appointment. It had not ocurred to speculation or to rumour. It cannot be made out that Mr. Parnell and his followers demanded it. It was not exacted at St. Petersburg. The electors of Mid Lothian did not urge it, nor those of Edinburgh either. A Secretary of State was chosen with no experience whatever of the Department he approached, with no knowledge of the Metropolitan Constabulary, no habit of consulting their authorities. The action was more violent; because another Colleague, as the House is well aware, had been at the Home Office for five years, had long directed the police; and, however moderate his talents for administrative business—I offer no opinion of them—must have been more qualified to deal with an emergency of this kind than a stranger. He had been hardened by a course of dynamite explosions. But let us grant that Mr. Childers was inevitable. He was, perhaps, upon one principle the First Minister has frequently applied. It is that men ought to be appointed to an Office, not to exercise the faculty and knowledge they possess, but to acquire the faculty and knowledge in which they are notoriously wanting. On that principle we have before remarked a great commercial statesman, thoroughly devoid of military science, chosen to preside over the War Office, and to re-organize an Army. There are many other illustrations of it which might come back to your Lordships. It renders Whitehall a political academy, not to employ the talent, but to remedy the ignorance of placemen; a genial school in which the education of the man is purchased by the ruin of the Empire. Let it be granted then that Mr. Childers was inevitable. He might otherwise have died before he grasped the elements of street fighting, in which we may be sure that now his progress is amazing. The First Minister had been installed in Office for a week, and had no call to go away for re-election. Under these circumstances, a portion of the Government being scattered, and the rest of it being inchoate, be became the proper guardian of the country in every Department which was vacant. Such was the position of the Duke of Wellington at the close of 1834, when Sir Robert Peel was absent. But there is no occasion to insist on that particular example. It is on record that the Admiralty referred to Mr. Pitt, without scruple, in the middle of the night, when naval difficulties happened. Lord Palmerston, as First Minister—I learnt it from Mr. Hermann Merivale, the permanent official—transacted the business of the Colonial Office in 1855, when Lord John Russell, who was then Colonial Secretary, went upon a mission to Vienna. It was the duty of the First Minister, who had just forced himself on Downing Street by an extraordinary method, to sustain the burden of the Home Office until his fancifully chosen nominee was ready to endure it. The Attorney General was in London, ready with his legal knowledge to assist him. No one was better placed than the First Minister for pointing out to Colonel Henderson that the line of the Clubs was the special line to be defended. He could hardly have forgotten the inflammatory language in which, not long ago, he had referred to them as "temples of luxury and ease," and held them up, although not meaning it at all, to the resentment of the people. However, those who do not think it proper to identify the First Minister with such a wide responsibility as usually devolves upon him, who would confine his function to the Treasury, leave every Department to itself, and give him no control over subordinates, will approve of the word collectively being brought into the Motion. Even among those who are acquainted well with the political machine, there may be differences as to where reproach ought to direct itself. But all intelligent society concurs in thinking it a scandal that Colonel Henderson should be the only mark for retribution, that everywhere else impunity should reign, that everywhere else official wealth, official rank should be accumulated. Such is the proposal of the Government. Such is the proposal which the House is asked to counteract or modify this evening. My Lords, it is not irrelevant, it is indeed essential, to look back to a few instances of riot and commotion successfully or unsuccessfully encountered, and see whether the praise or blame was fixed upon the head of the Constabulary. In 1866, soon after the late Lord Derby began his third Administration, there was a signal triumph of disorder. A large mass succeeded in occupying Hyde Park, against the wishes and the proclamation of the Government. The police having undoubtedly been worsted, the arrangements having certainly been vicious, the whole blame might have fallen on them. Such was not the language in either House of Parliament. The attack was copiously directed against the Home Office and the Government. The Secretary of State resigned—I think it was an error upon his part. But it never occurred to anyone to make the predecessor of Colonel Henderson a scapegoat. In connection with this topic there is something to be particularly noted. The Metropolitan Police had been far more decidedly frustrated than happened on the 8th of February. On that day in Oxford Street—and this ought always to be mentioned in behalf of Colonel Henderson—they did succeed at last in gaining an advantage to which our safety at this moment is attributable. In 1866 they thoroughly collapsed, and made way for the Military Forces. But still they did not bear, as now, the whole responsibility. In 1848, law and order were successfully maintained against a Chartist demonstration, when anarchy had been supreme in Paris, Berlin, and Vienna; when Thrones were scattered by a revolutionary hurricane; when all the world looked on to see whether the British capital would ride unharmed over the tempest. The praise was given to Sir George Grey, the Secretary of State, who organized the special constables, to the Duke of Wellington, who placed the troops, to Lord John Russell, who invoked his prudence and activity. According to the present doctrine, or at least according to its converse, the police ought all to have been knighted, and a Garter, if nothing else, bestowed on the Commissioner. What do we find on recurring to 1780, and to Lord George Gordon? The riots were much graver than the present ones. For many days, and not for a few hours, disorder was ascendant. Magistrates and constables were paralyzed. The King alone retained his self-possession. Newgate was invaded; a number of Dissenting chapels burnt; the mansion of the Lord Chief Justice pillaged; terror universal. Against whom did the language of public men direct itself? Against the Government collectively. You may see it in the speeches of Mr. Fox, Lord Shelburne, and others which remain to us. You may see it in the well-known and classical defence of Lord George Gordon, by the great forensic master of that period. No officer, who guided or misguided the police, was chosen to be at once a target and a shelter trench. My Lords, it may be asked, even by those who do not venture to dispute this line of reasoning, on what ground and with what aim should either House of Parliament declare itself? It is the only mode of guarding against such lapses for the future. There is much to lure or drag Administrations into tacit compact with disturbance. It may appear a necessary method to conciliate electors. It may be thought conducive to the objects which the Cabinet are aiming at. At least, it gratifies the love of ease, of compromise, and of inaction which, on the late occasion, was conspicuous. But these are speculative arguments. What did we observe in 1884? We saw the group which has now returned substantially to Office initiating or encouraging a vast assemblage, by which the routes to Parliament were blocked, by which Members of either House were driven or excluded from their places, which was directed towards Westminster beyond its proper route into Hyde Park, for no purpose but the purpose of impeding and intimidating. The right hon. Gentleman, and those whom he employs—however great their merits—are not to be depended on for the maintenance of order, or I should rather say of freedom, in the streets of the Metropolis. But Colonel Henderson has been removed. In his removal, where is the security for better conduct of the Government? What is it to the Government, if, once a-year or once a-month, you change the head of the police? His groans are heard with perfect equanimity. It is true the vigilance of that official may be improved by such a process. It is true the successor of Colonel Henderson may be unerring, irreproachable. But he can never give the orders to prevent a conflict of opinion in Trafalgar Square. A step of that kind must depend upon the Government. He can only parry or resist the violence it leads to. He can only battle with the evil which a capable and honourable Government would not have suffered to present itself. Some think it useless for your Lordships to pass a Motion of this kind, unless the other House concurs in it. Governments are not of that opinion, since, when they are exposed to censure in the House of Lords, they regularly try to counteract it in the other. It was seen in 1850, in 1864, and even in the last Session. It is not obviously desirable that both Houses should concur in a Resolution of this character. The half is sometimes better than the whole, according to an old Greek proverb. If both Houses united, a Dissolution might be hurried, or a change of Government necessitated. It is appropriate that the error should be recorded in one House, when inconveniences would follow on empathic, although well-founded, reprimand from both of them together. Of course, no Motion of this House alone can promise to ensure a new, or a corrected, Government, which many feel to be desirable in reference to Ireland and every other topic. It is, however, true that insufficient measures may often be obligatory measures, when a principle dictates them. In medicine, war, or navigation, the rules of science may demand a certain course, although it will not reach the whole effect which is desired, although it seems that death, defeat, or shipwreck are impending. The same lesson is suggested by political affairs. To act at present on the maxim, that where error has been proved, one House of Parliament should notice it, may give a better aspect to a gloomy situation, may be the germ, the starting point, of remedy, or of improvement. It may, indeed, be otherwise. But where the voice of duty is emphatic, there is no room for searching calculation, or minute analysis of policy and prudence. Parliament is bound to see that in a transaction of this kind justice is maintained, and retribution properly distributed. The Government, as now disposed and constituted, has few supporters upon this side beyond the Treasury Bench. They have no claim on any Party which desires to uphold the Irish Union. But if noble Lords opposite, arrayed to criticize and censure, become their followers and advocates when such results have sprung from their deficiency, what power will remain, what refuge will be standing? The form of words which I have chosen may not, indeed, appear to them the most expressive of their judgment. In that event they may amend and supersede it. In the meanwhile I will move the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

Moved to resolve—

"That in the opinion of this House responsibility for the unfortunate occurrences of 8th February devolves on Her Majesty's Government collectively and not on any single branch of the executive."—(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell.*)

LORD THURLOW said, that he had listened with great attention to the noble Lord, and he hoped that he should be forgiven if he declined to admit on the part of the Government that he had made out a case against them. The Motion as it stood contained a very through and sweeping condemnation of Her Majesty's Government. It was, of course, painful that so sweeping a condemnation should come from a noble Lord who was generally a supporter of Her Majesty's present Government. He must, therefore, ask their Lordships to permit him very briefly to examine the Motion of the noble Lord upon its merits. The noble Lord said that Her Majesty's Government collectively were to blame for the disgraceful riots that had occurred on the 8th of February in the West End. Having the honour to represent the Home Office in their Lordships' House, of course he was very glad that the Motion should be framed in that way; but he feared that the position taken up by the noble Lord could not be maintained, for the reason that Her Majesty's Government did not exist collectively as a whole on that day, it not having been completely formed until a much later date. It was true that the Home Secretary had entered upon his duties on that day; but the only other Members of the Government that had actually entered upon their Offices at the time were the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack (Lord Herschell), the noble Lord the Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer), the noble Earl the Secretary for Foreign Affairs (the Earl of Roseberry), the noble Marquess the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Marquess of Ripon), and the noble Earl the Secretary for India (the Earl of Kimberley). At that time the Legal Advisers of the Crown had not been appointed, and therefore Her Majesty's Government could not be said to have existed as a whole on the day in question. The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) did not think it his duty immediately on entering the Home Office to upset all the arrangements of his Predecessor in Office or of the police, in view of the meeting in Trafalgar Square, especially as he had been assured that these arrangements were perfectly sufficient. They had now, however, other guides more reliable than the noble Lord upon this matter, having before them the Report of the Commissioners appointed to consider the question of the organization of the Police. The last three lines of that Report indicated very distinctly where the mischief under the old system lay. They were as follows:—

"We conclude our Report by a strong expression of opinion that the administration and organization of the Metropolitan Police Force requires to be thoroughly investigated; and we hope that this investigation will take place without delay."

It was evident from that Report that the riots of the 8th of February were due, not to the fault of the Executive or to the quality of the police, but to the defective system of our police organization. He desired to repeat what he had already said—namely, that the Metropolitan Police Force was second to none in material, but that it wanted an Intelligence Department which might be its eyes and ears and the means of conveying orders accurately so as to insure their being carried out. These riots would probably result in a great gain to the country which had escaped a great danger very cheaply. He was glad to be able to state that the Government and Parliament were taking steps to reimburse those who had suffered during the riots. He was also glad to have the opportunity of endorsing the praise of Sir Edmund Henderson which had been expressed by the noble Viscount (Viscount Cranbrook) opposite. The services of Sir Edmund Henderson, who had kept the peace of this Metropolis during the last 17 years, were in no danger of being forgotten. Times had changed, London had now greatly increased in population, and various dangers had grown up of which before they had little knowledge. Under those circumstances it was very natural that after the lapse of 17 years Sir Edmund Henderson might be permitted to relinquish the cares of his high office; and he thought it was very right that a new man should be selected who no doubt would be better able to introduce the reforms that were needed into the Police Force. In conclusion, he congratulated the noble Lord who had brought forward that Motion at any rate on the originality of his arguments, which were fully equal to the remarkable suggestion made in a former debate—that the late riots were caused by the annexation of Burmah. For himself, he ventured to hope that their Lordships would consider that the Government had acted with prudence on that occasion. He did not think it would be wise at present to accept the sweeping Resolution which the noble Lord had proposed. It would not be wise to trifle with the safety of the Metropolis by weakening the hands of the Executive at that moment of transition, and he therefore called upon their Lordships to reject the Motion.

Lord DORCHESTER said, that after the studied reply just made by the Government to the vigorous denouncement of the noble Lord (Lord Stratheden and Campbell), he (Lord Dorchester) did not intend to follow up that matter at any great length, although it was one which concerned the safety of their households in that Metropolis, and the security of a vast amount of valuable property. He would, however, observe that he had never known that there was any mystery in the discipline of a well-regulated regiment; and he saw no reason why there should be mystery in the organization of the Metropolitan Police. It was a mere question of discipline, of organization, and of the relations which existed between the Home Department and the senior executive officer of a large body of men, numbering, he believed, over 13,000, who had very responsible and onerous duties, and who were individually exposed by day and night to three of the most tempting influences that affected men's probity and their organization—namely, wine, women, and money. They were exposed to those three sources of temptation, and from them they had kept wonderfully aloof. No man who had lived, as he had done, in London for many years, and had watched the action of the Metropolitan constables, could fail to admire the steadiness and alacrity with which they discharged their duties. At the East End of London, in October last, there were some disturbances which the police were said to have been too active and energetic in putting down. He was not in the secrets of the Home Office or of Scotland Yard; but it was the general impression that the want of action on February 8 resulted, in a great measure, from the blame that was thrown on some of the Inspectors and subordinates of the Force for being too active in suppressing the disturbances at the East End of London. That might or might not be the case; but the disturbance of February 8 was known beforehand to be likely to take place. He had seen a letter dated 12 days before the occurrence forshadowing accurately what actually happened. He did not believe that the least possible blame devolved on Mr. Childers on that occasion. How far that right hon. Gentleman might have understood the duties of the Home Office on the first day he went there it was not for him to say; but there was no doubt that Mr. Childers gave every attention to every subject that was brought before him. But were there no Permanent Under Secretaries at the Home Office, no detective officer in Scotland Yard in communication with the Inspector of Criminal Detection at the Home Office? He was informed that the relations between the Home Office and Scotland Yard should be those that existed between the War Office and the General commanding an army in foreign parts. Well, he really believed that had that disturbance occurred in Cairo, it would have been known to the War Office before Mr. Childers knew of it at the Home Office. A gentleman warned a body of police near Stafford House of what was going to happen, and told them that the mob were going up Pall Mall and St. James's Street, breaking windows and looting, and the reply he received was that the police had taken precautions, which were to remain behind. Inspectors of police and bodies of men were distributed where they were not wanted; but those Inspectors appeared to have had their orders. Whence those orders came and what they were had not transpired. Later on an Inspector turned out with 15 men, and finding what was going on he sent men to Oxford Street, and the disturbance was put an end to. Probably by his prompt action that Inspector saved the Bond Street and Regent Street shopkeepers from being plundered. If the other Inspectors were right, that Inspector was wrong; but in his (Lord Dorchester's) opinion he was quite right, and at any rate his prompt action on his own initiative put an end to the disturbance. He maintained that their Lordships had a right to ask why the Inspectors of Police did not take steps to protect the property of the inhabitants. He believed that the organization of the Police Force was faulty. It had not a sufficient number of head officials to carry out whatever orders had to be enforced; the Force was not in sufficiently constant communication with the Chief Commissioner, and that officer was not in close enough touch with the authorities at the Home Office. If the police found themselves at some time unable to cope with a disturbance, the military could be called out to assist them. While everyone knew that a disturbance of some kind was likely to occur on this occasion, there was no police magistrate in attendance to read the Riot Act, although the policemen were being very much harassed by the mob; whereas for a week subsequently, without any symptoms of disturbance, the entire garrison of London were confined to their barracks and magistrates with them. It was of great importance to the happiness, comfort, and welfare of the inhabitants of London that they should know they were to be protected, that the police should be instructed in their duties, that the military should be told what action they were to take in similar circumstances, that police magistrates should be at hand on the occasion of a disturbance of this kind, and that the Home Secretary should be in close correspondence with the different authorities in order to prevent the recurrence of so deplorable a blunder.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he thought it might be convenient to their Lordships if he were to state what the law was regarding some of the matters under discussion. There was no doubt that if a number of people, however innocently intentioned they might be, occupied any part of the public highways, or places which were used for the traffic of the public, and which might come under the description of the Queen's highway, to such an extent as seriously to interfere with the free circulation of the people—which was the natural and proper use of the highway—when that took place to a serious extent, an unlawful act was committed. The people who committed this unlawful act were indictable; the police were warranted in dispersing them, and if any person resisted the authority of the police he could be taken into custody. In reference to meetings in the Park, he said it was absolutely certain that there was no right, or anything in the nature of a right, on the part of people to hold a meeting for political purposes in the Park, unless by gracious permission of Her Majesty, or of those authorities who are intrusted with its care. He did not deny that the public had certain rights in the Park, partly from long indulgence and partly from the maintenance of the Parks coming out of the Consolidated Fund. Those things combined undoubtedly gave a practical right; but the right of the people in this respect was that of recreation and quiet enjoyment, and not of holding political meetings. There was no right in anyone to go into the Park to preach. Further, the law undoubtedly was that if a number of persons met and so conducted themselves in demeanour, language, or action, as to excite a reasonable fear in the minds of people that violence would or might take place, such was an unlawful assembly. The parties to it were indictable; the police were justified in dispersing it, and were also justified in arresting anyone who resisted their lawful dispersion. In reference to the military, his opinion was that a soldier was not only justified but bound to assist the police in keeping the peace; if this was true of one soldier, it was true of 20 soldiers, even although they were under the command of an officer. He had not the slightest doubt that the law was so. If the *posse comitatus* were called out, soldiers would be included. He had not referred to the question whether or not these particular meetings in Trafalgar Square were lawful or not. He could not help saying, speaking of those meetings as a whole, that they were not *bonâ fide* meetings for the purpose of discussion and enlightenment. They were meetings for the purpose of exciting awe in those who lived in the West of London, or in the minds of those persons who were supposed to have influence to alter the law in the way in which these persons desired it to be altered. Persons did not come seriously together to discuss questions in the open air in the month of February; they went to some more convenient place for the purpose. One of the reasons why this disturbance on the 8th of February happened resulted from the expectations of the police that the persons who did the mischief, coming as they did from the South-East of London, would go back to their own neighbourhood as soon as the meeting was over. Why did not those people give expression to their feelings in their own neighbourhood?

Lord de Ros said, he did not think that he need offer any apology for bringing this subject under their Lordships' notice, because there was, no doubt, a considerable amount of ambiguity attached to it. The Queen's Regulations laid down that troops were not to be taken out except on the requisition of a magistrate in writing, or in cases of great and sudden emergency. If an officer was called upon to act on a so-called great emergency without a magistrate, and loss of life ensued on account of his giving the word of command to fire in the case of Infantry, or to charge in the case of Cavalry, who was to decide whether he was warranted in so acting? Why, the jury empannelled to try him for his life! On the other hand, suppose that he did not, and that the case was such as to warrant his taking extreme measures, he was liable then to be tried by a court martial for neglect of duty; he, therefore, considered that the officer was placed in a most delicate position. In the one case, the officer was acting, as it were, with a rope round his neck; and, in the other, he rendered himself liable to a court martial. He did not for a moment contend that when a soldier was out of barracks for his recreation, he was not bound to render all the assistance in his power to the police, the same as any other loyal person. There was no such thing as an armed soldier in the streets off duty; when he was armed he was under the control of an officer or non-commissioned officer, who was responsible for the acts of those under his command. He ventured, therefore, to think that the military should not be called out in aid of the civil power, except in the most extreme cases, and where the mob were armed, and that a magistrate should always accompany the force. The plan adopted in 1848, during the Chartist demonstrations, appeared to be most sensible—namely, to have detachments posted in various parts of the town, and kept out of sight. The persons assembling generally became aware of this, and it was calculated to exercise a very wholesome check on their proceedings. He begged to recommend that the mounted police be increased. Six mounted men, with their horses well in hand, would be of more use than 50 dismounted men in dispersing a crowd. He trusted that these few remarks would lead to something more definite being laid down for the guidance of officers.

The Duke of CAMBRIDGE said, he was under the impression that, as a rule, the military could not act without the authority of a police magistrate. It was true that in the case of a burglary anyone would be justified in assisting the police; but however laudable and proper it might be for a soldier or anyone else to do so, there was no doubt, as a rule, that when any considerable body of troops were called out to assist the police on any occasion, they should always have a magistrate with them to give the requisite authority. It would be a very dangerous experiment indeed if a commanding officer were to depart from that rule, which was, he thought, a very safe one.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER) said, as the illustrious Duke had referred to him on the subject of what had occurred in Ireland, he might say that his recollection of what occurred in 1882-3 was that any body of troops going out to preserve order was accompanied by a magistrate; but his opinion also was that all citizens were called upon to assist the police, and that this included soldiers. He could recall one case in 1882, in Dublin, when the police were attacked in the most savage way by some of the worst characters in that City. Sergeant Danvers, of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, interfered, and secured the man who led the attack on the police. That was an example where a soldier, having loyal instincts towards law and order, came forward and acted properly, and with the highest possible credit to himself, in assisting the civil power.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: The discussion, while it has been very interesting, has somewhat wandered from the Motion of the noble Lord; but it has called attention to the law regulating the assistance which may be given to the civil power by the military. My own impression is that it is desirable for soldiers to act under a magistrate in all ordinary cases; but in case of an emergency, when riots and disturbances occur, it would be monstrous to suppose that soldiers, like other citizens, may not interfere to preserve order, even if no magistrate be there. Though soldiers as a body had better act with a magistrate and under the orders of their officers, they may act with perfect safety individually in assisting the police. I recollect a case that occurred in Ireland while the noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer) was Viceroy. Some soldiers were attacked, and defended themselves with their arms against their assailants. I certainly think that soldiers, like other citizens, if put in peril of their lives, have a right to fix their bayonets and defend themselves. Referring to the Motion before the House, it will, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, censure the late Government as well as the present. We went out of Office on the Saturday, and the present Government came into Office on the Monday. By passing this Motion and censuring the Government we should be inflicting a backhanded blow upon ourselves. We were the *de facto* if not the *de jure* Government up to the Saturday previous to the 8th of February, and therefore it would be difficult, under the circumstances, to say who were the Executive responsible for what preceded the meeting. While speaking on this subject, I must be allowed to say that I have never seen anything more manly than the conduct of Sir Edmund Henderson in taking upon himself the whole responsibility for these unfortunate occurrences. Sir Edmund Henderson seems to have miscalculated the action the mob was likely to take and not to have provided for it. No doubt the consequences were very serious, as were also the consequences of orders being sent by word of mouth. Moreover, the want of initiative shown by the inferior officers in not taking upon themselves to stop the mob when they saw rioting going on is extremely lamentable. It seems to me that an Inspector or Superintendent in command of men is not called upon to wait for orders when rioting is going on around him, but should act for himself as a single constable would if he saw robbery being committed. The greatest credit is due to the constable at Marylebone Lane who, with the aid of 15 men, checked further disturbances in that quarter. The arguments of the noble Lord are well worthy of consideration. I trust that the noble Lord will not press his Motion; but I think there is a duty cast upon any Government in such matters. In this case two meetings were called—one by the unemployed, and the other by the Social Democrats. The latter gave notice that they were going there to put the others down; and nothing is more clear than that the unemployed were not the authors of the disturbance. Two hostile mobs were allowed to assemble in the centre of London without interference. If there is not power already to prohibit the assemblage of such mobs there ought to be. There ought to be power for the Government to prohibit such meetings and to make them immediately illegal. The responsibility would rest with the Government; but the order of the Government would justify the police for any action they might take to prevent the assemblage of the mob.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl GRANVILLE): I need scarcely say that I thank the noble Viscount (Viscount Cranbrook) for the straightforward way in which he has met and disposed of the Motion of my noble Friend (Lord Stratheden and Campbell). I may say that I never considered this Motion of a serious character, otherwise I should have regarded it as a Vote of Censure upon the Government, and desired that it should be brought forward on the earliest possible day. Had I regarded it as a Vote of Censure, I should also have thought it my duty to prepare myself with facts and arguments to lay before the House. I think your Lordships will agree with me that it has given rise to an interesting conversation, but not in the least in favour of the Motion. While I agree entirely with the noble Viscount that the responsibility of dealing with particular cases rests with the Government, we must not dismiss from our minds the fact that with 4,000,000 of inhabitants it is absolutely impossible to put an end to open-air meetings in the Metropolis. We must be careful in looking at this question—while not forgetting the responsibility of the Government in each particular case—not to lay down any general rule as to the prohibition of public meetings.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that the questions raised in that discussion were of great importance. Had he thought that these questions would have arisen he would have taken care to satisfy himself more than he had done with reference to the exact law on this subject. It was very important to bear in mind that military force was not to be called in aid of the civil power except by distinct civil authority. He quite agreed that a soldier did not cease to be a citizen because he was a soldier; and any soldier, like any citizen, ought to help the police in an emergency. But in that case the soldier should do it as a civilian and not as a soldier. He quite agreed also with his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) that there was no objection to one or half-a-dozen or more soldiers assisting the police as civilians. But the soldier *quâ* soldier was armed with a weapon intended to be a dangerous weapon, which might not only disable, but cause loss of life. The danger was not in his assisting the civil power as a soldier, but in his using his military weapon in doing so. That a soldier must do at his own responsibility, though he did not say that an emergency might not arise where soldiers would not be justified in taking the responsibility of using their military weapons. But if the military force acted as a military force against the people, using their military weapons, they ought to have the previous sanction of the civil authority. He was anxious to emphasize the distinction which existed in his own mind between the action of soldiers in their character of citizens and their action as a military force. The latter action should be confined to cases where they were called to aid in the repression of disturbance by the civil authority.

LORD HALSBURY said, he agreed with the Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell) that when persons had deadly weapons, as soldiers had, their action could only be justified when they were under the orders of the proper authority. The point of his noble and learned Friend's observations was founded on the fact of the weapons being deadly. But, so far as the responsibility for conduct was concerned, the policeman was equally responsible with the soldier if he used his baton unnecessarily. The Queen's Regulations in the case of the soldier could not supersede the Common Law. The soldier was, no doubt, primarily bound to obey the commands of his officers; but if he contravened the Common Law, the commands of his officers would be no defence. If the soldier refused to interfere in a riot he might be liable to the Common Law; and he might be equally liable if he interfered without proper authority. It was, therefore, misleading to speak of the law as drawing a distinction between the soldier and the citizen. The noble Lord behind him (Lord de Ros) had referred to the Riot Act. The law was that when the Riot Act was read everybody who continued to assemble was guilty of felony. Until the Riot Act was read it would have to be established by evidence that a felony had been committed; but the continuance of the assembly after the reading of the Act would itself constitute a felony.

LORD STRATHEDEN AND CAMPBELL said, that he had no choice but to act on the opinion of the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Cranbrook), by whom that evening the majority were guided. At the same time, the noble Viscount had entirely corroborated his arguments as to the origin of the disturbances in the coincidence of two meetings, of which one might have been easily averted. Neither the noble Lord who followed him (Lord Thurlow), nor the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Earl Granville), had even attempted to overthrow a single proposition which he (Lord Stratheden and Campbell) had brought before their Lordships.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MURDER OF PATRICK FINLAY, WOODFORD, CO. GALWAY.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

THE DUKE OF ST. ALBANS, in rising to call attention to the murder of the bailiff Patrick Finlay, at Woodford, co. Galway; and to ask Her Majesty's Government what steps, if any, have been taken to bring the murderers to justice; and, whether they consider their existing powers are sufficient for the protection of life and detection of crime in Ireland? said, there was no one who was present would ever forget that solemn scene in which both Parties in that House united to express horror at the murders of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke. There were murders in Ireland before, there had been murders since, and now to the long list was added the name of Patrick Finlay. He believed this to have been a murder, though the National Press had described it as "the alleged murder," and an Irish Member in "another place" insinuated it was an accidental death. This suggestion, to his credit, the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) had treated with contemptuous silence. The murder was thus described by the Dublin correspondent of *The Times*—

> "Finlay, who was boycotted, had been forced to gather fuel in a wood on the estate of Sir Henry Burke, a boycotted landlord. On the Wednesday, armed with his revolver, he went to the wood without previously informing the police, who for some time past had kept a protective watch over him when abroad. After an hour or so, his wife spoke to the sergeant, who, on going to the wood, found Finlay dead, his revolver beside him with one chamber discharged. So far from the murder exciting horror in the locality, the people, as in the Curtin case, openly rejoiced at the crime. When Mrs. Finlay was returning to the town, after viewing the body of her husband where it lay in the wood, a vast crowd assembled and mocked her grief with jeers and shouts of triumph. Six constables, in consequence of this display of popular feeling, had to be left that night to guard the widow's house, situate in the centre of the town. It is stated that there are evictions pending on a neighbouring property in which Finlay was to take part. He had also civil bill decrees against tenants of Mrs. Lewis, but there are no evictions in that case. It had been arranged that a strong force of military was to be sent to aid the constabulary, a body numbering 75 men, in executing the decrees, but after the Chief Secretary's speech the aspect of the situation was entirely changed and the people were told by their Sunday orators that the 'Government will send no military here for evictions, and we will be able for the police.' The arrangements about the military have been countermanded, and the proceedings to enforce the law are now in abeyance."

The noble Earl (the Earl of Aberdeen), in his position as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was properly escorted by soldiers wherever he went; but military protection was denied to save the life of a poor process-server, and Her Majesty's Government claimed to represent democracy. His sad story was not finished. Horrible murders happened in England, but public sympathy in this country was not with the murderers. *The Times* correspondent, in describing the funeral of Finlay, said—

> "It was with great difficulty that the police procured a place of burial for the remains, admission to the usual graveyards being refused. Ultimately they were interred in a small disused private burial ground. No one attended the funeral but Finlay's widow, Mr. Lewis and his brother, Mr. Lewis's steward, Mr. Donney, and the police, under the command of Mr. Dixon, district inspector. In Woodford a man went shouting through the streets, 'Finlay's soul is in hell, and that is where he ought to be.' The coffin was obtained from the workhouse at Loughrea, as no one in Woodford would supply it, and had to be taken out of the town by a back way instead of through the main street in order to avoid a hostile demonstration. Despite this precaution, the loud laughter and joyous shouts of the people could be distinctly heard. The murderers of Finlay

did not think their hatred sufficiently satisfied by shooting him through the chest, but after his death, as there was good reason to believe, they discharged his own revolver into his mouth. His miserable widow was left absolutely desolate, and had no prospect but the poorhouse."

Such was the end of poor Patrick Finlay, a man of good character, an Army pensioner, who had fought for England in the Crimea. Great allowance must be made for the increased difficulties in which Ministers found themselves owing to the lame, halting, and blind policy adopted as regarded Ireland by the late Government during the six months they were in Office. He did not wish to rake up the past, nor seemingly to harass Her Majesty's Ministers into divulging their Irish policy, nor was he desirous seriously to harass them in respect of Irish matters; and when they considered how gigantic were the issues involved, the time the Government had asked to prepare their policy erred on the side rather of modesty. But as Englishmen we had a right to know that fresh victims between this and then would not be sacrificed at the altar of the so-called Irish Nationalism, and that outrages such as he had described should not be permitted to disgrace our civilization in a part of the State still known as the United Kingdom only 10 hours distant from London. He asked the noble Earl to give a distinct answer to the Question—Whether in the opinion of the Government the present law in Ireland was strong enough to detect crime, which in Ireland meant to protect life? If the noble Earl could say "Yes;" his reply would be received with a sense of relief, not only in this House, but in the country, and especially in Ireland. If he could only tell us to wait till the 1st of April, it would be better for the Government to contract in the interim with the National League for the protection of life, or even to subsidize O'Donovan Rossa, than to let innocent men be murdered. He, a Liberal, asked the noble Earl, as a Member of a Democratic Government, whether the life of a poor man performing humble but legal public duties was to be less sacred than that of the Official highest in Dublin Castle, and whether the blood of Patrick Finlay appealed with less force to the Government than did that unhappily spilt in the Phœnix Park?

THE EARL OF LIMERICK, on rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether it was true that on the night of Sunday, 7th March, 15 head of cattle, the property of Michael O'Connor, were houghed or otherwise horribly mutilated at Ballyculhane, near Glin; whether on the same night, close to the same place, a cowshed containing eight cows was maliciously burned and the cows roasted to death; whether a meeting of the National League was held in Glin on that Sunday; and, whether the owners of the cattle stated to have been thus horribly mutilated or destroyed had been "Boycotted" for some time past, and were barely able to obtain the necessaries of life? said, the crimes which were occurring in Ireland were a disgrace to a Christian country. It was true that these outrages had recently been condemned by resolution of the National League; but it unfortunately happened that however powerful the National League was in other respects when it attempted to condemn outrages, those outrages did not in some way or other cease on account of that condemnation. It seemed as if within this National League there were some inner centres which exercised the real power. Whether they called them Invincibles or what else, it would seem that they did not shrink from outrage, and were not affected by the condemnations which the National League itself issued. The question before them was whether Her Majesty's Government were able to deal with these secret societies or centres which existed and carried on their secret work. He would not trouble their Lordships by relating at length statements to show that the horrible murder already referred to was not an isolated case. He would refer only to two. One of those was not yet attended with murder, and the other was that of which he had given Notice, which was attended with the horrible mutilation and destruction of unfortunate cattle. He alluded to these cases because they occurred in his own neighbourhood, and he could vouch for the facts. One of the cases to which he wished to call particular attention, because the persecution of those attacked had not yet ceased, was that of a farmer named Tesky, who had been attacked and injured in his house, and his life was despaired of. Well, Tesky identified one of the men who committed the outrage, and he was tried at the Spring Assizes at Limerick, but was acquitted. He was informed that threatening letters had been sent before the trial to jurors, and, since, to Tesky himself. He should like to hear some statement from the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) as regarded the cases heard at those Assizes, for he believed not a conviction had been secured. The outrage at Glin was a terrible one. The statements concerning it did not rest on newspaper paragraphs. They rested on a statement deliberately made and signed by the Knight of Glin, who had since written that since the outrage a notice had been posted calling on a tenant to "Take notice, I will burn you alive as I burned the cows last night." He desired to say that this outrage at Glin occurred within four hours of the holding of a Nationalist meeting in that place; but he wished to qualify that remark, and to be perfectly clear in regard to it. He believed thoroughly that the great majority of those attending those meetings reprobated such outrages as those he had described. Still the language used at those meetings stirred up the intemperate and evil-disposed, and nobody knew that better than the noble Earl (Earl Spencer). Whilst holding this opinion, still he thought it was impossible to free those holding the meetings from all responsibility for the outrages which in so many instances followed them. If these outrages were allowed to go on until some measure was brought forward for settling the state of Ireland for the future, Her Majesty's Government would for a longer or shorter period be practically abandoning the enforcement of the law in that country. He feared that the measure that was to be brought forward by the Ministry would not, under such circumstances, bring about peace and the settled order of good government.

LORD GREVILLE said, a Question had been asked of Her Majesty's Government which he ventured to say they were absolutely powerless to answer, for at present in Ireland government existed only in name, and as an executive power the Government was valueless. If an unfortunate man came under the hand of the Land League the Government was powerless to save him. Mr. Baron Dowse, at a recent Assize, had called attention to the increase of crime for equal periods in the same district, the number of offences having been 151 in 1884, 166 in 1885, and in the last six months no fewer than 300; and these offences were of a serious nature, including two murders, 18 threats to murder, 39 cases of stealing cattle, horses, and sheep, 11 cases of arson, 18 cases of the killing and maiming of cattle, and 52 seizures of arms and levying of contributions. All these things were happening at the present moment. If the Government were powerful enough to carry out the law, why had there been these 300 cases in the last six months? Mr. Davitt, the originator of the Land League, had made a strong speech against Moonlighting and other outrages; and the language he had used was even stronger than had fallen from the Government. But with an impulsive race and nation like the Irish nation it was not so easy, when they had been roused and hounded on by the words of an eloquent man, to bring them back to moderation by asking them to be kind and gentle. In Westmeath, which once provoked the passing of the Westmeath Act, there were now few or no outrages, and that was owing to the influence exercised by the Roman Catholic Bishop in that county. But for the influence of him and his priests it would be almost impossible for a man to live in the county. Perhaps the measure to be introduced by the Prime Minister might do something to restore peace and tranquillity to the country; but at present the motto of the Government was *non possumus.*

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Earl SPENCER): My Lords, the noble Earl opposite alluded to the Question he has put down, and which would formally come on later in the evening. I do not object to his having alluded to it. Probably it will be more convenient that it should be brought forward and answered in the present debate. I, for one, shall say nothing to take away from the force of the language which both the noble Duke and the noble Earl have used with regard to these detestable murders and crimes in Ireland. No one, I am sorry to say, has had more experience of these terrible crimes than I have had during the years that I have had the honour of being Her Majesty's Representative. I know how violent they are, how much they intimidate the people in the neighbourhood in which they are committed. I know full well that sympathy with the perpetrators of these crimes is too often found to exist among the population of Ireland. I deplore all this from the bottom of my heart. The most serious thing of all is the terribly disgusting feeling of sympathy with the criminals which too often prevails in those districts in which the crimes are committed. I cannot say how deeply this has always impressed me. It is not only ordinary ruffians who take part in these crimes, but you too often find they are committed by fanatics who are led by a false love of their country to think they can serve it by these atrocities. This is the most serious part of the history of Ireland connected with these crimes. I fear that no repressive legislation can affect that terrible feeling; it has not been diminished by the successive measures of repression we have had. I sincerely hope that some day we may arrive at a better feeling on the part of the population of Ireland—a feeling in support of law and of order instead of one of sympathy with crime committed in the midst of the people. I have not been able to obtain detailed reports of the crimes referred to in the second Question on the Paper; but I believe that in the main the statements embodied in the Question are correct. I fear it is probable there was great sympathy with the criminals; and I know there was great difficulty about the interment of the man to whom the noble Duke referred. I cannot give information as to the steps taken by the Government to discover the criminals, as everyone acquainted with Ireland will agree with me when I say that that would not in any degree be conducive to the ends of justice. This, however, I can say—that the Irish Government are using their utmost endeavours to try and trace the criminal, but at present I regret to say that I am not able to give any very hopeful account of the success which is likely to attend their efforts. Not only are they using their utmost endeavours to trace the criminals, but to prevent a recurrence of similar outrages in that part of the country. The noble Duke referred to a speech of the Chief Secretary in the other House, and seemed to connect this crime, in some way, with remarks which were made by the right hon. Gentleman; but, as I said on a former occasion, I cannot help thinking that that speech has been very much misunderstood. I took occasion to explain that what was said was not that the aid of the military to the civil power would be refused, but that when the aid of the military was demanded, he would carefully consider each case, and would determine whether a necessity for using the troops had arisen. With regard to this first case, it so happens that after my right hon. Friend had made that speech he consulted me as to whether it would be advisable to send Her Majesty's troops to be present at the evictions at Woodford. My right hon. Friend was perfectly willing, if it was necessary, to send the military in aid of the civil power. The only question was whether it was desirable to send more police without soldiers, or a smaller body of police with military. I said it was always desirable, if it were possible, to avoid using the military, and that I should prefer sending double the number of police on this occasion to calling in the military; but if the people on the spot said the military were necessary, I felt he must authorize their being sent. He entirely concurred in that; but I believe that circumstances arose afterwards to indicate that the troops were not called for. I regret to say that the details of the outrage in the second Question are correctly stated. Some of the outrages that have been referred to were brutal in the extreme, and I have neither desire nor intention to extenuate them in the slightest degree. It is a remarkable thing, however, that the two men — Sullivan and M'Mahon — who were the sufferers by these outrages, were members of the National League, although doubtless it has been said that they had, previously to these outrages being committed, been held up to the odium of that Association because of their having taken the farms. It is, however, only fair to state that the day after the outrages were committed the National League offered a reward of £100 for the discovery of the perpetrators of these cruelties. It is certainly evident that nothing could be calculated to do so much harm to the cause which the National League have at heart than that they should be plotting, or in any way concerned in, such brutalities as those to which reference has been made. The noble Duke asked—

"What steps, if any, have been taken to bring the murderers to justice; and whether they consider their existing powers are sufficient for the protection of life and the detection of crime in Ireland?"

The Question of the noble Duke amounts to this—Is law and order perfectly enforced in Ireland? I hardly know whether at any time within my recollection it could be said absolutely that the condition of Ireland with regard to crime, and the sympathies of the people in favour of law and order, were all that could be desired; but the question now before us is, whether the condition of the country in these respects is not relatively more satisfactory at the present moment than it was during the period when the late Administration was in Office, and whether it is such as to call for special legislation? I have some Returns before me that tell with remarkable force upon this point. I shall not trouble the House by reading those Returns at any great length; but I think that the few figures I intend to lay before your Lordships will convince you that the condition of things which now exists in Ireland is far better than that which existed at the time when special coercive legislation was called into operation. I quite admit that there are some districts of Ireland which are far worse than others—for instance, the condition of Killarney in Kerry, and Loughrea in Galway, is far from satisfactory. Deducting threatening letters, the decrease of agrarian outrages since February, 1886, compared with the average in the six preceding months is very striking; 63 was the average for October, November, and December, 1885, and January, 1886, while in February it was 33, only four more than in the first seven months of 1885. That shows that crime had not increased—that it had, in fact, diminished in February. I do not lay great stress upon the fact, but it has diminished since Her Majesty's Government has been in Office.

LORD ASHBOURNE: Do these figures apply to the whole of Ireland?

EARL SPENCER: Yes; to the whole of Ireland.

THE EARL OF LIMERICK: The month of February was a short one for comparison.

EARL SPENCER: Only two days. What was the condition of things in the same month in previous years? In 1880, when crime was rising very fast in Ireland, the outrages, other than threatening letters, were—January 77, February 58; 1881, January 194, February 89; 1882, January 189, February 154; 1886, January 46, and February 33. There was thus an enormous difference between the outrages in those years and the present. I venture to think that although those figures do not show a condition of the country which is satisfactory, yet that that condition does not compare unfavourably with that which existed in previous years. In my opinion, no Government is entitled, after the lapse of exceptional measures, to renew them unless it can be shown that very grave dangers exist; and that certainly is not the case at the present moment. I maintain that the figures I have quoted will prove to your Lordships that although isolated cases of murder and of outrage of a very serious kind are still occurring in Ireland, yet that the general condition of the country has greatly improved since Her Majesty's present Government have been in Office. I will now give some particulars of "Boycotting" as it exists now and make a comparison with the state of things which existed when the late Government were in Office. In the quarter ending June 30, 1885, the number of persons totally "Boycotted" was 80, and partially 219. In the quarter ending September 30, 1885, the number totally "Boycotted" was 179, and partially 706. In that ending December 31, 1885, the number totally "Boycotted" was 175, and partially 716; in the month of January, 1886, the number totally "Boycotted" was 181, and partially 719; and in the month of February, 1886, the number totally "Boycotted" was 181, and partially 718. These figures are remarkable as showing that during the period in which Her Majesty's late Government were in Office just as many persons, within one or two, were "Boycotted" as at the present time. During the whole of that time, when "Boycotting" was at its height, Her Majesty's late Government contented themselves with looking on; and therefore they cannot now blame Her Majesty's present Government for not immediately taking very violent steps to put an end to the National League. I am sure your Lordships will not require me, until the time arrives when we can conveniently consider the whole question of Ireland, to state what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take to remedy the present unhappy state of things in that country, and to restore law and order. I can assure your Lordships that Her Majesty's Irish Government will endeavour, in the meantime, in every way to insure that the lives and the property of Her Majesty's subjects are protected. No one denounces with more vigour than I do these crimes, and no one wishes more than I do to see them put down by the ordinary law. In any case we are determined to uphold and maintain the law of the land, and I sincerely hope that we may be successful in putting down these terrible outrages, which I am not surprised have excited the sympathy and indignation of the people of this country.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY said, they owed a debt of gratitude to the noble Duke for bringing this matter forward; but he was afraid he could not congratulate the noble Duke upon having obtained a satisfactory answer on this subject from Her Majesty's Government. He (the Marquess of Londonderry) could not gather from the noble Earl's speech one crumb of comfort. He confessed he felt no surprise at reading the answer given on Tuesday in the House of Commons by the Chief Secretary for Ireland on that subject, as had the right hon. Gentleman given a straightforward answer that he would at once take steps to prevent the recurrence of such a crime, he would have lost the support of those of his followers who disapproved of crime only because it was a source of weakness to their cause. The noble Duke had not overstated the case. He could corroborate every word which had fallen from him as to the outrages that had taken place in the neighbourhood of Woodford. The noble Duke had told their Lordships of the character of the victims of those outrages; but he had not told them about the reign of terror which existed in the neighbourhood of Woodford. In an article in *The Dublin Evening Mail* of March 12, describing the state of things prevailing at the present moment in the neighbourhood, he found the following statement:—

"I will now give an instance of the kind of teaching the people here are subject to. A certain Mr. Francis Tully, previous to the murder of Finlay, had in a speech, as reported in the local Press, spoken of a certain medicine he possessed which could cure bailiffs, process-servers, rent-warners, &c. On Wednesday, March 3, Finlay was murdered; and on Saturday, March 6, the following appears in *The Connaught People*:—'The patent medicine of Mr. Francis Tulley, of the Woodford division, seems to be doing excellent service in these parts. It has already cured a large number of bailiffs, rent-warners, process-servers, and agents, and is expected before long to accomplish that most extraordinary feat which has baffled statesmen and physicians since the time of the Flood—that is, to cure the noble and aristocratic disease so prevalent among landlords namely, the go out or evict—or, as they themselves politely call it, the gout. If Frank Tully succeeds in doing this he ought to be made physician in chief to Mr. Parnell and the Irish Party.' I have said that the state of Woodford and surrounding districts is one of panic—nothing else can describe it. On Sunday last—the Sunday immediately following Finlay's murder—six more bailiffs, rent-warners, &c., resigned, influenced, no doubt, by fear of some more of Mr. Frank Tully's medicine, which already has had such a deadly effect. As these men are now out of danger there can be no harm in giving their names. They are Mitchell and Rafferty, wood rangers to Sir Henry Burke; Gorman, Flannery, Kenny, and Page, gamekeepers and bailiffs of the Marquess of Clanricarde."

All would remember the Prime Minister's letter to Lord de Vesci of February 12, in which he said that the great questions to be considered in reference to Ireland were social order, a settlement of the Land Question, and the widely prevalent desire of self-government. He had no idea of what might be the Prime Minister's meaning of the words "social order;" but when he read to their Lordships a few instances of the outrages that had occurred since the day on which that letter was written, he thought they would see that in place of social order there was at present a reign of terror in Ireland. The following was a summary of outrages and crime, reported in the public Press since February 12—

"Two men charged before Resident Magistrate of Longford with having cut off the tails of cattle belonging to Mr. Dinegan, Killashee (Feb. 12). At Derrymore, County Longford, a sheriff's bailiff set upon in exercise of his duty, beaten with sticks and billhooks, and cattle rescued (Feb. 19). A party of disguised Moonlighters visit the house of Thomas Lehy; Patrick Finlay murdered (March 4). At Castleconnel, a farmer sentenced to one month for stabbing another farmer in the cheek whose father was suspected of having paid his rent; Denis Brennan, a bailiff, fired at while returning from an evicted farm."

These were, irrespective of "Boycotting," almost the worst form of social disorder.

"Sheriff and 20 constables unable to carry out evictions at Scotstown, Monaghan, being attacked by mobs throwing stones (Feb. 25). Murderous attack upon a farmer named M'Sweeney, near Killarney, for refusing to give up his gun (Feb. 27). Attack on Captain Chute, of Leebrook, County Kerry (March 6). Conroy, a tenant of Sir Henry Burke, obliged to obtain police protection through having paid his rent (March 9). Threatening letters sent to Robert Tesky, and also to several Limerick jurors, in connection with the trial of three prisoners for a Moonlight outrage upon Mr. Tesky (March 8). Moonlight raid upon the house of a farmer named Dunne, near Rostrevor (March 7). Burning of house near Listowel, and 10 cows, 10 goats, and 15 tons of hay, the property of a farmer holding lands from which the tenants had been evicted (March 7). Mutilation of 15 head of cattle belonging to Michael O'Connor, of Ballyculhane, Glin; also two other farmers had an out-house set on fire, and eight cows roasted to death, in the same locality, for having taken evicted farms (March 7). Attack on a process-server in the Kilmurry district, Kilrush, by a party of men with pitchforks, &c. (March 11). Burning of Lord Clanricarde's wood at Woodford (March 9). Stripping and tarring of a process-server near Villiers Town, County Waterford (March 12). The Rev. John Callaghy, P P., Ballinakill, for having paid his rent, was compelled to resign the presidency of the local branch of the National League, was 'Boycotted,' and unable to get his horse shod, and did not receive his accustomed dues; it was this priest who, a few days ago, read prayers at the grave of the murdered man, Patrick Finlay. James Cannon, shopkeeper of Woodford, was completely 'Boycotted' for supplying the police. Michael Dwyer, a car driver, Woodford, 'Boycotted,' attacked and beaten for having driven the police; he is now under police protection. Many tenants in the parish of Woodford are prevented from paying their rents by the grossest intimidation, and speakers at National League meetings in Woodford have advised open resistance to the law. One speaker at a National League meeting, recently held at Woodford, declared that the Government would not give the military for evictions, and that the people were well able for the police."

His object in drawing attention to these outrages was because he could not prevent his mind from reverting to the terrible events of the years 1881-2, when crime and outrage stalked over Ireland unchecked; and when, to the appeals of the suffering and law-abiding people of the country, the Government of the day turned a deaf ear. Those outrages were over 10,000, and how long they would have lasted he was unable to say. But surely the climax was not reached till May 6, when the fearful assassination in Phœnix Park occurred, which sent a thrill of horror throughout Europe. Then, and not till then, did the Ministers take decided measures; and, thanks to the energy, ability, and courage of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer), peace and order were restored. He wished that the noble Earl would take the same steps now. It might sound like audacity on his part to offer suggestions to the Government when suggestions from men of so much greater experience and weight had been before now ignored by the Liberal Government. But he could not forget that he was one of the Loyalists of Ireland; and, therefore, he called on the Government to take immediate steps for the prevention of such crimes as he had quoted to their Lordships—steps which, though they might alienate from them the support of men who had been described as "steeped to the lips in treason," would, nevertheless, secure to them the sincerest gratitude and respect of every loyal and patriotic Irishman. In conclusion, he earnestly hoped that it might never again fall to the lot of anyone in similar circumstances to call upon the Government to extend their protection to the humble subjects of the Queen, who were now paying the heaviest penalties of torture and suffering in consequence of their loyalty to their Sovereign and their country.

Lord ASHBOURNE said, that the speeches of noble Lords opposite suggested painful reflections in regard to the present condition of Ireland. They should look plainly and distinctly at the actual state of that country, and not allow themselves to be blinded either by exaggeration on the one side, or by an attempt on the other to ignore plain facts, and not see what all the world outside of that House saw without difficulty. The task of the noble Earl who represented in that House the views of the Government in reference to Ireland was, no doubt, a difficult one. It might be doubly difficult for him, because no one had on that question a greater wealth of knowledge, or a greater record of experience, to fall back upon. Whatever might be the political exigency of the noble Earl at present, his sympathy was not with crime—was not with Irish crime; and if he were at liberty to speak with that absolute freedom which was sometimes denied even to politicians, he ventured to think the noble Earl could speak on that question in a way that would amply satisfy those noble Lords who took part in that discussion, on whatever side they might sit. The condition of Ireland was far too serious a matter to be a Party question. No Government—he cared not on which side of the House it sat—could enter upon the consideration of Irish policy or administration with a light heart; and it was the duty of the Opposition to recognize that any Government applying itself to the Irish problem must be treated with a certain amount of reasonable—aye, of ample—consideration. The question before their Lordships that evening was not one of policy; it involved simply the consideration of what was the position of Ireland with reference to the preservation of social order. The noble Earl had interpolated in his observations a synopsis of the statistics of Irish crime and outrage. It was well known that there was nothing so misleading as statistics; but two of the most recent and appalling outrages which had happened last week had been selected for notice and attention that day by the noble Duke (the Duke of St. Albans) and his noble Friend (the Earl of Limerick) as illustrative of the state of many parts of Ireland. Attention had been directed to them, and concentrated upon them, in order to elicit from the Government what were their views in reference to them, how they regarded them, and whether they thought that, at the present time, they had power sufficient to cope with the disturbed state of social order, of which the crimes were symptomatic. Those crimes were not exhaustive of the statement regarding the condition of Irish crime; but they were symptomatic of the diseased state of feeling which now existed in Ireland. The noble Earl (Earl Spencer) had used words of rebuke to the perpetrators of those outrages, and had fittingly denounced them; but he did not quite follow the noble Earl in his attempt to suggest that the state of Ireland was at present to be judged by the lists of a few figures that might be submitted by statisticians who furnished information to the Government. No one knew better than the noble Earl that nothing was so misleading regarding the present condition of Ireland as to look at the statistics of crime. What was the present condition of Ireland? That was a matter which, from beginning to end of his speech, the noble Earl had not dealt with. Did he not know that he had himself stated, in the debate on the Address, that never in his recollection, nor even in the history of the country, was the state of Ireland so bad as regarded intimidation? Did he not know that in many parts of the country at present there was an authority in force which was not the Queen's authority, which was all-powerful? This was a circumstance of profound and supreme significance. The crimes which had been referred to must be regarded in their real significance, which was that they were symptomatic, not of isolated feeling, but of the state of feeling which prevailed not universally in Ireland, but in too many of the large districts of that unhappy country. The noble Earl had referred to "Boycotting" outrages. He asked their Lordships to look at the figures in their naked significance as revealing the present state of Ireland? There were at this moment 900 persons who were being subjected to this frightful system, wholly or partially, of having their lives made a burden to them by "Boycotting." But how many persons must be taking action in such a proceeding? One person could not "Boycott" another to this unbearable degree; it must be a whole community leagued together which took part in this conspiracy against the peace of their fellow-men. In these circumstances, he wished to know what return of statistics would indicate how many thousand persons in Ireland were involved in this terrible system of "Boycotting?" The noble Duke had certainly not overstated the circumstances attending this frightful murder of Finlay. He had also drawn attention to what was the gravest thing connected with it—namely, the appalling state of sympathy on the part of the population with those who committed the crime. But this feeling of sympathy was not confined to this particular district or to this particular case. It might be said of this poor victim, who was partially crippled, that he was the instrument used by a landlord for the collection of rent; but that fact would be no excuse for the brutality of the outrage. The case of the Curtin family still lived in their recollection, however; and it could not be ignored by those who wished to understand what was the real condition of Ireland. There were none so blind as those who would not see. People could not forget, nor would they be allowed to forget, the incidents of the Curtin case, without being asked, at the same time, to consider the present state of Ireland, because in it were found all the incidents of this horrible and degrading sympathy. It was a case utterly free from all the elements of landlord and tenant. Mr. Curtin was himself an influential tenant farmer, closely connected with the people, living among them, worshipping at the same chapel, belonging to the same community, and, he believed, a member of the National League; and their Lordships were familiar with the circumstances which culminated in the Bishop of the diocese having to close the chapel for six weeks owing to the hostile manifestations of the populace against the members of the Curtin family. An effort had been made to confuse this question, by pointing out that this incident was closed, and must, therefore, be now ignored and put aside. This could not be done. Unless people wished to be deceived, they could not be deceived in reference to the circumstances of this outrage. It was true that the chapel had been re-opened within the last fortnight; it was equally true that the Curtin family had resumed worship there. He placed no undue significance on the fact that a substantial force of police was present at the chapel in order to see that the Curtins were not molested. Take it that they were allowed to live there without being subjected to outrage, and to worship in that chapel, was it not an appalling thing that manifestations of this feeling of sympathy could have occurred recently in Ireland in regard to people whose only offence was that they would not stand by and see their father murdered in cold blood? Was it not horrible that such a thing even could have occurred? He was aware that the Prime Minister laid stress on the fact that this outrage occurred in November last. A few months made ancient history with the Prime Minister; but he did not think that a period so recent as November could be ignored by responsible statesmen when they were about to legislate in reference to the condition of Ireland. When the Curtin murder first took place, it was denounced in Dublin and throughout the country by the Nationalist Press and the Press generally; and, therefore, at first, public opinion did not know the existence of this marked sympathy with criminals in the locality; but, notwithstanding, it was found that a month afterwards this element had been painfully developed. With reference to the outrages referred to by his noble Friend (the Earl of Limerick), they had been sufficiently discussed in detail; but he had drawn attention to a fact which should not be ignored, and that was that a National League meeting was held in the vicinity four hours before the outrages were committed. It was true that the League afterwards offered a reward for the discovery of the perpetrators; and the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) appeared to derive much comfort from the fact, although he admitted that he had very little faith himself in the potency of such an agency in the detection of Irish crime. For his own part, he was quite willing to believe that the National League offered a reward; but this case could be looked at from many points of view. It might be that the National League was not able to control, in many parts of the country, this feeling of criminal sympathy which had been called into existence. It was a much easier matter to raise a state of feeling of this kind than to control or allay it. It might be that the National League was not able to control, as it might think prudence required, a movement which was at present advancing at a rate they did not at all desire. But the state of the country could be judged of by other things than the outrages which had been referred to. During the past few days he had been struck with statements in the Press as to the way in which contracts were enforced and the payments of rent were carried out. It was impossible to ignore in an agricultural country like Ireland—whether the case was being considered for better or worse—the way in which contracts between landlord and tenant were carried out, and the manner in which payment of rent was enforced. A paragraph appeared in *The Freeman's Journal* of the 10th instant, describing an unsuccessful attempt to carry out an eviction with an attendance of 100 policemen; and in *The Times* of the 9th instant in reference to another case, it was stated that the tenants could have paid 20 times the rent, but they wished for process of eviction. Incidents of this kind could be found in any paper any day. They disclosed, not a universal condition of things in Ireland, but a normal condition in many districts. It was idle for the Government to shut their eyes to the significance of these facts; they could not be ignored by a Government seeking to deal with the country. The figures given by Mr. Baron Dowse in his Charge, and already quoted by the noble Lord opposite, were of greater significance than would be seen at first sight. In each case the offences were not ordinary ones, but those that were specially reported by the Constabulary between the Summer and Spring Assizes; and when the number had risen from 150 to 300 the matter had become serious indeed. There were several suggestive paragraphs in *The Times* of that morning, one relating to the difficulty the Executive had in dealing as they would wish with the quarters of one of the most distinguished of Her Majesty's regiments. It had been said that the true view of Ireland and Irish affairs might be obtained by contrasting crime and outrage now with previous periods, and by showing under the different heads what was going on. He did not think this was the way to meet the question. There was great ignorance displayed as to the number of persons who were "Boycotted;" and he had thought it right to draw attention to a few other circumstances, in order to show that they must look even deeper than statistics to find what was the present nature of the facts. He could assure their Lordships that it did not require much study to look deeper, because those who read the ordinary channels of information could discover for themselves, unless they wished to close their eyes to the information which was afforded. They could not, of course, make people see if they would not do so and intended to remain blind, nor could they make people understand if they would not accept the best information. The closing part of the Question of the noble Duke who introduced the subject was full of pregnant suggestion and meaning, and that was as to the present and future intentions of the Government—whether the Government thought that in the state of facts indicated in the speeches which had been made and in the statistics of crime issued they were adequately armed with the powers they at present possessed. He thought the noble Earl would acknowledge himself that throughout his speech he nowhere indicated that he did think the Government had at their disposal all the powers which were necessary; and the manner in which he asked for time further indicated that he considered that the present state of facts was not unfairly described by those who had preceded him. The noble Earl made no complaint whatever as to the way the matter had been brought before the House and the Government; but he seemed to think it would be unreasonable to argue that the Government should not be given a longer time before they were asked to take more violent remedies. But he would ask how long a time? He did not intend to press the matter at this moment; but he could not help remarking that, even in this grave state of affairs, the noble Earl the Leader of the Government in the House had only been able to tell them that by the 1st of April the Government would be in a position to indicate what their Irish policy was, and the broad aspect with which they would deal with it. But he would ask if the most sanguine of their Lordships thought when the proposals were put forward—proposals about which he would now make no observations — did they believe, if they had the consent of the Cabinet—about which, again, he would say nothing—did they believe that those proposals, whatever their character might be, would be instantaneously accepted by both Houses of Parliament? Whatever proposals were brought forward must take lengthened time in examination, discussion, amendment, and possibly rejection; and during all that time what would be the social state of Ireland? Were those murders to be allowed to repeat themselves, or was each murder to be brought under the attention of their Lordships, and to be accounted for or extenuated by threadbare statistics, which proved nothing? The government of Ireland was a difficult problem, and ought to be approached with a sincere, anxious, and conscientious desire to do what is right; and all criticism ought to be governed by a due consideration of the extreme difficulty of the task. He has said no word about the Irish policy of the Government — the time had not yet come. But their

Lordships' attention had been brought to outrages which shocked humanity, and were symptomatic of a diseased state of feeling in substantial parts of the country. They must earnestly hope that, whatever might be the future policy of the Government, it would not be forgotten that human life and the decencies of civilization, at all events, demanded earnest and constant care from Her Majesty's Government.

LORD FITZGERALD, who was indistinctly heard, said, he regretted the noble and learned Lord was so late with his speech. It was a speech he should like to have heard some months ago, when the noble and learned Lord was in Office, because the crimes which he denounced so eloquently existed then in quite as great force as they did now. It was true that the state of parts of Ireland was exceedingly unsatisfactory. But, he was happy to say, there were other parts of which a wholly different account could be given. The whole of Ulster was comparatively free from crime, and would compare most favourably with any part of England or Scotland; the Eastern counties also, for the most part, were orderly and quiet. Westmeath was in a condition of profound peace. But in parts of Kerry and of Cork, and the South-Western counties generally, there was a prevalence of crime such as ought to be repressed with the strongest possible hand. The late Viceroy had rightly pointed out that the serious character of the evil consisted not so much in the crime itself as in the sympathy which was manifested for crime by the people. He hoped to have heard that it was the intention of the Government to protect people in those parts, and he denied that the legislation which was necessary should be called coercive. It was not coercion to protect the weak, and much of the legislation needed already existed in this country. They had heard by the Returns what had taken place according to the official Reports; but the actual state of things was much worse. He well recollected the statement made by the late Viceroy at the suggestion of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) as to the policy of the late Government. The noble Earl on that occasion pointed to the diminution of crime under the vigorous administration of Lord Spencer, and urged that as a reason for the Government's not renewing any portion of the Crimes Act. But in consequence of that policy intimidation had increased fourfold. Some of the provisions of the Crimes Act were most valuable, especially those which gave a summary jurisdiction in cases where previously a jury was required, and those which enabled the magistrate to hold inquiries by means of which the perpetrators of crimes had in some instances been discovered. It was to be regretted that none of those provisions were renewed, and that the late Government had not, till the moment when they sent Mr. Smith to enable them in 48 hours to form a policy, really considered what course they were going to adopt in this most difficult problem. It was true that the present Government had as yet done nothing; but they were given to understand — he hoped they understood correctly — that in a short time they were to be informed what the Government intended to do for the purpose of restoring social order in Ireland.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, he wished to dwell upon the facts as they were, and the noble and learned Lord who had just spoken had told them what the state of Ireland really was. When the late Government met Parliament they had their Bill prepared; but he would not take his stand on a circumstance of that sort. The question was, what was the duty of the Government in the face of such a great emergency as now existed? Kerry, Limerick, Galway, and other parts of Ireland were not under the Government of the Queen at all. Crimes were there committed of such a character as to bring discredit on civilization, and these were not merely the isolated acts of individuals, but they were sympathized with by the whole of the neighbourhood. In addition to these crimes a large number of people had been "Boycotted." The noble Earl opposite had not ventured to say that the law was dealing with this state of things in a manner which was satisfactory to himself or to the Government, or in a manner which was likely to bring about a change in Ireland; but he only referred them to some future legislation. The arguments of the noble Earl, as far as they went, seemed to be to the effect that no repressive measures were required. At the end of last Session, when the new Government came in, it was said by the Prime Minister that he and the Government who went out had a measure prepared for continuing certain provisions of the Crimes Act. Why was not the right hon. Gentleman now prepared to introduce such a measure? He agreed with the noble and learned Lord that measures of such a kind ought not to be called coercive measures. They were measures for the repression of crime, and, given the same circumstances in England, they would be welcomed as a necessity, and as justice to those who were affected by such crimes. A solemn responsibility rested upon the Government. They might put it off to bring in a general policy; but they were responsible for every day which had elapsed since the Thursday when the late Government were prepared to bring in such measures as they thought necessary and adequate to cope with these great difficulties in Ireland. Since that time the present Government had been responsible when the existing law was not sufficient. The noble Earl opposite, he was glad to admit, did his duty on many occasions in Ireland manfully, courageously, and with fairness to those whom he was necessarily treating as enemies to his Government. He admitted also the difficulty in which the noble Earl now found himself. The noble Earl was a Member of a Government which was engaged in studying a certain great policy for Ireland; but the crime of Ireland had been irrespective of all those policies. Conciliation was tried at various times, and the crime had always increased unless the law was able to deal with it. It had been said by Mr. Sheil that his countrymen were very bad people to run away from. It was necessary to have strong laws strongly administered, as they were by the noble Earl, to meet the exceptional circumstances in which Ireland was placed. Let any attack be made on his (Viscount Cranbrook's) conduct as a Member of the late Government; but let them not delay action further. The course taken by the late Government was not in question in this discussion. During the period of that experiment of seven months, he frankly owned that, personally, he longed for it to come to a conclusion, and for Parliament to be sitting, so that they could address themselves to it for powers to deal with the growing evils in Ireland. And now he said the same. He did not say it in a spirit of opposition; he did not mean now to comment on the future policy of Her Majesty's Government; but he said that they had a solemn duty to perform, and at that hour they ought to be in a position to say that they had in their hands such weapons as were adequate to cope with the circumstances which prevailed in Ireland, and that if they failed to use them they were not doing their duty to their country and to their Queen.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of KIMBERLEY) said, he sincerely agreed with the noble Viscount that the grave matter they had been discussing that evening could not be in any way advanced by Party recrimination. But he must point out that it was not merely recrimination, but reference to the situation created by the late Government, that bore upon the question which they had to consider. Whether the course pursued by the late Government was right or wrong, it was clear that the present Government had to deal with the situation so created. It was useless now to say that just before they went out of Office the Government of Mr. Gladstone had a measure prepared, and that they were ready to apply to Parliament for a prolongation of the Crimes Act. That was, no doubt, true; but, for whatever reason, the Government which succeeded them did not think it right to propose a renewal of the Crimes Act. This created a wholly new situation. To propose to prolong the operation of an Act which might have been working well was a perfectly different thing from proposing its re-enactment after it had been dropped by the action of one of the great Parties in the State. They had to consider what was the position in which they were now placed. First of all, by the action of the late Government—and here he could not avoid some recrimination—the hands of the Executive of this country had been weakened, and the difficulty of going to Parliament for any repressive measure had been enormously increased. That being the situation, the Government had to consider whether the state of things as regarded serious crime—and he was not now speaking of "Boycotting"—was so alarming that they were bound to put aside everything else, and, without anticipating any other measures, to come to Parliament for repressive legislation. His noble Friend behind him had given a sufficient answer to this contention, and had shown that although undoubtedly in the last six months there had been some increase in agrarian crime, apart from threatening letters, yet the state of things was far less serious at present than it was when they thought it necessary formerly to bring in the Crimes Act. Looking to that fact, he maintained that they were justified in not now going to Parliament for a renewal of that measure. Then, there was another thing which they could not help considering. His own experience of Ireland was getting rather ancient; but with regard to agrarian crime the experience of all connected with the Government of Ireland had been the same. It had always existed more or less, and the really grave part of the matter was that the perpetrators of these crimes had the sympathy of a large part of the population. And he feared they would continue until we could bring the Irish people to look upon the law as a friend, and not as an enemy. After an experience of six months the late Government, when Parliament assembled, did not think matters in Ireland were in such a serious condition that they should announce to Parliament the introduction of repressive measures. If the Government had made up their minds they would have stated it in the Queen's Speech. The present Government were in some respects in the same position, and they did not think the time had arrived when they were called upon to bring in repressive measures. He agreed with the noble Viscount that nothing could be more grave than the circumstances in which they now found themselves, and that no subject could be more grave than the treatment of the questions in regard to Ireland; but if they had no greater difficulty in dealing with those questions than they had in repelling the attacks made upon the Government by noble Lords opposite for not bringing forward repressive legislation he should be very sanguine indeed of the result.

THE EARL OF IDDESLEIGH said, he rose with great reluctance to say a few words in reply to the noble Earl who had just addressed the House. He was most reluctant to leave the consideration of the subject to the question of a Party character raised by noble Lords on different sides of the House. But it was only right to point out that they ought not to allow one statement of the noble Earl to go unchallenged—namely, that the late Government at the time they met Parliament had not made their minds as to the serious condition of things existing in Ireland. Within two days of that time Notice was given of a measure which they were prepared at once to introduce and to prosecute in the other House. If that measure had been thought wrong it could have been resisted. But the Party opposite did not meet the Bill in that way; by a side wind they displaced the Government before they had had time to bring forward the measure of which they had given Notice. Noble Lords opposite had no right to say therefore—"You created a situation by what you did in the winter, and that situation we have to get out of now." They could not use that argument, as they had not allowed the late Government to bring forward measures which they recommended. Could they have refrained from making that dash at Office within the first few days of the Session, Parliament would have had before it the measure which they were prepared to propose, and then it would have been seen what it was that they thought it their duty to recommend, and what they should have asked Parliament to accept. Noble Lords opposite had not done that, and they had no right to come forward and twit them with what was really the consequence of their own action in displacing the late Government from power. The most serious point of this controversy was its effect on the situation at the present moment. Everyone felt that the situation was most serious, and that no more time than was absolutely inevitable should be taken up in endeavouring to re-establish the authority of the Queen's Government in Ireland. Yet the answer of Her Majesty's Government was that they must wait, partly because some controversy with respect to the action of the previous Government was proceeding, and partly because the whole question of Ireland—complicated as it was—was to be raised and discussed. Although told to wait, they had no assurance from Her Majesty's Government of their anxiety to support the authority of the Queen in

Ireland; and he feared that the most lamentable results would follow from the delay in enforcing the supremacy of the law in that country.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he wished to point out that a difficulty with regard to legislation for Ireland could be met by applying it to the United Kingdom. Crimes in Ireland which the present law could not reach might be put down by legislation for the three countries. He did not believe anyone in this country would object to "Boycotting" being made illegal here as well as in Ireland. The legislation should be permanent, and not merely temporary in its character. If the measures necessary for the security of life and property in Ireland were applied to England and Scotland as well, the idea would at once be got rid of that there was any prejudice against Ireland in applying to it exceptional legislation.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl GRANVILLE) said, with regard to what had fallen from the noble Earl who had last spoken, it was very undesirable, unless it were absolutely necessary, to have exceptional legislation for Ireland. But when it was proposed to introduce a law against "Boycotting" in the whole United Kingdom, he felt bound to point out that there was no "Boycotting" elsewhere than in Ireland.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE: But there might be.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that if "Boycotting" did not exist in the United Kingdom it would be impossible to bring in a Bill for its suppression. When complaint was made with reference to Ireland while the late Government was in Office, the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury), as a justification for the do-nothing policy of his Government, said that the present law could not deal with "Boycotting," and that they could not construct the law that would. It seemed to him at the time that the noble Marquess was giving a good deal of encouragement to the system by that remark; but still it was a declaration which could not be overlooked. Now, so short a time after, when Her Majesty's Government wished to bring forward the whole question, they were told that they were unreasonably delaying necessary measures for the safety of Ireland. What chance would they have of obtaining acceptance of any measures they might bring forward dealing with all questions with regard to Ireland if they were now to introduce some Bill which would take long to pass, and which, when passed, might be abortive and useless against "Boycotting?" It was very plausible to say—"We mean to introduce a Bill to destroy the National League." He objected as much as anybody to the policy of the National League, to much that they had done; but he had very great doubt indeed whether merely putting an end to the open action of the National League, as exactly the same machinery would be under the surface and working in the dark, would, in the slightest degree, relieve the great evils which now existed.

ARTIZANS' AND LABOURERS' DWELLINGS IMPROVEMENT ACTS.

Statement of buildings erected within the Metropolis and the City of London in pursuance of the Artizans' and Labourers' Dwellings Improvement Acts.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Minute of the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, dated 10th March 1886, postponing the operation of the Scotch Code (1886):

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at half past Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 15*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —NAVY ESTIMATES.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Resolution in Committee* — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Liquor Traffic (Local Veto) (Ulster) * [142].

Ordered — *First Reading* — Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation [141].

Second Reading—Marriages Validity [137].

Committee—Lunacy (Vacating of Seats) [85]—R.P.; Coal Mines [92] — R.P.; Labourers' (Ireland) Acts Amendment [10]—R.P.

Committee — *Report* — Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland) * [86].

Withdrawn—Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal * [33].

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (IRELAND) — DISTURBANCE AT THE SOUTH FERMANAGH ELECTION—ASSAULT ON JOHN M'MANUS.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that, on the evening of the declaration of the poll in South Fermanagh, a man of the name of John M'Manus was savagely assaulted opposite his own door; whether this attack was made by three Orangemen; if M'Manus was, in consequence of his injuries, confined to bed for three weeks, and attended by a doctor; were the men brought before the Petty Sessions Court, Lisnaskea, on 9th January; was the case against two of them dismissed; is it true that in the case of the third the resident and two magistrates were in favour of returning the accused for trial, while three other magistrates were for dismissal; are these three magistrates members of the Orange Society; did the district inspector of police state in Court that this case would be brought forward again; if so, why has nothing been heard of it at either of the two last sittings of the Court; and, if he can state what action it is proposed to take in this case?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, this affair was on December 5 last. Only one of three alleged assailants was known to have been an Orangeman. The other facts were as stated in the Question, the Bench being equally divided in respect to the case against the man. Owing to what appeared to be a misconception on the part of the District Inspector, the case against the other two men was not brought forward at the next Petty Sessions; but he was informed it was now under consideration by the Divisional Magistrates.

SCOTLAND—PORTREE PIER, ISLE OF SKYE—DEATH OF REV. DR. MACKAY.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether any official inquiry has taken place into the circumstances under which the late Rev. Dr. Mackay, of Hull, met his death last September by stumbling over the pier at Portree, Isle of Skye; and, if so, will there be any objection to lay the Papers upon the Table of the House?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) (Clackmannan, &c.): Yes, Sir; a careful official inquiry was made by the Procurator Fiscal at the time, seven witnesses having been examined, whose evidence extended to nearly 40 pages; and the evidence thus obtained, along with a Medical Report by Dr. Ross, was forwarded to the Crown Office, and considered by Crown Counsel in the usual way. It appeared that Dr. Mackay had been a passenger by the steamer *Clydesdale*, which arrived at Portree about 10 o'clock on the evening of August 19, and that he had gone ashore to take a walk. On returning to the steamer he fell into the water between the quay and the steamer, but was immediately rescued and conveyed to an hotel, and carefully attended to there by Dr. Ross. He had suffered two severe scalp wounds in falling from the quay; but his death, which happened on the followed Saturday, resulted from acute congestion of the lungs, due to his immersion in the water. There were two gangways between the steamer and the quay; and from Dr. Mackay's statement it appeared that he had been going on board by the forward gangway, which was being used for shipping lambs, and was requested to go by the after gangway, and that in proceeding from the one gangway to the other he had tripped and fallen into the water. I fear I cannot lay the Papers upon the Table, as, according to Scottish practice, such inquiries are not published.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—PUPIL TEACHERS' SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATIONS—PUBLICATION OF RESULTS.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If arrangements cannot be made to publish the result of pupil teachers scholarship examinations held in July before the end of September, instead of November 5th, as at present fixed; and, if he is aware that much inconvenience is caused to pupil teachers by the present arrangement?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir Lyon Playfair) (Leeds, S.): Without adding considerably to the staff, the results could not be published in September; but in future endeavours will be made to do so early in October.

SUPPLY—CLASS I., VOTE 3, ROYAL PARKS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS.

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether arrangements can be made for the office of First Commissioner of Works to be held by a Member of this House; or, in the absence of such an arrangement, whether he can insure that a Minister will be in attendance for the purpose of defending, instead of attacking, the Estimates?

MR. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) had the following Question on the Paper on the same subject:—To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, What course the Government propose to take with reference to the Vote in Committee of Supply on Thursday, which reduced Vote 3, Class I., for the Royal Parks, by the sum of £50,403?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): The hon. Member will allow me to answer his Question in conjunction with what I may, perhaps, be allowed to call the more practical Question of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith). The Government cannot assent to any alteration in the present arrangements relating to the Royal Parks. With reference to the other Parks, they are prepared to propose legislation for the purpose of transferring them to the charge of the Metropolitan Board; and the Government trust that, under these circumstances, the House will, pending such legislation, grant the necessary Supplies for the maintenance of those places of public enjoyment for the people.

MR. BRODRICK: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question. Will he answer it, or, as an alternative, will he give the House some assurance that he will himself endeavour to be present on such occasions as that of Friday last?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER: I did not think that the hon. Gentleman had seriously put his Question. The reason why I was not present on Friday night was because I was obeying the commands of the Queen, and I hope the hon. Member will accept that as a sufficient answer. Though he seems to think it ridiculous, I do not; and that was the reason I was not present. If the hon. Member really wishes an answer to the Question, which I thought he really had put rather in jest than in earnest, I have only to answer that I and all other Ministers are prepared to and do support the Estimates that are laid on the Table. As regards the other part of the Question, I have to say that the Government are not prepared at present to make any change in the arrangements on the subject of the Office of Works.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): Perhaps the House will allow me, as a matter of personal explanation, to say a word or two, as the Question really points to myself, and is intended to convey a censure upon me. In the last Parliament it is well known to a great many Members that I took a very active part in opposing the Vote for the Parks, but not for the Royal Parks. In both the proposals I submitted to the House I carefully excepted the proposal regarding the Royal Parks, and simply asked the House to support the view expressed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer—namely, that the local Parks should be transferred to a Local Body when such a Body was formed. In the course of the debate on the Vote on Thursday night—at which the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Brodrick) was not present—repeated challenges were made to me as to whether I still adhered to the views I expressed when out of Office, and a quotation was made to the Committee from one of my speeches. Under those circumstances, I felt bound in honour to get up and state that I had in no way receded from the opinions formerly expressed. Beyond that I did not say one word which could be regarded as an attack on the Estimates. On the contrary, I distinctly informed the Committee that the views of the Government and of the Treasury had been placed before the House by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers), who had been previously Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer would bring up the Vote again on Report or on the Supplementary Estimates?—because, after the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, he did not intend to oppose the Vote.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER said, perhaps the hon. Member would allow him time to consider the course to pursue.

EGYPT—THE PAPERS.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state when the Government will publish further Papers in continuation of Egypt (No. 2), 1886?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): Further Papers will be presented as soon as they form a collection of sufficient interest and completeness.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—SUAKIN.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government propose to carry on any further warlike operations against the tribes round Suakin; and, if not, whether they will put an end to the grain blockade in the Red Sea, which was undertaken with the view of storming those tribes into submission?

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked whether it was owing to instructions from home that Sir Charles Warren was, according to the morning papers, indulging in fresh expeditions to kill more Arabs?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): I have not seen the statement to which my hon. Friend refers, and he had better put the Question on the Paper. As to the Question of the hon. Member, it rests rather with the Military Authorities than the Foreign Office; but I may say that as the tribes round Suakin maintain an attitude of open hostility, Her Majesty's Government must reserve entire freedom of action as to the military and naval measures which should be taken for the safety of that port and of its garrison and inhabitants; but it is neither expected nor intended that any military measures should be otherwise than defensive in their object.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MALICIOUS BURNING OF HAY AT NEWCASTLE WEST, CO. LIMERICK—COMPENSATION.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether at the hearing of a presentment for alleged malicious burning of hay, before the grand jury of county Limerick on the 6th instant, evidence was given by Jeremiah M'Carthy to the effect that on the night of the burning he saw Rose Darcy, daughter of the owner, in conversation with a man named John Connors, in the employment of Darcy, near the hay, that she had an oil can, box of matches, and paper in her hands, and that about an hour afterwards he saw Connors throwing oil on the hay and setting it on fire; and, whether a primâ facie case having been thus established against Connors and Rose Darcy, the authorities will take steps to have them brought to trial for the crime of arson?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that the evidence given by Connors against Rose Darcy was not considered trustworthy. As he had mentioned before, it was in direct opposition to his former statement made on the same subject; and his evidence and that of M'Carthy was disbelieved by the Grand Jury, who heard all the parties. He was advised that, under all the circumstances, the evidence of Connors and of M'Carthy was not sufficient to justify any prosecution founded on it.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM: Will the right hon. Gentleman have these persons indicted for perjury?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I must consult the Attorney General for Ireland on that subject.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) ACT—RETURN OF FORMS TO THE CLERK OF THE UNION THROUGH THE POST OFFICE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will suggest to the Postmaster General the importance to the Unions of Ireland that the forms served by the Union officials under "The Parliamentary Registration Act, 1885," should be returned to the clerks of the Union post free?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, this was a matter for the Post Office Authorities, and he believed they were considering some representations made to them on the subject. The subject was one that concerned England as well as Ireland, and should be considered as a whole.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—WOODFORD, CO. GALWAY.

Captain M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the following incidents, in connection with the state of things existing in Woodford, county Galway, are correct; whether James Connor, shopkeeper, of Woodford, is completely boycotted for supplying goods to the police; whether Michael Dwyer, car driver, of Woodford, was boycotted, attacked, and beaten for having driven the police, and if he is now under police protection; whether several gamekeepers, wood rangers, rent warners, and bailiffs on properties in the locality were brought up before the Woodford Branch of the National League, and were compelled to leave their situations; whether only one eviction has up to the present been carried out on the estate of Sir Henry Burke, that of a man named "Francis O'Farrell," and whether the local National League organ, *The Western News and Weekly Examiner* of 13th February, stated that "O'Farrell was in a position to pay twenty times the amount of the claim made on him;" whether many tenants in the parish of Woodford are prevented paying their rents by the grossest intimidation; and, whether speakers at National League meetings there have advised open resistance to the Law?

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) said, he would like to ask, at the same time, whether it was true that Sir Henry Burke took out 60 ejectment decrees at the January Sessions against tenants on these estates, and that Mrs. Hewett took out 26 decrees against tenants who had paid the hanging gale, and, therefore, could not be legally ejected?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's Notice contravenes the Regulations of the House passed last week.

Mr. HARRIS: Sir, the ejectments——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am sorry to say, in answer to the hon. and gallant Member, that my information does not enable me to contradict, in any material point, the statements made in this Question. The state of affairs in and about Woodford is undoubtedly, as I informed the House last week, extremely bad, and has been for some days engaging the close and active attention of the Irish Government. The police give all possible protection, and are using every effort to procure evidence of offences. The meetings referred to in the last paragraph of the Question were held in private, and, as the police were therefore not present, it is impossible to know with any accuracy what passed or did not pass.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had any information that three tenants in that district, whose farms had been sold by auction for arrears, on coming into the agent's office and offering to settle the rent were told by him that they could not settle unless all the other tenants paid their rent?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he had not heard of it.

Captain M'CALMONT asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the bad state of things at Woodford was due to the presence of a prominent member of the National League named Higgins?

[No reply.]

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—CO. LIMERICK.

Captain M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, on Sunday night (7th), fifteen head of cattle, the property of a farmer named Michael O'Connor, were mutilated on his holding at Ballyculhane, Glen, county Limerick; if two other men, who lived near O'Connor, and who have recently taken a farm from which the previous tenant was evicted for non-payment of rent, had a number of cows in an outhouse, which was set on fire; if eight of the cows were roasted to death; if a quantity of hay was also burnt; and, if there had been a National League meeting in the immediate neighbourhood the same afternoon?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The facts of these hateful cruelties are, I believe, correctly described in the Question, and it is also true that a quantity of hay was burnt. A National League meeting was held in the locality on the same day, for the purpose, I believe, of selecting a Guardian to replace Lord Monteagle in the Chairmanship of the Union. I have carefully read the shorthand writer's notes of the proceedings at that meeting, and have laid them before the Attorney General for Ireland, who considers—and I fully concur in the opinion—that no language was used at that meeting that would warrant a prosecution. I should add that I am informed on good authority that the local branch of the National League have offered a reward of £100 for the discovery of the perpetrators of these atrocities.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMASTER AT OMAGH.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, If the postmaster at Omagh has leave to absent himself from his office for two hours per day, in order to discharge duties wholly apart from that of the post office; and, if not, whether the person in question will be instructed to devote himself exclusively to the discharge of his post official functions?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that the postmaster had not infringed upon any of the Rules of the Department.

COMMISSIONERS OF EDUCATION (IRELAND)—EXAMINATION PAPERS OF NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that two National teachers may be examined on the same papers of questions for First Class, and that one man gets First Division of First Class on taking a minimum of sixty-five per cent. and that the other, who has equally proved his efficiency in teaching, may take ninety per cent. and get only Second Division; if so, whether it is the intention of the Commissioners of National Education to continue such inequality; whether, when a National teacher is allowed to present himself for promotion at the Annual Examination, the Commissioners will consider the propriety of giving him the benefit of his abilities; and, whether the Commissioners will have the Examiners' names at the head of the papers, as is done in all other public Examinations?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that for the future there will be a separate set of examination papers for candidates seeking promotion to the two divisions of the first class, and the questions for the next examination have already been prepared on this principle. The examination and promotion of teachers are founded on the conjoint considerations of desert as teachers and ability as scholars. If the hon. Members will have the goodness to move for it, I shall be happy to lay on the Table a Memorandum showing the procedure adopted in the preparation of questions for these examinations. This Memorandum will explain how it is impossible that the name of the author should appear at the head of the papers.

INLAND REVENUE—STAMPS—AFFIXING OF NEWSPAPER STAMPS.

MR. D. GRAY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that, when newspaper stamps were impressed on the papers themselves instead of upon wrappers, the operation of stamping was, for Irish newspapers, performed in the Custom House, Dublin; and, whether there is any reason why the wrapper could not as easily be stamped in Dublin as the paper itself formerly was, instead of requiring the wrappers to be sent at considerable delay, inconvenience, and cost from Ireland to London and back again at the expense of the newspapers?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, that formerly the papers were merely hand stamped. That practice was discontinued in 1871. They were now stamped by machinery, for reasons of economy, in the London Office.

INLAND REVENUE — CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT (IRELAND) — CONFISCATED SNUFF AND TOBACCO.

MR. D. GRAY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is true that 24 tons of snuff, upon which duty had not been paid, were recently thrown by the Customs authorities into Dublin Bay; and, whether it would not be possible either to distribute confiscated snuff and tobacco amongst the poor of the hospitals and workhouses, or to sell it, and devote the proceeds to some public purpose?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhapton, E.), in reply, said, it was true that authority was given by the Board of Customs for the destruction, in the manner stated, of the quantity of snuff mentioned. But it had not been confiscated. It was snuff on which the duty had been paid, and on which the manufacturers had claimed and received drawback. The authorities did not think it right to distribute the snuff among the hospitals and workhouses. Confiscated tobacco was not sold, because the expense of doing so, independent of the duty, would not warrant that course.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—PIER AT INNISHMURRY ISLAND.

MR. P. McDONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Fishery Piers and Harbour Commissioners, two years ago, in reply to a memorial from the Innishmurry Island fishermen, promised that their inspector would be directed to visit the island and report upon the necessity of a landing pier; whether such visit and report have yet been made; and, if so, with what result; whether it was a fact that a gunboat, carrying provisions for the relief of the poor starving people, was unable to land anything owing to the want of a suitable pier, and had to lie off shore for several days; if any action has yet been taken towards the erection of the much required landing pier at Knoclane and Easky on the main land; and, whether he would endeavour to proceed with the erection of such necessary works so as to afford employment in relief of the distress now prevailing on the West Coast of Ireland and the adjacent Islands?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, the Fishery Piers and Harbour Commissioners informed him that they were not aware of having given the promise mentioned with regard to Innishmurry. On the contrary, they stated in August, 1884, that it was impossible to say when an inquiry could be held, and no such inquiry had yet been made. They had no official knowledge of the circumstances referred to in the third paragraph of the Question. The Commissioners were in communication with the parties interested in getting a pier at Knoclane, and the pier at Easky was more than half finished. Measures had been taken to push forward these works on the West Coast of Ireland.

BORNEO—FURTHER ACQUISITION OF TERRITORY BY THE NORTH BORNEO COMPANY.

SIR JOHN GORST (Chatham) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government are in possession of information respecting the recent acquisition of fresh territory by the North Borneo Company; whether complaints have reached Her Majesty's Government that some of the Natives have been deprived of their all by unjust and secret transfers of territory; whether many of these people have been thrown into prison when showing a natural repugnance in being ousted of all they possessed; what are the positions held by Mr. Treacher, the Acting Consul General, towards Her Majesty's Government and towards the North Borneo Company; and, how long he has held such positions respectively?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): Information has recently reached Her Majesty's Government respecting the acquisition referred to in the Question, and complaints have been received that cessions of territory have been obtained from a Native Prince through a Minister not duly authorized to make them, and under circumstances which Her Majesty's Government consider call for further inquiry. It is also alleged that Natives have suffered by these cessions. The information now in the possession of Her Majesty's Government is not sufficient to enable them to determine the controversies of fact which have arisen, nor to pronounce on the justice of the complaints. No information to the effect mentioned in the third paragraph of the Question has been received by Her Majesty's Government. Mr. Treacher, who was previously in the Colonial Service, and had acted as Administrator of Labuan and Consul General for Borneo between the years 1876 and 1880, was appointed in 1881 to be the principal representative of the North Borneo Company in Borneo. He has recently acted for Dr. Leys, the present Administrator and Consul General, during the latter's absence upon leave.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—APPURTENANCES OF LAND.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that in some cases in Ireland industrial schools are crippled for want of land to extend their usefulness; and, whether he can hold out any hope of legislation this Session to remedy the grievance?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The Irish Government have had no representations on this subject. Of course, the hon. Member is well aware that many of the schools are already in possession of land; and I am not aware that there is in any case any necessity for legislation to enable them to acquire land.

POST OFFICE—SAVINGS BANK DEPOSITS.

MR. BEADEL (Essex, Chelmsford) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Postmaster General would consider the practicability of making arrangements whereby Savings Bank deposits may be received at village Post Offices, with a view to encourage provident habits amongst agricultural labourers and others; or, if such Post Offices be not available, whether steps cannot be taken to appoint responsible persons willing to undertake the duties?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I am informed by the Postmaster General that the experience of his Department tends to show that Post Office Savings Banks are not generally required in the remote rural districts; but that whenever it appears that one is desired, and can be established without a probable loss to the State, steps are at once taken for opening an office. Arrangements already exist under which any responsible person may open an account in the Post Office Savings Bank on behalf of labourers and others without their personal attendance at a savings bank.

INLAND REVENUE—COLLECTION OF INCOME TAX.

MR. DWYER GRAY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to a number of letters in *The Essex Weekly News*, complaining of excessive assessments under Schedule D of the Income Tax, and the method in which appeals have been heard; whether it is a fact that in various districts the collectors have issued final and peremptory notices for payment of Income Tax, under threat of proceedings, at much earlier dates than usual; and, whether, in view of the great depression in trade, he will consider the advisability of simplifying and making more applicable to the circumstances of small traders, who only keep simple accounts, appeals against excessive assessments of their supposed profits?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I have not seen the letters referred to in the first paragraph of the Question. As to the second, I am informed that in no case have the collectors issued peremptory notices for payment until such payment was very long overdue. As to the third part of the Question with reference to small traders, it is a matter in the discretion of the Local District Commissioners, and it is understood that they are not by any means exacting in their requirements in such cases.

MR. DWYER GRAY: Is the Income Tax not due on the 1st of January? The Question I asked was, whether these peremptory notices were issued this year at an earlier date than usual?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: It is quite true it is due on the 1st of January, and it is desirable that it should be paid before the 31st of March. There has been, I believe, no undue pressure.

NAVY—H.M.S. "DIAMOND."

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Daily News* of the 10th instant, to the effect that H.M.S. *Diamond* had recently returned to Sydney, after an absence of three months spent in punishing natives in various parts, for murders committed by them on British subjects; whether it is true, as stated, that, at various points mentioned, villages were shelled and burned, nets and canoes destroyed, and cocoa-nut plantations laid waste; and, whether, in view of the allegations that—

> "The feeling on the station is that the natives have been punished with undue severity, as they simply sought to avenge themselves on unscrupulous 'labour traders' who have tried to carry them off as slaves to the Northern Queensland sugar plantations,"

he will cause any Despatches explanatory of the operations to be laid before Parliament?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): My attention has been called to the statement in *The Daily News* referred to in the Question of my hon. Friend. On the 18th of December last a despatch, dated October 20 last, was received from the late Sir Peter Scratchley, High Commissioner for New Guinea, in which he stated that after consultation with Captain Clayton, the Commander of the *Diamond*, it was decided that they should together visit the scenes of the several outrages which had to be investigated. After their investigations were completed, Sir Peter Scratchley proposed to submit for the information of the Colonial Office a General Report upon the whole subject. This Report has not yet been received. The delay in receiving it has probably been caused by the death of Sir Peter Scratchley.

MR. J. A. BLAKE (Carlow) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he has received any Report with regard to certain alleged operations of H.M.S. *Diamond* against the natives of some of the Islands in the Pacific, as stated in *The Daily News* and *Telegraph* of 10th and 11th instants; and, if not, if he will cause inquiry to be made as to their truth, and as to the instructions given to the Captain of the *Diamond*, and the Report of that officer as to the manner in which he carried them out; and, if he will lay the information, when received, upon the Table of the House?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): The only official information that has been received on this subject is the following extract from a letter dated January 14:—

> "The *Diamond* has arrived at Sydney from New Guinea on the 12th, and particulars of the cases of outrages by natives which Captain Clayton has recently investigated will shortly be forwarded to their Lordships."

As soon as this Report has been received I will communicate with the hon. Member, in order that he may renew his Question.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES BILL—RESIDENTS IN NORTH LAMBETH.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will be prepared to include in the Schedule of those householders in London whom he proposes to compensate in the "Compensation Bill" the residents in North Lambeth, who suffered, on the 21st ultimo, equally with those at the West End from the riotous proceedings of the mob?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinbugh, S.) The residents in North Lambeth will not be included among those entitled to compensation under the proposed Bill. The Government are of opinion that the disturbances of the 8th ultimo were of such an exceptional nature as to render special legislation desirable; but I cannot undertake to extend the provisions of the Bill to other occurrences of a less special character.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. VESEY FITZGERALD, R.M.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, Divisional Resident Magistrate, at present residing at Portarlington, Queen's County, refused, on the 17th February last, to attest the signatures to four claims to vote at an election of Poor Law Guardians when presented to him in the Petty Sessions Courthouse, Portarlington, by Mr. John Kavanagh, Poor Law Guardian for Ballyhittas Electoral Division, Mountmellick Union?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-upon-Tyne), in reply, said, Mr. Fitzgerald informed him, in respect to the case referred to, that he expressed himself as quite ready to attend to any application addressed to the Bench in a proper and respectful manner; but he did not regard Mr. Kavanagh's application or demeanour as coming within that category. It was Mr. Fitzgerald's practice to afford every facility to persons desiring to address the Bench who claimed to vote.

MR. LALOR: Did he fling back these papers?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Mr. Fitzgerald's account of the demeanour of this gentleman is not prepossessing. As to Mr. Fitzgerald's particular action in that matter, I cannot say.

MR. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): Had not Mr. Kavanagh a legal right to what he asked?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: A respectful demeanour should characterize the applicant.

SCOTLAND—EVICTION OF CROFTERS —RETURN OF CASES.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked the Secretary for Scotland, If he will procure without delay, and lay upon the Table of the House, a Return for the last thirty years, or a less time, of all evictions in cases of agricultural occupiers under £30 of annual rent, not being leaseholders, in those counties named in the Crofters Bill (No. 2) now before the House, distinguishing between evictions for arrears of rent, and other causes, and giving the numbers in each parish, and names of lands on which such evictions have taken place?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): To obtain the information for this Return would be a work of very great labour and cost indeed, and would, I should suppose, occupy months. Further, I may point out to the hon. Member that in the case of yearly tenancies, to which alone this Return he asks for applies, it would not be necessary to specify whether the rent was or was not in arrear—it would be enough to allege that the tenancy was yearly, and that the landlord desired to terminate it. It would, therefore, probably be impossible to obtain with any accuracy a statement of the cases in which the eviction was in respect of arrears, as distinguished from the cases in which it was not. Besides, many yearly tenants would remove upon warnings, of which there would be no official record.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—SUB-COMMISSIONERS—SITTING IN TYRONE.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it true that a large number of tenants in the Clogher (county Tyrone) Union, whose applications to have fair rents fixed were listed for hearing on the 9th February last, were required to attend at Aughnacloy, involving, in some cases, journeys of fifteen miles on foot for the tenants and their witnesses, instead of having their business disposed of at Clogher, where sittings had usually been held to deal with cases arising in the vicinity; whether, after complaining of this inconvenience, the tenants were informed that the sittings at Aughnacloy had also been abandoned, and the hearing of their cases postponed until the next sittings; whether the tenants have memorialised the Sub-Commissioners for a prompt hearing of their applications, pointing out that, unless the adjudication should be made before the 1st of May, they will be saddled with their present rack-rents for another half-year, and complaining that in some cases a delay of two years has already taken place in obtaining a decision upon their applications; and, whether the Commissioners will make arrangements to prevent any further hardship, expense, and miscarriage in the case of these poor tenants?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): It appears that the Sub-Commissioners were detained at Dungannon longer than was expected, the severe weather having retarded the inspection of farms there, and it consequently became necessary to adjourn the proposed sittings at Aughnacloy, which was considered the most fitting and convenient place for hearing the cases for that district. This was accordingly done, with the approval of the Chief Commissioners, and the earliest possible notice of the adjournment was given to the tenants. The Land Commissioners are not aware that any Memorial on the subject has been sent in by these tenants; but they state that there are no cases in the locality pending for two years. The oldest fair rent case appears to have been lodged on the 2nd of April last, and the remainder in August and September. The Commissioners observe that they fear it is not possible to make arrangements which are not liable to be disturbed by the weather, and that if these cases had been proceeded with other tenants later on the circuit would have had the same cause of complaint. The earliest possible notice of the adjournment was given.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: The reply appears to have rather missed the principal point of the Question, whether, after complaining of the inconvenience, the tenants were obliged to travel 15 miles, and were then informed that the sittings at Aughnacloy had also been abandoned, and the hearings postponed to next sittings, involving the payment of another half-year's rent? Is the reply of the right hon. Gentleman that because the people complained of travelling 15 miles their cases were put off altogether? Were not the tenants misinformed?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he did not think that was a fair inference from the reply of the Commissioners.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: The reply does not appear to explain why the cases were not tried at Aughnacloy, which is described as a convenient place by the Commissioners.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: No. The Question was why they were not heard there at a particular time, and the Commissioners had explained why the sittings were postponed.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN said, he was sorry to intervene again; but he would ask would the Commissioners make arrangements to enable the fair rents to be fixed without their being prejudiced by what had occurred?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY said, he had no undertaking to give as to the future; but if the hon. Gentleman would make clearer the point on which he wanted information, he (Mr. Morley) would communicate with the Commissioners upon it.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—DUBLIN AND BELFAST POST OFFICES—ANNUAL LEAVE OF TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Is it a fact that certain male telegraphists in the Dublin and Belfast Telegraph Offices only receive a fortnight's annnal leave, although performing a full share of Sunday and night duty; is it the fact that these are the only large offices in Great Britain and Ireland where the leave of duly appointed male telegraphists performing similar duties is restricted to a fortnight; and, will measures be taken to remove this inequality?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the Postmaster General had directed inquiries to be made whether there were any instances of the kind referred to by the hon. Member.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF MR. NEWEL.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will inform the House on whose recommendation the late Secretary to the Board of National Education in Ireland, Mr. Newel, was appointed a Commissioner; is it the case that, prior to his appointment, he was superannuated and awarded a pension after 46 years' service when deemed unfit for further service; is it true that, immediately on his appointment as Commissioner, his son was promoted over fourteen others of longer service from a subordinate position to the office of secretary; is it a fact that, when Mr. Lowther was Chief Secretary for Ireland, Mr. Newel, during the temporary absence of the present resident Commissioner on a Government inquiry in Malta, succeeded in diverting the £47,000 granted in the Estimates of that time to help the convent schools into the general expenditure instead of appropriating it as intended; and, will he inquire into the extent of the dissatisfaction expressed at those appointments?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, he really did not know, and had no means of knowing, on whose recommendation Mr. Newel was made Commissioner of National Education. He had voluntarily retired from the Secretaryship after 48 years' service. He received the pension to which he was legally entitled, and was appointed a Commissioner by Lord Carnarvon. He (Mr. Morley) had already explained to the hon. Member for Derry the circumstances under which Mr. Newel's son was promoted to the post of Head Inspector, not Secretary. He was satisfied that the appointment was made on the grounds of merit. The change by which the teachers in convent schools did not participate in these grants in 1879 was the act of the Government of the day.

ARMY—REGIMENTAL STATISTICS.

General FRASER (Lambeth, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he could grant the Return relating to the state of Battalions of Infantry which appears on to-day's paper?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): I have to say that I find that my Predecessors have uniformly declined to give information as to the constitution of individual regiments, and I must adhere to the rule.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—RATING QUALIFICATION FOR A GUARDIAN.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) (for Mr. Finucane) asked the President of the Local Government Board for Ireland, If, in a Poor Law Union, in which the rating qualification for a guardian is £20 per year, and two ratepayers are jointly rated at £27 yearly, whether either or both of those ratepayers are qualified to act as guardians?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), who replied, said, if either of the two ratepayers referred to was liable to contribute on a proportion which amounted to a rating qualification—that was to say, £20—he would be eligible for the office of elected Guardian. The two ratepayers in the example put by the hon. Member would not be eligible.

ARMY—WAR DEPARTMENT—GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS ABROAD.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, What quantity of work is now being performed for the War Department on the Continent; what contracts are running; what is the total of those contracts in money and materials; and, what proportions remain to be completed?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): The contracts that are being carried out on the Continent for the War Department are—For Hotchkiss, 6-pounder, quick-firing guns, with ammnnition, valued at £99,261; for German brown gunpowder, valued at £126,753; for Italian and Swiss walnut gun-stocks, valued at £52,946; for Cavalry swords, valued at £20,000; for various small items, valued at £8,541—making a total of £307,501. The value of the outstanding supplies—that is, the amount still undelivered under these contracts—is £185,833. These contracts were none of them entered into since I have been at the War Office; but I am informed that, speaking generally, none of the articles in question could, at the date of the respective contracts, have been obtained in this country.

HARBOURS—DOVER HARBOUR.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will state the actual amount that has up to this time been expended and the liabilities, if any, incurred in connection with the accommodation at Dover for the convicts intended to be employed on the construction of a harbour at that place?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Childers) (Edinburgh, S.): In reply to my hon. Friend I beg to say that the expenditure and liabilities in respect of buildings at Dover up to March 31, 1866, amount to £39,100; £13,175 has been expended on the purchase of land; but all of this will not be necessary for the buildings. A great portion will be required for the harbour works, or for any works of defence that may have to be erected.

THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES — SEPARATION OF NORTH QUEENSLAND FROM QUEENSLAND.

Mr. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government have come to any decision with reference to the proposed separation of North Queensland from the Colony of Queensland; and, whether, if any such change is made, Her Majesty's Government will take steps to place coloured labour in North Queensland under the direct supervision of the Colonial Office?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Osborne Morgan) (Denbighshire, E.): I understand that a

Memorial formally asking for the separation of North Queensland from the Colony of Queensland has been prepared in that Colony, but has not yet been received here; and, under these circumstances, of course no decision has been come to on the subject. The question of coloured labour will probably be referred to in the Memorial. In any case, it will be carefully considered by the Colonial Office.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—RENEWAL.

Mr. LEWIS (Londonderry), asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, amongst other things, the prohibition and regulation of the importation into Ireland of dynamite, gun cotton, and other explosives, are not provided for by the "Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881," which expires on the 1st June, 1886; and, whether the Government will state their intention as to applying or not for a renewal of that Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Sir, as I have already stated, the question whether the Peace Preservation Act is to be renewed or not is one that requires, and will receive, the attention of Her Majesty's Government, whose views regarding it will be made public when the proper time arrives. The matter is not materially affected by the considerations suggested in the Question of the hon. Member. The Act is essentially an Arms Act; and I am advised that the regulation of the explosives he mentions, whether as regards their importation, storage, or possession, is sufficiently provided for in ordinary legislation irrespective of the Peace Preservation Act.

RAILWAY AND CANAL COMPANIES—STATISTICAL RETURNS.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Government will grant a Return showing the mileage of each of the Railway and Canal Companies of the United Kingdom, explaining in the case of each Canal the extent to which it is under the control of any Railway Company, and accompanied by a map showing the whole of the Railway and Canal systems of the Country?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside): The information which the hon. Member wishes for with regard to the railways will be found in the Returns which are annually laid before Parliament; and the information with regard to Canals can be found in the Appendix to the Report of the Committee of both Houses of Parliament on Railway Amalgamation, which was appointed in the Session of 1872. Very few changes have been made since that date. If the hon. Member still wishes to move for the information I shall be glad to confer with him on the subject, as the Return will be costly.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — SCHOOL GRANTS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the Special Report given at page 101 of the last Education Report, is a sufficient compliance with the requirements of Section 98 of the Education Act viz. that the Department shall cause to be laid before Parliament each year a Special Report, stating their reasons for refusing a grant in each case; whether the Report states the reasons of the Department for each such refusal; whether the statement that "the [School] Board objected," or "the [School] Board and Her Majesty's Inspector considered the School unnecessary," afford to Parliament the reasons of the Department sufficiently to enable Parliament to judge of the fairness or otherwise of the refusal; and, whether he would consent to lay upon the Table an amended Return setting forth in detail the reasons of the Department in each case of refusal?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir Lyon Playfair) (Leeds, S.): I agree with the hon. Member that there may be improvement in stating the reasons for refusal of a grant, although the substance of the decision can only be given. When, as in the case of the Dan-y-Craig school, the House desires further information, the correspondence on the subject is presented. I believe that the Return at page 101 of the Report legally, though too briefly, complies with the 98th clause of the Act, and I do not think an amended Return is necessary. I have given instructions to state fuller reasons in the next Report.

POST-OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTAL FACILITIES IN DONEGAL.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will draw the attention of the Postmaster General to the immense distances which many centres of population in county Donegal are from the nearest telegraph station; and, whether he will consider the desirability of running a line to Bunbeg on the western coast?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the question of extending postal facilities in Donegal had frequently been considered. Further inquiries would be made, and the result should be made known to hon. Members interested.

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—COALING STATIONS.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he could, for the convenience of the House, state, before the discussion upon the Navy Estimates, the amount proposed to be taken in the Army Estimates for the completion of defences of coaling stations Abroad?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): We propose, in the Army Estimates, to take £50,000 towards works at the coaling stations abroad, and £138,200 towards armaments at the same stations.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL — AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS OF CAPITAL AND INCOME.

Captain PRICE (Devonport) asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, What has the cost of auditing the accounts of Greenwich Hospital been hitherto, and what is the estimated cost for the coming year; and, why is this charge now transferred from Naval to Greenwich Hospital Account?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. Duff) (Banffshire): The charge for auditing the capital and income accounts of Greenwich Hospital was, in 1870, fixed at £400 a-year. Owing to the sale of large portions of the landed property of the Hospital this was eventually reduced, in 1879, to £50 a-year. Up to 1885 no charge had been made for the audit of the appropriation account; but the Treasury having required that this should also be paid for, the present amount of £348 was fixed. At no time have naval funds borne the charge for the audit of Greenwich Hospital accounts. The Admiralty are unable to lay the Report of the Committee on Greenwich Hospital upon the Table. This Report contains much matter of a confidential nature, which in the interests of the Charity it would be very undesirable to make public.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—GAELIC IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

Mr. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the Secretary for Scotland, If, under the new regulation, it will be impossible for Gaelic speaking children to earn the extra shilling where no pupil teacher is employed to teach that language, and when it is taught by the principal teacher; and, if making Gaelic a special subject only means that it is to be taught in the same way as French or Latin, or whether Gaelic will be employed as a medium for teaching English?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Trevelyan) (Hawick, &c.): As the object is to encourage the employment of Gaelic-speaking pupil teachers, the extra 1*s.* will be paid, as stated in the Article, only where expense is incurred by employing such a pupil teacher. As a specific subject, Gaelic stands on the same footing as the other specific subjects; but in regard to the class subjects, intelligence may be tested by asking explanations in Gaelic; and a judicious use of Gaelic as a medium for teaching English will be one of the elements taken into account in assessing the grant for the infants and the earlier Standards.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF MILITIA STAFFS.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the great irregularities in the position as to pay and allowances between the non-commissioned officers of Militia Staffs serving on Army engagements and those on Militia engagements; and, whether he can hold out any hope that the claims of the latter to some amelioration of their condition in cases of long and meritorious service will be considered?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) (Leeds, W.): The intention is that all sergeants of the Militia Permanent Staff, as vacancies arise, shall be men serving on their Army engagements. Only about 700 sergeants serving on their Militia engagements remain out of a total of 4,567. These latter, undoubtedly, have a lower rate of pay than the former; but they have neither had the former's past Army service, nor share their liability to be removed to active Army duty whenever required. I may add that the Militia sergeants receive extra pay of 3*d.* a-day when employed at the depôt on Army duty, and that their pensions have been lately improved.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, in the constitution of the proposed Select Committee to inquire into Indian Administration, care will be taken to secure that the Committee shall be composed principally of persons who have had no official connection with the Indian Administration?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): Care will be taken that Members who have had no official connection with the Indian Government are properly represented on the Committee; but I cannot pledge myself to any particular proportion.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—THE WATERFORD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

Mr. R. POWER (Waterford) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received any communication respecting the Waterford Industrial School; whether the number of children in this school is in excess of the number for which a Government Grant is allowed; whether the school is capable of accommodating a larger number; whether the Government inspector has spoken in the most favourable terms of its management; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will consider the propriety of increasing the grant to the school?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, he had every desire to do whatever could be done for industrial schools in Ireland; but the Estimates for the current year having been finally closed he was precluded from considering the merits of any application with regard to industrial schools at the present moment. He was informed that the Estimates for the ensuing year's service showed a considerable increase on the sum voted for the present year.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Wexford, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that last year precisely the same reply was delivered to a similar application by his Predecessor in Office?

[No reply.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING—CRIMPING IN AMERICAN PORTS.

Captain VERNEY (Bucks, N., Buckingham) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that, owing to the abolishing of advance notes in 1881, the crimping system in some American ports has been within the last few months elevated into a fine art, so that seamen are practically swindled out of all their wages before they embark on their voyage, and then, having signed articles in the presence of Her Majesty's Consul for a shilling a month, they are paid off in this Country, or in a Continental port, absolutely penniless; and, if so, whether immediate orders will be telegraphed to Her Majesty's Consuls in America forbidding them directly or indirectly to countenance this iniquity?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside): The advance note was abolished in this country in 1881, and I am informed that good results have followed its abolition. I am at a loss to understand how its abolition in England can have facilitated crimping in the United States, which is an abuse of long standing, and has been the subject of repeated representations from Her Majesty's Government. The United States Government have recently passed a law to render advance notes absolutely illegal, with a view to putting a stop to crimping. Crimping, nevertheless, goes on, and advances are made. In a recent case where nearly a whole crew were landed destitute at Amsterdam, they had signed articles at New York for 1*s.* for the first month; but I subsequently learnt that they had each received an advance of $25 at New York. This did not appear on the face of the agreement, and the British Consul had no official cognizance of it; but the men fully understood that they were signing for 1*s.* a-month for the first month, and knew why they were doing so. I have given instructions that further inquiry should be made of Her Majesty's Consuls in the United States respecting the operation of the law with regard to advance notes, and will consider what steps can be taken to check the evils to which the hon. Member has called attention.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — ALLEGED ASSAULT ON MR. PATRICK CORKERY.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that, on the 2nd day of last November, a gentleman named Patrick Corkery was violently assaulted without cause, on the public road at Millstreet, by Head Constable O'Brien and Constable Byrne; whether the unpaid magistrates in Millstreet, upon the 31st December, dismissed the charge brought by Patrick Corkery, and corroborated by several witnesses against O'Brien and Byrne; and, whether an inquiry into the circumstances of the case will be made at an early and fitting opportunity?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, this case of alleged assault had been investigated by a Bench consisting of a Resident Magistrate and four local mgiastrates, and was dismissed on the merits. There was no corroborative evidence.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—EMPLOYMENT AS CARETAKERS AT INNISCARRA, CO. CORK.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that two sub-constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary are employed as caretakers upon the farm from which Daniel Cronin, of Faha, in the parish of Inniscarra, county of Cork, was evicted upon the 29th of January last; and, if the policemen are not fulfilling the said function, in what capacity are they dwelling upon the farm; whether there are many similar instances of constabulary being so employed in the county of Cork; and, whether he will bring about the withdrawal of all public officers subserving such functions?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): No. The two constables referred to were not employed as caretakers, but in affording protection to caretakers. There were no police in Cork employed as caretakers.

DR. TANNER inquired in what capacity the constables were employed if not as caretakers, there being no crime in the district?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I suppose the caretakers consider they stand in need of protection; whether they are really so or not I cannot say. It is a matter for the local authority.

PAROCHIAL GOVERNMENT—RIGHT TO VOTE AT VESTRIES.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If householders, whether males or unmarried females, whose names are entered in the occupiers' column of the rate book, but whose landlords pay the rates, are entitled to attend and vote at common vestries, provided that all rates made or becoming due more than three months previously have been paid; and, whether, looking to the doubt which exists in many rural parishes as to this right, and to the importance of its being thoroughly understood, the Local Government Board will take any steps to make the state of the Law publicly known?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.): The effect of the existing law is that householders, whether males or unmarried females, whose names are entered in the occupiers' column of the rate book, but whose landlords pay the rates, are entitled to attend and vote in common Vestries, provided that all rates made or become due more than three months previously have been paid. We have, however, no evidence that there is any such doubt on this question as to render any action on the part of the Board necessary, in the way of communicating with the overseers of the parishes in England and Wales. It will be remembered that there are about 15,000 separate Poor Law parishes.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, seeing that by the recent Parliamentary Return of Religious Instruction given in "School Board Schools" formed since April 1885, it appears that no religious instruction whatever is given in the Board Schools in the undermentioned parishes of Bedwas, Monmouthshire; Austerfield, Yorkshire; Kenarth and Llannon, Carmarthenshire; Bettws, Margam, Upper Dylais, Upper Neath, and Whitchurch, Glamorganshire, he will be pleased to draw the attention of the several School Boards in question to this defect in their system of teaching?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): The Department has no power by the Education Act to make any representation or to use any influence in regard to religious instruction in schools, and the Inspectors are expressly prohibited by Section 7 of the Act from taking any part in it. In the Return to which the hon. Member refers there are Board schools in which no religious instruction is given, and there have been a few similar cases in all previous Returns. The decision as to religious teaching rests wholly with the school boards. It would be against the whole spirit of the Act if I were to make any representations either to school boards or to voluntary schools on the subject of religious teaching.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CATHOLIC MAGISTRATES, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. KELLY (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether 148 gentlemen hold the Commission of the Peace for the county of Donegal, the vast majority of the people of which are Catholics; whether of those not more that one-twelfth are Catholics; whether there are many Catholics in the county fully qualified to hold the Commission of the Peace; and, whether the Lord Chancellor is prepared to consider the appointment of an additional number of Catholic Justices on the recommendation of representative bodies, or influential men of the county Donegal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, with the trifling exception that the actual number of gentlemen holding the Commission of the Peace for the County Donegal was 147, there was no reason to doubt the accuracy of the matter stated in the first two paragraphs of the Question. The Lord Chancellor, who was himself a Catholic, was not in a position to say how many Catholics there were in the county qualified for the commission; but, as he (Mr. Morley) had intimated upon a previous occasion, the Lord Chancellor would be prepared to consider any recommendations made as suggested in the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, if such recommendations had been previously made to the Lieutenant of the County.

THE SPENDING DEPARTMENTS OF THE STATE.

MR. RYLANDS (Burnley) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is the intention of the Government, at an early period this Session, to take steps for the appointment of Select Committees to inquire into the Administration and Expenditure of the great Spending Departments of the State?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian), in reply, said, that until the Indian Committee had been appointed it was impossible at present to give a forecast of possible proceedings in regard to the subject of the Question.

EDUCATION (IRELAND) — NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS—GOOD SERVICE SALARY.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How the teachers of National Schools in Ireland entitled to good service salary are paid that salary, whether yearly, half-yearly, or quarterly; is it a fact that such teachers received a half-year's payment of their good service salary about the 25th July, and a quarter's payment about the 25th October 1885; has the payment for the quarter ending 31st December last yet been paid; if not, what is the cause of the delay; and, will he direct that in future the good service salary be paid quarterly, and along with the ordinary salary?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Prior to the current financial year the good service salary in the case of Irish

National school teachers was paid annually, in one sum, but only after the completion of the year of service to which it related. The change to quarterly payment was made this year, with a view to the advantage and interest of the teachers. Payment of good service salary has been already made for December, 1885, quarter in the vast majority of cases. A few cases, however, remain unavoidably unpaid, owing to circumstances which have necessitated special inquiries and consideration.

PRIVILEGE—DUPLICATE SIGNATURES TO PETITIONS.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement, in the Second Report of the Petitions Committee, in reference to certain Petitions from Ireland against Repeal of the Union, viz.—

> "Your Committee have, in the case of the Petitions from the South Division of Donegal, presented on the 26th February by Mr. Macartney, reported to the House the number of names appended thereto; but they are of opinion that many of the names are in the same handwriting;"

and, whether he will consider the propriety of taking steps to make the practice of affixing fictitious signatures to Petitions to Parliament a punishable offence?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian), in reply, said, his hon. Friend the Member for Walsall (Sir Charles Forster) would give a more authoritative answer than he could. Undoubtedly his opinion was that although there might be, and probably would occur from time to time, abuses which he regretted from the unscrupulous use and employment of the power of petitioning, yet so far as the House was concerned the securities taken on the whole were quite sufficient. The constant and vigilant attention of the Committee on Petitions under the superintendence of his hon. Friend, he believed, caused the system, as a whole, to work satisfactorily, subject to the exceptional cases.

Sir CHARLES FORSTER said, the Committee on Petitions found in two Petitions a number of signatures in the same handwriting. In Petition No. 243 it appeared that 12 persons signed a large number of names, and in Petition No. 244 seven persons appeared to have signed for 336. The Petitions were formal in other respects, and all the Committee could do was to notice the circumstances in the extract given in the Question. He would remind the House that it possessed powers for the punishment of this offence. Twenty years ago two persons were committed to Newgate for a term of imprisonment for having forged signatures to Parliamentary Petitions.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—EXTERNAL TRADE OF THE COUNTRY.

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the large proportion of the population of this Country, dependent entirely upon its external trade, is annually increasing by hundreds of thousands, while this external trade has during the past two years gradually declined to the extent of nearly eighty millions (representing in large part the wages of labour), and is still declining; whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared with any proposals to encourage fresh enterprise which may arrest that decline; and, in particular, whether they will take any steps to induce the spread of our population and the employment of capital over the vast unoccupied lands in the Colonies entrusted to the British Nation; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will consent to the appointment of a Select Committee upon this urgent subject?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): My attention has been generally directed to the subject-matter of this Question. It was a subject-matter referred by the late Government to a Royal Commission. In these circumstances I could not ask the House to appoint a Select Commmittee.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—TRAWLING ON THE IRISH COAST.

Mr. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the injury done to the poor fishermen of Enniscrone, Easky, and Killala by the system of trawling; and, whether the Fishery Commission will take the necessary steps to prevent the continuence of trawling within certain limits?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): No complaint has been made to the Inspectors of Fisheries of injury done by trawling in the Killala Bay. Nearly all the fishermen at Enniscrone use trawls themselves. I believe that some of them have objected to larger boats than their own being allowed to fish there.

IRELAND—GRAND JURIES—RESOLUTIONS ON HOME RULE.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has received Copies of Resolutions passed by the large majority of the Grand Juries of Ireland, protesting against any scheme of Home Rule for that Country; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of this House the Resolutions so received from those representative bodies?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Before the Prime Minister answers the Questions I would like to ask him whether it is proper to include Grand Juries amongst "representative bodies?"

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Before the Question is answered, Sir, I would like to ask whether it is by way of satire or jest the Grand Juries of Ireland are called representative bodies?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, MidLothian): I am not aware that Grand Juries in Ireland have been called representative bodies. [An hon. MEMBER: It is so in the Question.] I certainly did not mean to answer for them in that character. I beg pardon; I see it is in the Question. I did not anticipate they would be so spoken of. My duty will be, as I stated before, to see what selection I can make. There are a great number of letters from private individuals entering into details which cannot be sufficiently weighty to be published. Although, undoubtedly, in many cases they are of great interest in themselves, yet they would necessarily repeat one another, and would contain matter that would not be for the consideration of the House. If I may be able to make a selection of a suitable kind, I will take care that the House shall know the opinion of the Grand Juries. Whether it would be right to print all these Reports of the Grand Juries is another matter, as they substantially correspond with one another in many respects. I will do the best I can to give a fair idea of the character of the Reports which have been received from bodies in Ireland, and not least from those which are representative bodies.

NAVY—THE ROYAL DOCKYARDS—DISCHARGE OF MEN AT DEVONPORT DOCKYARD.

In reply to Captain PRICE (Devonport),

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire) said, that notice had been given to 343 men to be discharged from Devonport Dockyard from the 20th instant. All these men had been engaged for purely temporary services in January last, on the distinct understanding that they would be discharged at the end of March. Communications were being held with the authorities at Devonport Dockyard, and it was hoped that arrangements might yet be made to prevent the discharge of a larger number of these men. No reduction had been made, or was intended to be made, in the normal staff of the establishment.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport) asked whether the hon. Gentleman was aware of the terms of the notice, which informed the men that their services would not be required after the 20th instant, "in consequence of a reduction of hands." Could the hon. Gentleman reconcile that statement with what he had said?

MR. R. W. DUFF said, the men had been engaged only until the end of March, and simply for temporary purposes.

SUPPLY—THE ARMY ESTIMATES.

MR. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) asked the Secretary of State for War when he proposed to take the Army Estimates?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAM) (Stirling, &c.), in reply, said, that there would be great inconvenience in postponing the Army Estimates beyond Thursday, on account of the ordinary statutory requirements. He must express his great regret that there had been some delay in printing the Estimates. They had been promised for to-day; but he was told that all that could be expected was a supply of 150 copies to-morrow.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that to take the Army Estimates on Thursday would not be giving the House a fair opportunity of considering important questions in connection with them. Perhaps the First Lord of the Treasury would allow him to say that if the Vote were taken next Monday there would still be time to get the Bill through Parliament.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) admitted that the right hon. Gentleman was justified in pressing his point. It was absolutely essential that the Vote should be taken not later than Monday. There was no doubt about that; for if they went beyond Monday they could not comply with the law. That being so, and owing to the temporary indisposition of the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert), which would prevent him making a regular statement that night, it was proposed that his hon. Friend should make his statement on Thursday. The Government hoped to get the Speaker out of the Chair that night on the Navy Estimates; but they would not take the first Vote till Thursday.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Then the Army Estimates are fixed for Monday?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Yes.

THE COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE—ALTERATION OF THE RULES OF DEBATE.

MR. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the fact that, on Wednesday last, a measure of great importance, on which a large number of honourable Members have given pledges to their constituents, was talked out, he will consider the propriety, without waiting for the appointment of a Committee on Procedure, of proposing some alteration of the Rules of Debate on Wednesday which will secure the judgment of the House being taken in the future?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I very much regret what happened on Wednesday last; but, at the same time, I do not think it would be possible to interrupt the Business of the House for the purpose of submitting to it a fractional part of the great and important question of Procedure; and I think it would be embarrassing to the Committee if we were to take out of their hands any portion of that great question.

CROFTERS' (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether it was his intention to proceed with the Crofters' Bill to-night; and, if so, after what hour the right hon. Gentleman would not proceed with it?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.), in reply, said, the course to be taken in regard to the Bill must depend upon what happened this evening. He hoped hon. Members interested in the measure would help the Government in pushing it forward. He could not absolutely name an hour after which it would not be taken.

MR. MACFARLANE asked if the reply meant that the right hon. Gentleman would take the Bill up to half-past 12?

MR. TREVELYAN replied, that he would proceed with the Bill if it was reached by 12 o'clock.

PARLIAMENT — PUBLIC BUSINESS — STANDING ORDER 485A—THE NAVY ESTIMATES.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Sir, I wish to put a Question to you upon a point of Order, in view of the Standing Order of November, 1882, which prescribes that—

> "Whenever the Committee of Supply stands as the first Order of the Day on Monday or Thursday, Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, unless on first going into Supply on the Army, Navy, or Civil Service Estimates respectively, or on any Vote of Credit an Amendment be moved or question raised relating to the Estimates proposed to be taken in Supply."

Now, Sir, the Question I wish to ask you is this—Whether, this evening, if the debate arising upon the first Notice of Amendment should not be completed but should be adjourned, this Standing Order will preclude the resumption of the debate on a future day, or whether the debate will be continued on the next day on which the Navy Estimates are set down?

MR. SPEAKER: The debate would be continued on the next day for which Supply is set down.

PARLIAMENT — THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (RULE 2, ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE)—THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE — CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE.

CAPTAIN **VERNEY** (Bucks, N., Buckingham): Under Rule 67, I rise to move the adjournment of the House. The question, Sir, on which I ask 40 Members to stand up and support me is that, although upwards of half the present House of Commons is composed of new Members who have been sent here to deal with the question of Procedure, no new Member has been put on the Procedure Committee.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified, Mr. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and less than 40 Members having risen in their places the House proceeded to the Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NAVY (EFFICIENCY).

RESOLUTION.

LORD **CHARLES BERESFORD** (Marylebone, E.), on rising to call attention to the large number of unemployed skilled artizans and others in the shipbuilding ports, and to move—

> "That now would be a suitable opportunity for the Sinking Fund to be suspended or Terminable Annuities created, in order to put the Royal Navy in that state of efficiency which is necessary for the safety of the Empire, at the least possible expense to the country, owing to the cheapness of material at the present time,"

said, his object was to call the attention of the House to the present state of the Navy. He had four points which he wished to press upon the House. First of all, he wished to show the number of the unemployed in the shipbuilding ports of Great Britain; secondly, the cheapness of material for shipbuilding; thirdly, he wished to show that the present strength of the Navy was not sufficient to perform all the duties it might be called upon to perform in time of war; and, fourthly, he would ask the House to vote certain moneys for the purpose of placing the Navy in the position it ought to hold, either by suspending the Sinking Fund or by creating Terminable Annuities. There were altogether 80,000 men—artificers of various kinds—in the country now unemployed, but who, if they were in work, would be engaged in the building of ships. These included upwards of 30,000 men on the Clyde; 30,000 at Newcastle and the North-Eastern ports; 5,000 or 8,000 on the Mersey; about 3,000 at Hull; and over 2,000 at Belfast. Then, as to the second point—the cheapness of material—there was a great difference in favour of the present time. Angle bars and plates were less than half their previous cost; compound armour was from £5 to £8 cheaper, and so of other materials. As to the third point—whether the Navy was efficient — the argument derived from the list of our armour-clads was a theoretic not a practical argument, for, though it might be said that England might have seven or eight armour-clads more than France, the duties which would fall upon our Fleet, when compared with the duties which would fall upon the French Fleet, would be as 10 to 1. He did not intend to urge that this country should invest more money in heavy armour-clads, because France had left off building any more. She had even left off building the two large ironclads that had been begun. Not that he thought we had enough of that class, but because the money would be spent more usefully on vessels which were more urgently required for the Fleet. But suppose Italy continued the policy of building heavy armour-clads, England was bound to build more. Taking the average of heavy ships, the French beat us in the corresponding class. In the class of what might be termed "bullies of the sea," the French were 500 tons better in weight—2½ inches in armour—the weight of their guns was considerably larger, and—which was an important point—the age of the French ships was from five to seven years less than that of the English. Of machine guns throwing shells—so necessary and most valuable as range finders—we had none, while the French had 1,200 Hotchkiss guns, throwing one-pound shells. In speed they were superior on the average by one knot. There were some of the component parts of our Fleet, such as cruisers and a torpedo fleet, in which we were lamentably weak, considering the activity displayed in building these classes by other nations. First of all with regard to cruisers. Foreign nations, having left off building heavy armourd vessels, were showing immense activity in regard to their cruiser fleet. At the end of the year this country would have 41 cruisers. Out of that number we must take 18 as obsolete vessels. That left 23 good vessels at the end of the year. There were 19 building; but he would say 17—for there were only 17 of a really excellent class—of which we had got seven laid down which would go 17½ knots. He was sorry they could not go 19. Then there were others of the *Mersey* class, and of the *Archer* class, and so on, making 19 altogether. Deducting the 18 obsolete boats, and taking 17, as he had said, that would give us 40 useful boats of different classes built and building. That number was insufficient. He would tell them what number we ought to have in order to maintain our supremacy. In the Channel we ought to have 12, in the Mediterranean eight, on the North American station five, on the South American three, on the West Coast of Africa two, on the Pacific four, on the China station 12—that sounded a great deal; but the French had 17 vessels in the Chinese waters, and we had not more than seven—in Australia five, the Cape four, on the East India Station five, which brought the total up to 60, whereas we had only got 40, as he had just shown. Any Admiral in command of a fleet would say that these cruisers were necessary to form one of the component parts. But the number he had given left none for the protection of our great Mercantile Marine. To make up the deficiency we should build at once 20 more—five of the *Australian* class, at a cost of £260,000 each, in all £1,300,000; 15 of a new class of 2,000 tons, of 20 knots, costing £110,000 each, or £1,650,000 in all. That would give us not one more than we ought to have. This class of vessels would be very cheap for what they could do. These could not be utilized to protect the great Mercantile Marine of this country, but were necessary simply to put the Fleet in the condition in which it ought to be with regard to cruisers. Three torpedo depôt ships should also be laid down. In all classes connected with torpedo warfare we were lamentably weak, and we ought therefore to immediately lay down three torpedo depôt ships of the *Hecla* class, with a speed of at least 19 knots. These should have a considerable capability of carrying coal, and all the necessaries for torpedo warfare—mines, connecting wires, batteries, buoys, spare Whiteheads, defence nets, and all kinds of mooring gear for torpedoes. They should also have workshops, so as to be able to provide against the various casualties that might occur, and carry a large number of supernumerary artificers and stokers. They ought also to carry a large supply of booms, so that they might run up a boom if they wanted to do so—as was lately done on the Coast of Ireland—as it must be remembered that the ships that would form a fighting fleet now would carry no spars for rigging up a boom. He would now turn to the seagoing torpedo vessels. This was another class they were very weak in—lamentably weak—when they looked at France. Our Navy had three *Scouts* laid down and one building; two *Curlews*, which were useless, and four *Grasshoppers*, which was a very excellent class. The latter were 450 tons burden, and their speed 20 knots. These, with the *Polyphemus*, made only 11 seagoing torpedo boats. He believed the French had now about eight seagoing torpedo vessels, and had laid down another 12. We had only got out one of these, and would only have 11 altogether. To put our Navy right in this class, he should say that we ought to build 21 of the *Grasshopper* class at £57,000 a-piece. That would make another £1,217,000. He would now speak of another class of torpedo boats, and he should like to point out that all these classes were absolutely necessary for warfare. It could not be said that the Navy should have one class of vessel only. England's duties were so many and varied on the sea that it was necessary to provide all these classes for the work that would have to be done under the different circumstances of war. He would suggest that they should do away with all classes of torpedo vessels of the boat class between the 135-feet seagoing boat and the 66-feet boat that was now carried in the *Hecla*, and that would be carried in the torpedo boat ships. How did the Navy stand with the only boats over 100 feet considered useful in rough weather? Great Britain had 69; Germany, 59; Italy, 47; France, 57; Russia, 26; Austria, 30. He thought the House would agree with him that he did not exaggerate when he said that our Navy was lamentably deficient in numbers in this class. He had said that the Navy should have the 135-feet boat, and he wished to give his reasons for suggesting it. The 125-feet boats were good boats, but only ran 19 knots; and a half-knot, he would point out, might win an action. The 135-feet boat, the *Falke*, he went down to see the other day. It was an Austrian boat, and our Navy had ordered one of them, Spain had ordered two, and Italy had ordered two. The beauty of this boat was that she could go 23 knots. The 125-feet boat could only go 19 knots; therefore he thought that the Navy should have the 135-feet boat, and nothing between that and the boat that was hoisted on the torpedo ship. France had ordered a large number of boats of this description to go about the same speed. At the present time our Navy had 54 laid down of the 125-feet boat, and only one of the 135-feet boat, *Falke* class. Austria had ordered 10 of this class to be completed every year. Considering the activity displayed by all foreign nations on this question of torpedo warfare, he contended that England was not efficiently provided in this direction, and would not be efficiently provided if it went to war in its present state. He could speak strongly on this question, and he thought it would, for instance, have been perfect madness to have sent the Fleet—although it was in good order and was formidable—under Admiral Hoskins to the Baltic last year, because the Fleet could have taken only eight torpedo boats, out of which only two could be called efficient. They were going to surprise or capsize the Russians, who, on the other hand, had 98 torpedo boats, 35 of them being really good; but, as he told the Russian Minister last night, if he had had one man there with a head on, he ought to have blown the English Fleet out of the water. Then, again, we had only three firms in England that could make torpedo boats. There were four; but only three worked for the Government. If a panic occurred, therefore, they would not be able to get the necessary work done, even if the pressure was tremendous. There was this danger with reference to this point—that France had eight firms, Germany six, and Italy six, to do work of this nature. That was a very important point, and it should be thought out with regard to what might happen in the future. The clever man was the man who looked ahead. He would suggest that the Admiralty should at once build 40 of the *Falke* class boats. These would cost £17,000 each. He did not know why they should pay that sum, seeing that the Austrian Government paid only £12,000 for them. That, however, was a question between the Government and the contractor. That was the end of the expenditure which he suggested. He now wished to touch upon other questions which were very important, but not quite of such vital importance as that of which he had been speaking. In the first place, he wished to say something as to the education of the officers and men. It was all very well to build ships and have guns; but all this was of no use unless they taught the officers and men how to use their weapons. The officers and men had never been in the position to know how to work the naval weapons which they would have to work in time of war. It was not only unfair, but absolutely dangerous, that such a state of things should exist. Ever since England had been England, the *personnel* of the Navy had never been better than now; and all that the officers and men wanted was to learn what they would have to do in time of war. Every Fleet should once a-year be put into a position which it would occupy if war were declared. As it was, it was exactly in the same position as a General who had an Army consisting of heavy Siege Artillery only, without Infantry, Horse or Field Artillery, or Cavalry. The Fleets had never been grouped together as they would be in time of war; and it was a most important thing that the officers and men should know how to work their ships at great speed. It was a difficult thing to do—it was a very difficult thing, he assured the House—to steady a nervous man for the first time on board a torpedo boat at full speed; and he should be happy to give hon. Members some day a chance of trying the experiment. He had had a great number of letters expressing the opinions of his brother officers; and they all told him that they gained more knowledge the other day under Admiral Hornby during the manœuvres on the Irish Coast than they had obtained through many years' previous service, because they had been put in the positions which they would occupy if war was declared. Then, with regard to the question of training squadrons, they could not do anything on the water with any man so well as with a trained sailor. The man who had been accustomed from his boyhood to work aloft possessed that readiness of resource and that independence of action which could not be got by a man in any other way. He hoped, therefore, that the House would see the necessity of having training squadrons, although they might cost a little money. They should never forget that the men should be trained first of all with the yards and masts. Yards and masts, however, should not be parts of the first-class ships. They should never have a Fleet without colliers and ammunition ships; and this, he wished to point out, was a very important matter. At every station the Fleet should be assembled every year for evolutions; and, as far as possible, these evolutions should be carried out by the order of the Admiralty. Added to this, the Admiralty should have a torpedo squadron formed every year for evolutionary purposes, the same as the Austrian and German Navies did at present. These were points he had not included in the work which, in his opinion, ought to be taken in hand at once for the English Navy. Going to other matters, he submitted that the Admiralty ought to organize the Mercantile Marine. Some of the vessels of the Mercantile Marine were supposed to carry guns; but these were only 40-pounder breech-loading guns and 64-pounder muzzle-loading guns. At present we could only arm some 20 vessels in that way; but he wished to point out that the guns they carried were perfectly useless against the modern vessels that would be brought to attack them. The question of arming the Mercantile Marine was one of very grave importance, because those vessels would have to defend themselves in time of war. Accordingly he would have places like Pembroke fitted up, so that in time of war the merchant vessel could run in, ship her guns, and then look after herself. It must be remembered that on those vessels we depended to carry our food supplies and the raw material essential to the commercial life of the country. The food supplies alone last year represented a value of £140,163,845. That was an enormous amount to trust to Providence, for it came to that and was nothing else. If one or two determined cruisers were to get in the way and stop the food supplies, what would be the result? We might win our actions at sea; but the people would have to pay £20,000,000 more for the food that would come into the country, the prices would so go up. The organization of the Naval Reserve was another matter of enormous importance. In that respect how did we compare with France, which had the best Naval Reserve of all the Continental Powers? The Royal Navy of France was 190,000, all told, out of which 130,000 were Reserve men —men who had passed through training in a man-of-war, and were capable of carrying out the orders given them when they were sent on board a ship. England, on the other hand, had only 79,900, all told, out of which she had only 18,500 Reserve. These were plain facts which would be found very serious if we went to war; and war, as everyone knew, was in these days a very sudden affair. It would, he thought, be easy to have a plan by which a large number of our merchant seamen should go through the Royal Navy for two, three, or five years as the case might be, and have a retaining fee. In that way the Admiralty would be able to lay hands on men all over the world if war was declared. The question with regard to the defence of the coaling stations was a simple marvel to all naval officers. The late Lord Dundonald, who was the greatest naval genius that a country ever produced, used to say—"Directly you produce steam and propel your vessels by machinery, what England ought to do is to take all the coaling stations she can, and then set to work and spend as much money as possible in getting them ready and fortified before she even builds her fleet of steamers." Lord Dundonald spoke like a sensible man. How were we now? The Admiralty, of course, said that the coaling stations came under the Military Vote; but directly war was declared the Admiral must send two of his best ships to defend the coaling stations. Coals were the very breath of life to the Fleet. Another point he wished to allude to was with regard to Coast defence. Considering the fact that our Coast line, without the Colonies at all, was a great deal larger than the French Coast line, he submitted that the Admiralty should organize some system of Naval Volunteers. He believed they might develop a system analogous to our magnificent Army of citizen soldiers that supported the Army, which would be of immense service to the Navy. Now, he was sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) was not in his place, because the right hon. Gentleman would be so interested in the cost of his little scheme. It amounted to £5,577,000. In looking at expense there was also a question of economy to be considered; and he should like to see the Admiralty order home immediately the 38 obsolete boats they had now at different stations, because otherwise they would have to repair them. That would be a useless and needless expense. These boats also created an enormous danger, because they went at so slow a pace that it would be no difficult enterprize for a smart Frenchman or Italian to go and mop the whole lot up, every one of them. He was afraid that was hardly Parliamentary language. At any rate, a good cruiser could take them all. That would be a terrible thing for England with the telegrams of "Another British gunboat taken" and "Another British gunboat gone wrong." Now, that was not only possible, but probable. If, however, these obsolete vessels were not ordered home, the best thing that could happen would be for each of their Commanders to blow his ship up and swim. He congratulated the present Board that they were going on with the whole Northbrook programme, and also with that of his noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton); but, even with the increased Estimate, the Navy was not in the position that the country thought it was. Now came the point, where was the money to come from? He had a proposal for that difficulty. It was not possible to say that these £5,000,000 should be thrown on the taxpayer, because he did not think the taxpayer was in a position to pay it. Suppose they were to say they would pay for the ships when they were completed. He would suggest that the money should be taken out of the Sinking Fund. Supposing the National Debt was to be extinguished in 100 years, why should it not be postponed for 102 years, and thus enable us to put the Navy in an efficient condition? If their Navy was broken through their posterity might have the satisfaction of paying double the National Debt. If the Navy was broken, and the first line of their defence destroyed, this Empire would be wrecked before they could bring her great latent wealth and power to work. Let them make the first line of defence strong, and they would run no danger. Better prevent a war by a few millions than spend many millions after a war has broken out. It was said—"Oh, the Navy Estimates are always increasing." Of course they were. In 1854 they were £7,500,000 sterling, and the Navy had to defend £268,000,000 of imports and exports. In 1883 they were £9,750,000, and the Navy had to defend £732,000,000 exports and imports. The proportions were not fair. He had a stronger argument than those he had advanced. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would agree with him with regard to this—that they threw a great deal of money away in panics. When war loomed in the distance they ordered all sorts of things they did not want. This was very demoralizing, and he wanted to stop that. He asked for £5,000,000 to do it. Why, £2,000,000 last year were thrown into the sea, and that was £2,000,000 which the taxpayers had to pay—not the way he proposed. It was used to hire and fit out the great mercantile ships, and it was used to retain ships which it was feared other Governments would buy. If they had their own ships they would not have to do that, and he maintained that was one very strong argument for his Motion. Do not let them go into these panics. They demoralized the country, and they were not English. He had endeavoured to give a plain statement of the actual facts, and he had endeavoured to avoid exaggeration. The question was one devoid of all Party feeling. These great defences of ours were National. The British man-of-war's man was not a panic-monger. He believed every single brother officer that he had the honour to serve with would agree with him in all these points. Let them not consider for a moment that he was carried away, by being a seaman, with a desire to spend money on the Service which was not necessary. He did not think there was much danger of that, after the facts and figures which he had given to the House. He would like the House to remember that this splendid Empire which was built by their forefathers, and which extended to every point of the compass, depended entirely upon our supremacy at sea; and were they to jeopardize the permanence of that heritage for some trifling sum of money? Why not spend a little money, and make a certainty of leaving this splendid inheritance to the future generations of Englishmen, by putting their naval supremacy beyond doubt? The noble and gallant Lord concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland), in rising to second the Motion, said, he confessed he could not see why the taxpayers of this generation alone should pay. The present was a most opportune occasion for engaging in this work. Labour and materials were both cheap. In his own borough of Sunderland they were providing relief works for 15,000 souls daily, and he held that a great deal of this distress might be ameliorated if the Government would give out those orders which were absolutely necessary. It was the duty of the Government, at a time of depression such as the present, to do all that they could to give the starving labourers bread and cheese. Thousands of miserable people were eking out a miserable existence, while Ministers did nothing for them. The present Government had ridden into power on the back of three acres and a cow, and had done nothing since they had come into power to ameliorate the condition of the great masses of the people of this country. Our Navy was in a condition, when compared with the Fleets of other European Powers, which urgently required consideration. At the time of the French Revolution, when England was mistress of the seas, the rest of the Naval Powers of Europe had only 180 ships of the line, while England had 207. Now the proportion was a very different one. With regard to her naval power, England ought, instead of being in arrears, to be in advance of all other nations; but this was by no means the case. Taking the case of torpedo boats, we found other nations greatly ahead of ourselves, both in the numbers of these boats and in the speed which they attained, the latter being a question greatly neglected by the Admiralty. An objection was made by every Government to any advance in our naval policy, on account of the cost; but when they came to compare the cost of providing additions to the Navy in time of peace with what it was in time of panic, they found it was infinitely cheaper to do the work in time of peace. With our Dockyards and private yards we had very great facilities for providing what was wanted for our Navy; and it was the duty of this country not to follow a cheeseparing policy, but to provide all the vessels necessary for the protection of our great Empire. Having regard to our immense Mercantile Marine it would require a very strong Naval Force to protect it in time of war. He hoped that the Government would give out orders for the building of the ships that were required, and would do so at once, as thereby they would do something towards relieving the congestion of labour in the shipbuilding ports.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "now would be a suitable opportunity for the Sinking Fund to be suspended, or Terminable Annuities created, in order to put the Royal Navy in that state of efficiency which is necessary for the safety of the Empire, at the least possible expense to the Country, owing to the cheapness of material at the present time,"—(*Lord Charles Beresford,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness) said, he had listened with great interest to the speech of the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), with which he agreed almost entirely. He would, however, ask the House to follow him into some other considerations. The great point of interest in naval matters was not now what it had been for many years. Down to 1880 the centre of interest in the Navy was in the contest between guns and armour. There was now no interest in that contest, although neither naval architects nor the makers of guns would admit that they had been defeated by their rivals. For years the pendulum had been swinging towards the supremacy of the gun; but now the centre of interest had been changed in consequence of the discovery within the last few years of a new weapon, which had, in the opinion of most, dethroned the gun from its supremacy as a naval weapon. The contest was now between the gun and the torpedo, which supplied what naval men had long desired—the means of wounding an antagonist below the water line. Science, which had given us the torpedo, would, no doubt, greatly develop its power. As big ships were the corollary of large guns, so small ships were the corollary of the torpedo. Between guns and armour the contest was, he might say, a friendly one, because large guns implied large ships, and large ships with heavy armour called for larger guns. But whether the gun or the torpedo was found most useful, the victor in the contest must displace the other. If it be true that the torpedo is the weapon of the future, were the Admiralty doing everything possible to develop that weapon? As yet that weapon was in a chrysalis state, and would emerge something very much more formidable. He would ask the Admiralty if everything was being done to further the progress of that weapon from the torpedo to the submarine gun? He urged this question upon them for this reason—that whoever made the most progress with the torpedo would undoubtedly have a great advantage in the event of being engaged in war. He had very great faith in the torpedo school of our Navy. It had improved enormously of recent years, and the officers were men of very considerable attainments; but from the very nature of the case the school might be the nursery, but could never be the workshop of invention. We knew the direction in which torpedo development was going, and we wanted to call on the inventive faculties of our countrymen to further that progress, that we might be the first with a really effective weapon that could not come from a school. The groove was too narrow. We must look for inventive talent elsewhere. This country ought to be as forward as possible in developing a weapon which would become the weapon of the future, and which would upset all the present shipbuilding plans and theories. In comparatively recent events the same arguments might be applied. It was notorious that the Navy had to be entirely re-armed because the Admiralty did not recognize in time that breech-loading guns were the guns of the future. That would have been recognized earlier if there had been an expenditure of money in calling forth inventive talent to solve the difficulty about the mechanism to close the breach of the gun. But we had now to re-arm the Navy at enormous expense. As was well known, the battle of Sadowa was lost because the Austrians had not then adopted the new mechanism of the rifle. Again, with torpedo boats we were not ready, and, in the case of panic, we had to spend large sums in hurrying them forward. It was the manifest duty of the Admiralty to offer every inducement to inventive talent, so that this country might take the lead in the development of the torpedo. In such matters it was necessary to be first in the field. He did not presume to speak for a large number of the Profession. These were his personal opinions in regard to torpedoes. He rather took issue with his noble Friend in reference to iron-clads. His noble Friend said he would not go in for iron-clads, and he agreed with him; but then his noble Friend went on to say if other countries built iron-clads we must follow them. Now, that he doubted. If this country really held the first rank as a naval scientific Power, we ought to be able to trust to our own opinion as to what was the best weapon, rather than to copy other nations. We ought to be able to see that the torpedo was the best weapon, and stick to that, never caring what other nations might do. We should not build big ships carrying big guns merely because other Powers had done so. At the present moment we were going to build three or four large iron-clads; but any of these, and any iron-clad afloat, could be disabled by a blow from a torpedo. [Sir EDWARD REED: No.] Yes; disabled in such a manner that she would fall a ready prey to another vessel. There were absolutely no means whatever of protecting large vessels from torpedoes, and a blow from a torpedo would disable any iron-clad ship afloat. It might be said armour-clad ships could be defended by machine guns and by nets; but he questioned both propositions. If it were proved to be true that armour-clad ships could be defended from torpedo boats by machine guns, the answer would be forthcoming in making these boats strong enough to resist the machine guns. Then would come the contest between machine guns and torpedo boats. Then it might be said nets might be hung around a big ship to keep off torpedoes; but in doing that we should be absolutely undoing what we had spent enormous sums of money to do—building great men-of-war of great speed and great capacity for turning. The mere fact of hanging nets around abolished those conditions. The big ships with big guns we were now building were rather the reflex of the old contest he had described. He questioned whether they were desirable, and he was afraid they were only an answer to another Power, and he denied that that was a wise policy. In March last year some remarks were made by Lord Northbrook, which showed him that the opinion he was placing before the House was, in theory, held by the Admiralty, but not carried out in practice. Lord Northbrook said—

> "The value of the torpedo attack was likely to increase. . . He did not mean alone, or even principally attacks by torpedo boats; but . . . it might be preferable to see ships of a smaller class. . . He entirely agreed, however, with the opinions expressed by the French Minister of Marine that it would be premature at present to give up building iron-clads, because . . . those large ships must probably constitute the most important element in the Fleets of the world."—(3 *Hansard*, [295] 238.)

And Lord Northbrook, having pointed out that a policy of building big ships had been followed all through the Administration, and that since then torpedoes had arisen, making an enormous difference in the policy that ought to be pursued, yet, with that fresh on his lips, he said—

> "But we must continue to build big ships and big guns, because other Powers do so."

Surely the answer ought to be—If big ships are being built we must meet them with torpedoes. Lord Northbrook and the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) at the time both held the view that the evolution of the Navy had been in the direction of torpedoes; but, instead of recognizing that in practice, they clung to their old idea of building big ships. In expressing a preference for small as against big ships, he expressed an individual opinion; but naval opinion was not made up on the point. It was in no sense against him. Everything seemed to point to the fact that the torpedo must be the weapon of the future, and that the gun would be practically displaced from its old supremacy. The noble and gallant Lord (Lord Charles Beresford) had something to say about education, and in much of that he agreed. He might put it in a concrete form, with regard to the management of a Fleet. There had never been an instance, so far as he knew, of any British Squadron or Fleet having been exercised in those evolutions which would be necessary in battle at full speed. Hon. Members of the House not familiar with naval matters should understand the enormous difference there was between the management of a vessel going at slow speed and at great speed. In the first case the management was of a clumsy weapon with plenty of time for consideration; but, as soon as speed was increased, then you had a weapon of extreme sensibility, requiring the greatest practical knowledge of management, and requiring very great nerve indeed to manœuvre. But would the House believe that, knowing as we did that in all human probability battles would be fought with ships going at the utmost speed of which they are capable, no squadron had ever been exercised under those conditions? The reason, he supposed, was because of the expenditure in coals; but should that trumpery consideration of expense stand in the way? Would a Fleet be sent into action with not a single captain or admiral having worked a vessel under the conditions in which he was about to fight? It was perfectly monstrous. With regard to coaling stations, he would only remark that, to our modern vessels, the coaling station was as necessary as her crew. The modern ship was a hundred times as useful as any number of old ships so long as she had coal; but without coal she was infinitely more useless. This should be borne in mind when coaling stations came to be discussed later on. He was not prepared to say that our Navy should be increased in proportion to the increase of our commerce. Going through the statistics of 60 years before 1884, he found that, while the tonnage of all vessels over 100 tons aggregate tonnage had increased nearly 300 per cent, yet the number of vessels in the same period had only increased 20 per cent so far as the Navy was concerned. It was just as easy to attack or to defend a big merchant ship as a small one; and, therefore, there was no reason for increasing our Navy in proportion to the increase in commercial tonnage; but, on the other side of the account, it must be remembered that, although there had not been such a very large increase in the number of merchant ships, yet the amount of space over which they had to pass and the multiplication of lines of commerce had enormously increased. From that point of view an increase in the Navy was essential. Sixty years ago our trade was confined to the West Indies, North America, the East Indies, and the Mediterranean; but since then our enormous China trade and Australian trade had grown up. A large trade with West Africa and South America had developed. Formerly it was easy to provide vessels for the protection of commerce by taking merchant vessels and putting a few guns on them, and history told him they did much service both in attack and defence. He denied, however, that that was the case now. He was distinctly of opinion that the system of taking large merchant steamers and converting them into ships for cruising and men-of-war for protecting our commerce was a complete and absolute mistake. Of course, he admitted that they were better than nothing; but he maintained that they ought to have something better. He said this for the simple reason that the engines and motive power of such steamers were almost in every case exposed and open to the enemy's fire. The large steamships were capital for the purposes for which they were built. The Secretary to the Admiralty in the late Liberal Administration (Sir Thomas Brassey) had remarked, when speaking of the cruisers which were laid down by his Government, that the belted cruiser would scarcely ever become obsolete through all the changes which might take place in the future of naval warfare. The right hon. Gentleman must be a very sanguine man indeed to make that statement. Of course, it might be true, but still it was a very bold statement to make, to say that any ship would through all the naval changes of the future never become obsolete. There was this difference, in his opinion, between what were called fighting ships and these cruisers. He should say that in a fighting ship they had to adapt the vessels to the weapons they would carry; while, on the other hand, in the cruisers they had to adapt the weapons to the vessels. He would observe that if they would give him for the purpose of protecting their commerce vessels which had speed, and had their engines and motive power properly protected, he would take what weapons the Government might give them; but it was essential that they should have a strong motive power and a good protecting power. It would be better if they could have good guns and torpedoes in these vessels; but they would rather have the class of vessels he had described, and put up with anything in the way of arms they could get, rather than go without swift protected vessels. Altogether, this, he thought, was not an unfair view to take of the matter, and he believed it was one which the naval element in the House would also adopt. On the question of torpedoes, he would not trouble the House at any greater length. On this subject he was only anxious to put before Her Majesty's Government the views that were held by a considerable section of his brother officers; and he was extremely obliged to hon. Members for the indulgence they had been good enough to extend to him.

Mr. D. J. JENKINS (Penryn and Falmouth) said, years ago Mr. Ward Hunt, the then Chief Secretary to the Admiralty, had come down to the House and said that our Fleet was simply a Fleet on paper—a phantom. Of course, such a statement as that, coming from so high an authority, caused a great deal of unnecessary panic; and he (Mr. J. D. Jenkins) hoped that nothing that would be said, or had been said, that night would have the same effect. When the House considered that naval science and gunnery had advanced with great rapidity during the last 10 or 15 years, and that iron-clad ships, built 10 or 15 years ago, had now become obsolete, he thought there was cause for great congratulation on the part of the taxpayers of this country that those who were responsible for the administration of the Navy had not been induced to increase that expenditure in an extravagant manner. He was bound to believe, notwithstanding the statement of the noble and gallant Lord that night (Lord Charles Beresford), that the responsible officers at the Admiralty were better informed of the true strength of our Fleet when compared with that of France and other great maritime nations than was imagined, and that their policy was to maintain our Fleet in a state of efficiency, and to keep it stronger than the Fleet of any other country. He was disposed to think, with the noble and gallant Lord, that we were apt to overrate the importance of our iron-clad ships in estimating the naval strength of this country. For a great maritime Power like England, he (Mr. D. J. Jenkins) agreed with the noble and gallant Lord that it was necessary that we should possess a large Fleet of cruising ships, and that some of those vessels should be capable of being propelled by sails as well as by steam. The noble and gallant Lord had called attention to the torpedo. He (Mr. D. J. Jenkins) had heard that the torpedo would be the naval weapon of the future. He thought that our huge iron-clads would be all very well as floating batteries; but that they were too large to be so efficiently manipulated as ships of a smaller class or type. It would, he considered, be a mistake for England to follow the example of Italy in building great monsters armed with 100-ton guns; and he only hoped that the House would not listen to any increased expenditure on the Navy at present. He believed that the administrators of the Navy were going on as fast as they ought to do; and he hoped, at all events, we should not be thrown into a state of panic by the statements that fell from the noble and gallant Lord, or statements from anybody else in the House.

MR. PEARCE (Lanark, Govan), in supporting the noble and gallant Lord who had brought forward the Motion, said, he felt sure his impressive speech had convinced the House of the necessity for increasing the strength of the Navy, and that the present was the time to do it. As that necessity was the basis of the argument in favour of giving work to the unemployed, he would like to supplement the noble Lord's speech by some remarks of his own. A few nights ago he had asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) for a Return to be laid upon the Table of the House showing the cost of the armoured, unarmoured, protected, and partially protected ships of the British Navy; and he informed him that the getting out of such a Return would involve so much labour that he regretted he could not give it to the House. He had, therefore, to obtain this information from other sources; and he found that the Fleet, excluding the old type of wooden vessels, had cost the country about £42,000,000. Another part of his Question to the hon. Gentleman was as to what was the estimated present value of the Fleet. That also, he informed him, the Admiralty had no record of. The present value of the ships he took it to be was the cost at which fighting ships of their character could be built to replace them, measured by the standard of offensive power, defensive power, speed, and coal-carrying capacity; and he estimated that a Fleet combining superior capabilities to the present Fleet could be built for the sum of £12,000,000. He thought, if they considered the requirements of the British Navy, that it had to protect our shores, our Colonies, our commerce, and our £140,000,000 of Mercantile Marine, a Fleet valued only at £12,000,000 was insufficient for those obligations. That became more apparent when they took into consideration that other nations had of late years been building ships of the modern type, and some of them not only having greater fighting qualities, but also superiority in regard to speed. Other nations seemed to have recognized earlier than our own officials had done that speed was one of the great factors in the war ships of the future. Only a year ago this country was in a state of semi-panic because a war was thought to be probable between ourselves and another European Power. The first thing then that was done by the Board of Admiralty was to look to the first line of defence, and what was the result? They found the Fleet was wofully deficient in fast cruisers, and they had to hire an amateur Fleet, selected from the fastest ships in the Mercantile Marine, to make up the deficiency. And what did the hire of this amateur Fleet cost us? Why, it cost the country £500,000 in six months. If, in time of probable war only, the country had to pay at the rate of £1,000,000 per annum for its deficiency in one respect in the constitution of the Fleet, what would it have to pay when the reality came? In his opinion, unless we altered the present method at once, we should have to rush in with £20,000,000 to put the Navy into such a state of efficiency as to comply with the obligations which would be imposed upon it. The number of obsolete ships in the Navy—and he regretted to say that some of them were of modern construction—had been from time to time referred to by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed); and he trusted that now the hon. Gentleman had taken a seat on the Treasury Bench the nation would not be deprived of his independent and valuable criticisms, but that he would continue to urge upon the Admiralty officials the proper type of vessels to build. It had been shown by the hon. Member—and he quite agreed with him—that some of the vessels at present building were of such a character that there was every probability of disaster befalling them after an action. In fact, their design was an invitation to the inventors of machine guns to perfect a system whereby the unprotected portions of the ship forward and aft might be easily cut away, and so render them unstable in a sea way after an engagement. They had been told that cruisers were being built capable of steaming 16 or 17 knots an hour at sea; but he did not believe there was a ship in the British Navy that could keep at sea for three days at a speed of 15 knots at the present time, and this when every day of the week vessels were crossing the Atlantic at a speed of from 18 to 20 knots an hour. The noble and gallant Lord had shown that, material being so much cheaper than it had ever been, the present was the time to make up for the deficiency in the Navy; and he appealed to the Government to take this exceptional opportunity to do so, and give employment to the thousands of workmen unemployed in the ports where shipbuilding was carried on. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) told the House on Friday, in the debate on harbours of refuge, that to put artizans brought up to work so different from that rough work required of them in the construction of harbours would unfit them for their own handicraft afterwards; but they did not ask that of the Government—they asked the Government to give work which they held to be of necessity to the country to men who had been brought up to that description of labour. Again, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) told the House in the same debate that the Government would not interfere in providing work for the unemployed, and urged them to appeal to their Local Authorities. Why, the Local Authorities in one of the boroughs in the division of the county which he represented informed him that at the present time they were £1,200 short in the local rates, arising from the inability of the poor people to pay, there being 8,000 to 9,000 men unemployed in the borough. These men had waited, hoping the Government would give them work. They had not rioted; they had not demonstrated; but they had pressed him to ask the Government to look upon their sad distress and employ them upon work they had been brought up to perform. The Government had now an opportunity of doing two great services, for which the country would give them full appreciation; they had an opportunity of putting the Navy in a state of efficiency at a time when it could be done more cheaply than possibly at any time in the future; and they had an opportunity of giving work to the thousands of men in the shipbuilding districts, who were literally in a state of starvation.

SIR DONALD CURRIE (Perthshire, W.) said, he had heard the speech of the noble and gallant Lord on this question with great interest, and with much of that speech he thoroughly agreed. They had found out since the debate in December, 1884, that there was a necessity for the cry of that time when the country was not thoroughly alive to its position as a Naval Power. There was the usual condemnation at that period of those who were bold enough to say something to the contrary; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers), like former Chancellors, spoke in favour of economy, and pointed to the experience of the past in regard to vessels that were unsuitable. The noble and gallant Lord referred to the subject of our Coast line. Well, he (Sir Donald Currie) had taken the figures, and he found that while the Coast line of France was 1,200 miles, that of England was 3,000 miles, Germany 700 miles, and Italy 1,500 miles; in other words, as regarded our home defences Great Britain ought to have a Navy sufficiently powerful to defend double the extent of coast exposed in Italy or France. But besides that we had far more ports and a much larger trade to protect. He remembered saying in the debate of 1884 that, as regarded the Navy, we were short of nearly everything. The House would be surprised to know that we had not more than 20 torpedoes at that time, while France had four times as many. Now, it was a positive fact, as stated by the noble and gallant Lord, that the British Fleet, if it had gone to the Baltic, would have absolutely risked destruction. This country had not more than eight or nine fit for the Baltic service, while it was perfectly well known that Russia had 85 to 90. But that was not all. Lord Northbrook, then the First Lord of the Admiralty, in that time of scare, ordered 30 or 40 torpedoes in a day. Why, then, was it previously debated in this House that they had a sufficient number? Having ordered these torpedo vessels, they could not be got ready in time before the closing of the Baltic; and if they had been ready they would have been of no use, for there were no torpedoes to put in them. When that was pointed out the defence set up in that House was that they were to be torpedo catchers. In other words, the preparations for the defence of this country and for attack against those who were superior to us in torpedoes amounted to this—that for the Baltic campaign, in which our ships were expected to show off to somewhat more advantage than when Sir Charles Napier ordered his sailors to sharpen their cutlasses, we were actually without a sufficient supply of torpedoes, and the proof was this. 40 were ordered in a day, at a cost of more than £500,000, and these would have been absolutely of no service, for they could not have been ready in time. In December, 1884, there was not a single torpedo vessel at Bermuda, Aden, Bombay, Singapore, and other important naval stations; it was not till months afterwards, and only a short time ago, that they were sent to the Cape and other stations. We had not guns to defend the ports; and at Singapore and Hong Kong—when danger from Russia and France seemed imminent—we had but little protection, and the Admiralty had to send the *Alexandra* through the Canal to the Mediterranean. Again, our coaling stations were not even now properly fortified. It was several years since a Committee was appointed to inquire into the question of our coaling stations. For two years no attention was paid to its recommendations, and it was only by telegraph a message was sent out in September or October, 1884, to fortify the unfortified places. The store of 100,000 tons of coal in depôt at Hong Kong and Singapore was at the mercy of a French Fleet, at that time infinitely stronger than ours in those seas. It was said that British merchant ships were of no great value as cruisers. Well, the argument urged in 1884 was that we ought to have British cruisers belonging to our own Government. Fifteen ships were taken up from the Mercantile Marine as absolutely necessary when war was imminent; some were little worth as cruisers; but the Government had to take them because they had no others. When these vessels did get guns, they were old, obsolete guns that were not of much use. Now, all this meant absence of efficiency and of preparation; and he judged that the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Charles Beresford) was perfectly right in proposing that there should be immediate action in the matter, now that the public mind was much more alive than formerly to the necessity for preparedness, looking to the Colonial policy of France and Germany which had been developed of late years and the risk of war. He would go in for the programme of the noble and gallant Lord, because he believed it would be a very cheap premium of insurance to spend annually a large sum in that direction. He sympathized with the desire of the Chancellor of the Exchequer not to go to the taxpayers with increased demands; but he held that if it was a question of having the necessary instruments of warfare to maintain our position abroad, then the expenditure required was of no moment whatever. After referring to the absence of proper arrangements for manning the hired merchant cruisers, and showing that no men could be spared from Her Majesty's ships for that purpose, the hon. Gentleman said that, in the recent experience they had had, between five and six weeks were taken to fit up the hired merchant cruisers. If we had a proper system, there should be no difficulty in fitting up a cruiser in six or seven days. The lesson from all this was that the Government should have their own cruisers, and be ready to make immediate use of whatever suitable merchant vessels they might take. It should not be forgotten that this Empire was worth preserving, and they could not make a greater mistake than by forgetting this. The great thing was to be prepared, and if the country were impressed with the conviction they would strengthen the hands of the Government. It was said that the Navy could stand against any combination of Powers. He denied that that was so. Looking at our Colonies and our widely-extended commerce, we were not very much superior to France alone at the present time. He trusted the House would emphasize the observations of the noble and gallant Lord, and that the country would take the matter to heart.

Sir J. E. COMMERELL (Southampton) said, he was desirous of making a few observations on the remarks which fell from the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). The hon. Member for Falmouth (Mr. D. J. Jenkins) seemed to be the only hon. Member on the Ministerial side of the House who appeared to doubt the fact of the very incomplete and unready state of the British Navy.

Mr. D. J. JENKINS said, that he had quoted the Admiralty officials on the point.

Sir J. E. COMMERELL said, he would like to point out to the hon. Gentleman a little fact, which might set his mind at rest on that point. When a small Russian cruiser in April last appeared on the North American Station, out of the whole of the squadron of which he (Sir John E. Commerell) had the command, he had only one vessel which, from the state of her boilers, was able to meet that cruiser. Out of that squadron there were three corvettes whose boilers were so defective, and the corvettes themselves of so obsolete a type, that he was perfectly certain, if they had fallen in singly with that small Russian cruiser, they would have been sunk in an hour. The only ship he had on the North American Station that would have had the slightest chance was the *Canada*. The very first time that she practised with her shells every one of those shells turned blind, and out of 50 of those shells not one exploded. He thought the argument of keeping up the British Fleet in a proper manner depended very much upon what were the requirements of the country. It was all very well to say that we were numerically superior to France. That might be correct; but it was not correct to say that we were superior to France and Italy combined. And though we might be numerically superior in the force of our ships as regards either of those Powers, yet, regarding our requirements, we were very inferior. As the noble Lord (Lord Charles Beresford) said, we had an enormous duty to perform—ten times more than any other Power. The greatest duty of all was to consider how we might maintain our food supply, which almost entirely came from abroad, and however victorious we might be, or gallant our seamen, if we could not protect our food supply England would most assuredly come off second best. In 1793, when the French revolutionary war broke out, in those days France depended very much for her food supply on America. What was the consequence? France, in the battle on the 1st of June, lost five or six fine ships, compensated for by her maintaining her food supply from America. He would put it to hon. Members, ought we to hesitate to spend a few millions upon our Navy, seeing in what a position we might be placed of degradation and disaster? The paucity of our Fleet was not so much in quantity as quality. We had now on the list of our Navy a very large quantity of obsolete corvettes, small gunboats, and gun vessels, which were justly said to be only fit to cook the kettles of all the old women in England. There was a very large proportion of obsolete ships indeed. When there were so many corvettes, with old, obsolete guns and wooden carriages, the hon. Member for Falmouth (Mr. D. J. Jenkins) had no warrant for saying that the Navy of Great Britain was in the state it ought to be. He would ask what took place the other day during the time of the Russian scare? The sum of £357,000 was spent for the hire of 16 ships, which he might say did very little service. If that money had been laid out on seven *Grasshoppers*, with a speed of 21 knots an hour, we should have had those vessels in our command now. On our foreign stations, he had no hesitation in saying, there were nothing but obsolete vessels. It did not surprise him that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway—the Radical Members—scrutinized the increasing expenditure of the Navy. When they looked at the form of their vessels, and at the money thrown away in the Dockyards—he had no hesitation in saying that was the literal truth—naval men were only too pleased to find that these things should become the subject of intelligent criticism. It was a great pleasure to them to see the Dockyards examined by gentlemen who understood them, and to see that our money was not thrown away. Now, he would give the House one or two instances which had come under his own observation. Sir Spencer Robinson, one of the most intelligent Controllers of the Navy, laid it down as an axiom that it was useless to put masts and yards in ships with twin screws. He (Sir J. E. Commerell) had had his flag flying in a ship with double screws, represented by the Controller of the Admiralty as a fast cruiser, which would catch any of the wasps of the enemy that might be preying upon our commerce. Now, what did this fast cruiser turn out? She turned out to be a vessel which, under the most favourable circumstances, could not exceed 13½ knots an hour. Their masts were utterly useless to them. He had represented year after year that they were not only useless, but dangerous, because when under sail they could not steer. Yet what did he see when he came down to the Dockyard? He saw the *Impérieuse* fitted with masts and yards, and in fifty times a worse condition than the *Northampton*, which had carried his flag. By that means they utterly destroyed the *Impérieuse* as a fighting ship. When he spoke about it the other day, he asked how they could think of sending a ship to sea with such things as those? But they replied—"Oh, no doubt before going to sea the masts will come out." Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, therefore, had a right to complain. Those masts and yards were not only objectionable for double screw ships, but were a source of tremendous danger in action, and the danger was quadrupled in a double as compared with a single screw. He believed himself that the Navy was in a very dubious state. He thought those old forms were useless in time of war, and expensive in time of peace. It would be better to sell them, and get vessels of a more modern type, which would not only protect our commerce, but prey upon the commerce of the enemy. It was not his intention to weary the House on the merits of gun and torpedo boats. That was a purely technical question. There was no doubt that as regards the Navy we must keep up with the times, and go ahead as other nations. He was perfectly aware that would cost money; but would any Government be able to face the country which had left the Navy in such a state that in time of war it would not be able to protect our commerce as well as the shores of the country? He did not hesitate to say that nine out of every 10 officers would agree that we were far behind what we ought to be. It was very much better, as the noble and gallant Lord said, that we should lay out £5,000,000 now on the Navy than to have scare after scare, when millions of money were thrown away one after the other. In the present day wars came on suddenly, and the issue was fought out quickly. Our naval officers were now highly educated, and the seamen as good, perhaps better, than ever they were. He (Sir J. E. Commerell), therefore, asked at a time like this, when we had such fine a *personnel*, for the sake of a few millions to put our men in ships that would be worthy of them. It was not in the power of every man to command success; but at least they would try to deserve it. It would not do to turn round and say that in olden times our men would have done differently. For his own part, he was convinced our seamen would do as much in the future as ever they had done in the past. But they must give them proper tools to fight with. During the late scare it was stated that Lord Northbrook had ordered one day 40 torpedo boats, which were wanted for instant service. Those vessels, he believed, cost between £16,000 and £17,000. Now, he had been told that only one or two firms were allowed to tender for doing Admiralty torpedo work, as they executed the work so quickly, and that other builders had not the slightest chance, as they could not be relied upon. He would like to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) how many of these boats had been delivered in a state fit for service now? He believed there were only 17, and they were not fitted with torpedo tubes. That assertion, he believed, would not be denied. He was anxious in time of peace to see all our large mercantile shipbuilding yards employed as much as possible, so that they might learn what the Admiralty requirements were. The Admiralty work was not so difficult to execute, but was very technical, and required special knowledge; so much so, that if two men were to tender for the same class of work one might, for want of knowledge, lose £5,000, and the other gain that amount through his technical skill. He had always held that it would be an excellent thing in times of peace to keep the shipbuilding yards busy, so that in time of war they might be relied upon to do their work efficiently. He was not among those who wished to see all our work given out under contract. Far from it. He wished to see the Naval Dockyards kept in an efficient state, and ready to turn out any work that might be required from them, which was not the case now. There was another question to which he wished briefly to refer, and that was in reference to squadrons not being employed in naval tactics on full speed. Having commanded a squadron himself he could say it was not a question of economy. But as the squadrons were composed of so many different types of ships, it was necessary that the speed of the whole squadron should be brought down to the speed of the slowest vessel. The last point to which he would refer was our coaling stations. He did not think the House was aware of the bad state of our coaling stations. He spoke more especially of those which he happened to know, and which had come under his own observation. The coaling station at Bermuda, for example, was supposed to be one of the most important in the world, cut off from the mainland by 800 miles. If war were to break out between France and ourselves the people of Bermuda would know nothing about it. He was happy to think the late Government contemplated a remedy for this state of things. It was not a question of what had been done or left undone in the past by any Government, but of what should be done in the future. The Bermuda coaling station was now absolutely unprotected, though a large sum of money had been expended upon it. At the present moment, an iron-clad of 7,000 tons could make her way to within bombarding distance of our Dockyard and coaling station at Bermuda without coming under the fire of a single gun from that station. The North American coaling station also was utterly inadequate, and though, perhaps, he might be wrong in admitting it, if war were to break out with a Foreign Power the coal fields of Cape Breton might be seized without our knowing anything about it. Could the hon. Member for Falmouth, therefore, say that our Navy was in a proper state of defence, while our coaling stations depended at present upon the defence given them by the Navy? He (Sir J. E. Commerell) maintained that our coaling stations were in an improper condition.

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY (Hastings) said, he must compliment the noble and gallant Lord who had introduced this Motion upon his excellent speech, so full of the spirit of that Profession of which he was so gallant and popular a member. He was sure that he was expressing the general feeling of the House when he said that the additional representation of the Navy by the several gallant Officers who had spoken was a very welcome addition to the House, and a great addition in their deliberations upon naval affairs. With regard to the views expressed by the noble Lord as to the direction in which naval expenditure should be directed, he very cordially agreed with him, and he was sure that the views the noble Lord had expressed would commend themselves to the House. The point on which he differed from the noble Lord was as to the absolute necessity for the immediate expenditure upon the scale which he had proposed in addition to the liberal Estimates brought forward by the Admiralty. For his own part, he claimed to be one of those who had the interests of the Navy at heart, and during the many years he had been a Member of that House he had always done his best towards the efficiency of the Navy. The noble Lord had said that the Naval Estimates should be framed on a liberal scale; but he would suggest, for the consideration of those who wished for an efficient Navy, and desired, with the noble Lord, that the Estimates should be framed on such a scale that it could not be a good policy to overstate the case, and he would deprecate demands which were excessive, lest they should, in the end, lead to some re-action in the state of public opinion with regard to the Navy. No doubt, if they looked to the magnitude of the interests at stake, the value of our shipping and sea-borne trade, to the extent of our Colonial Empire and the inevitable dispersion of our Naval Forces in the event of war, and the concentration of the Navy of the enemy at some suitable point, and on the dependence of our country upon imported food, it was difficult to say what extent of expenditure would be sufficient to meet all emergencies that might arise. But if they looked at the question from another point of view, if they compared the resources available in the hands of the British and Naval Administration on the scale of the last few years with the amount available elsewhere, he ventured to say that it should be sufficient, under good administration, to place this country in a commanding position. The French Shipbuilding Votes last year were £2,750,000, and of this country, including the Vote of Credit, the Votes were £5,342,000, while the Votes proposed in the Estimates for the coming year would amount to £5,307,000. They were spending double the amount expended upon building under the French Administration; and if they obtained as effective a result from a given expenditure as was obtained under foreign Administrations there should be little cause for uneasiness. The main thought of the Board of Admiralty in relation to shipbuilding for the coming year would be directed towards the ships in hand, and the Admiralty during the next year, 1887-8, would have the opportunity of carrying out a large programme of new construction. He trusted that that programme would be directed on the lines suggested by the noble and gallant Lord and other gallant Officers who had spoken. The policy proposed for 1886-7 was to complete with despatch the vessels laid down with the sanction of Parliament at the close of Lord Northbrook's Administration. To the programme as put before Parliament for 1885-6 the late Government added one torpedo cruiser of the *Archer* type, and four torpedo gun boats of the *Grasshopper* type. He cordially approved of the remarks of the noble Lord opposite with regard to the *Grasshopper* type of ship. This class would supply to the Navy a type intermediate between the *Archer* class and the Coast Service boats. Such a type was urgently needed to act in combination with our armoured squadrons. The cruise undertaken by the torpedo boats attached to Admiral Hornby's Squadron and the more recent voyage of the four torpedo boats from Malta to Suda Bay in the depth of winter were not unattended with risk. The torpedo boats of the new class and improved type might be capable of contending with any weather; but it was idle to suppose that vessels of from 50 to 60 tons could keep at sea for extended periods without reducing the crew to a state of exhaustion. If Lord Nelson found that the fag from service in a brig was very great when constantly at sea, they might rest assured that life in a torpedo boat of small size would be far more trying. The rapid completion of the ships now in hand would enable the Admiralty next year to propose an extensive programme of new construction. In framing our shipbuilding programme for the future regard must necessarily be had to the direction which was being given to naval preparations in other countries. At the present time indications were not wanting of a general disposition to withdraw from a costly rivalry in armoured building. It was a significant fact that while the Germans had only one iron-clad in construction, a Vote of Credit of £840,000 had recently been obtained for 70 torpedo boats for Coast defence. In France the policy favoured by the present Minister of Marine had been made known to the world by his own publications and by those of M. Gabriel Charmes. The naval operations of the future were, according to the views of these gentlemen, to be directed not against the battle ship, but against the commerce of the enemy. While no new iron-clad was laid down for France in 1885, in 1886 further progress was suspended on two ships which had already been commenced. The main expenditure in France would be directed to the completion of the iron-clads already considerably advanced; but fast cruisers and torpedo vessels were evidently destined in the near future to monopolize the resources available for the building of ships. The French had lately laid down the *Tage* and the *Amiral Cecille*, of 7,045 tons, protected on the same plan as the *Mersey* class, and with a speed of 19 knots. The Constructors in the French Dockyards had been asked to propose designs for cruisers of 4,200 tons and 19 knots, and for another class of 2,600 tons and 18 knots, both to be lightly armed. The French torpedo flotilla in construction comprised three torpedo cruisers of the *Condor* class, of 1,280 tons and 17 knots, and seven of the *Bombe* class of 220 tons and 18 knots; and they had in construction 11 seagoing torpedo boats of 66 tons and 20 knots. It was necessary that the British Admiralty should be armed at all points; but if no new iron-clad was laid down by Foreign Powers this country might, on the completion of those now in hand, wisely pause before commencing any new ships. The necessity for laying down new armoured ships at present might be obviated by the effective and judicious conversion of existing ships. They might begin with the *Audacious* class, taking one ship in hand at a time to be modernized as a second-class battle ship, with reduced masts, compound engines, and improved armour and armament. It could not now be said that we were neglecting the torpedo. It should be our policy to develop vigorously the strength of the Navy with the new weapon. For the defence of our commerce it was impossible to be precise as to the standard of strength at which our Fleet should be maintained in relation to that of the Powers. The increased expenditure shown in the Estimates for 1885-6 was mainly appropriated to vessels for the protection of commerce. The *Archer* class was considered valuable for these duties and as seagoing torpedo boats. The belted cruisers were more particularly designed under the late Board for the protection of commerce; and the resources of the Navy, in future years, might, with advantage, be applied to the construction of additional vessels of a similar type, but with that advance in speed which had been rendered necessary in consequence of the laying down of still faster vessels by Foreign Powers. He entertained the earnest hope that a large evolutionary squadron might be brought together every year, not only for the purpose of testing by experiments the value of new weapons and new types of fighting vessels of all classes, but for the practical instruction of officers and men. The opportunities afforded to them in the cruise of the Evolutionary Squadron last summer were highly appreciated by all concerned; and any Board of Admiralty might be congratulated which was able to appoint to the command an officer so eminently qualified as Sir Geoffrey Hornby, and he earnestly hoped that the high rank which that gallant gentleman had attained in the Navy would not debar him from hoisting his flag with the squadron on future occasions. In conclusion, he might say that he was of opinion that if the House of Commons continued to place at the disposal of the Admiralty Estimates such as were voted last year and were proposed for the present year, these sums would be sufficient, under good administration, to maintain the Navy in a commanding position.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he felt sure that all the naval men in the House had listened to the speech of the noble and gallant Lord with pleasure. They were all proud of him for the manner in which he had on various occasions upheld the honour of the Service; but, at the same time, the terms of the noble and gallant Lord's Motion were open to exception. He would suggest to the noble and gallant Lord that he should omit from the Motion all reference to Terminable Annuities and the Sinking Fund; for when naval men began talking about these they were certainly out of their depth. If this were done, he believed the Motion would be unanimously accepted by the House. What, he asked, did naval men know about Terminable Annuities? As much as swans knew about sheet anchors. He trusted that the subject of the Navy would never be discussed from a Party point of view. Unfortunately, the Navy had suffered too much at the hands of both Parties. Each side of the House thought too much of the taxpayer. The House of Commons was their best friend, and Governments were their worst friends, because they never had the courage of their convictions. He deprecated invidious comparisons with other nations. What they wanted was a Committee of Inquiry. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed), who had moved in the matter last year, was, he feared, muzzled now. But they would probably have some wise counsels from that hon. Gentleman that night. At present there was no continuity of policy in naval matters. The effect of the fatal Order in Council of 1869 was that the Lords of the Admiralty had ceased to be responsible to the public. Instead of really being Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, they were only now heads of Departments, responsible to the First Lord. As Lords Commissioners, they had a right to tender advice; now they only met by sufferance as a consultative Board. These were great evils, which called for redress. All naval men were agreed that a change in the present system was required; and he hoped someone would move for a Committee of Inquiry, because the majority of this House did not understand the question. Allusion had been made to the Russian scare of last year. The hon. Member for Hastings (Sir Thomas Brassey) had alluded to it; but at that time the hon. Member was Secretary to the Admiralty, and the Government of which he was a Member had been five years in power. When the Baltic Fleet was being prepared there were no torpedo boats fit to accompany it. Iron-clads could not be put to fight torpedo boats, just as elephants could not be put to fight wasps; and no Admiral would dream of entering the Baltic without some sort of a flotilla of torpedo boats, seeing that the Russians had 70 stationed there. There were said to have been eight torpedo boats with Admiral Hornby's Squadron on the Coast of Ireland; but it was well known to all the officers that six of those boats were not fit to keep the sea. The greatest Marine Power in the world with two serviceable torpedo boats! In Portsmouth Yard there were not three Whitehead torpedoes to issue to the Fleet at the time of the scare. Was that a creditable state of things for a Goverument to land the country in? Then, again, in China the Admiral was so short of torpedoes that he had to ask leave to buy 13 of the Chinese Government. On another occasion two torpedo boats were purchased from the Chilian Government. Of course, it was quite right of the Admiral to buy these torpedoes and torpedo boats; but who was responsible for that state of things? Was it not the Government in which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hastings was Secretary to the Admiralty? Nothing at all was done until the scare came. As the noble and gallant Lord who moved the Resolution had said, when wars came upon a country they came quickly, and could only be dealt with successfully when that country was prepared beforehand. The interests of England were so vast, with her Colonies depending upon her for protection, the necessity of keeping open her food supply was so urgent, the volume of her trade was so enormous, that the Navy, as it was, was quite inadequate to support and maintain them. It was only for naval men to make known the facts. It was for the House of Commons to say whether they would find a remedy, or be lulled to sleep by official statements. There was great laxity in the conduct of naval arrangements, and there was great need of a searching inquiry into them. A great deal of the maladministration was due to the present Parliamentary system. At present, the Naval Lords were hardly allowed to formulate a policy. In June last, when the late Administration of the present Prime Minister went out, Naval Lords of distinction were displaced from the Board. It was then hoped that the Conservative Party would remain long enough in power to formulate a firm naval policy; but, unfortunately, that was not to be. But he maintained it was a very serious matter to displace the Naval Lords last June, and to displace them again in January. He did not wish to trespass longer on the time of the House. He only wished to press upon the House the necessity of accepting this Resolution; and if the noble and gallant Lord would only consent to omit the words which had reference to Terminable Annuities he saw no reason why the House—for he was sure they all honoured the Naval Service—should not affirm the Resolution.

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Sir EDWARD J. REED) (Cardiff) said, that, by an unfortunate slip, his hon. and gallant Friend who had just spoken (Admiral Field) had let out the secret when he said that naval men despised politicians. Well, if politicians were disposed to be as severe upon naval men they might use similar language; for his hon. and gallant Friend had taken the greatest pains to impress on the House that a number of naval officers of high rank and distinction had held office at the Board of Admiralty on the condition that they should have no power whatever, because of the Order passed in 1869 by the First Lord of the Admiralty. He (Sir Edward J. Reed) closed at once with his hon. and gallant Friend on that statement; and he said that, whatever might have been the weakening effect of the Order to which his hon. and gallant Friend had referred, the Naval Lords at the Admiralty were Naval Lords still. They were still responsible for the due execution of their duties; and he did not believe that any gallant Officer who had held office as Sea Lord for the last few years would hold the doctrine of his hon. and gallant Friend, and say that since 1869 no Naval Lord had had more power than a clerk. So far from admitting that doctrine, he had himself been one of those who felt that a very heavy responsibility had lain upon the Sea Lords of the Admiralty; and, although he had on all occasions passed over, not only Sea Lords, but Comptrollers, Constructors, and others, to fix responsibility on the First Lord of the Admiralty, who stood before the country as the most responsible person, at the same time he would despise those naval officers if it were possible to believe that they held office without power, and received pay without responsibility. He had been challenged with reference to the Motion he had before the House in the last Parliament; and it appeared to be thought that he would be somewhat wanting in his duty if he failed now to press for a Committee of Inquiry into the condition of the Navy. But he did not at all take that view, and for this reason. When he gave Notice of his Motion in the last Parliament, he did so with the consciousness that not a single iron-clad worthy of the name was being built; that the so-called protected ships were not worthy of the designation; and that, owing to the prevalence of a fanatical theory of naval construction, the Navy was falling into a most unsatisfactory state. But since that time, and partly, he hoped, in consequence of his Motion, Lord Northbrook had appeared before Parliament with a programme of the greatest possible importance, and we were now constructing seven ships in all, including a type of armour-belted cruisers of 5,000 tons, to which the noble Lord gave a speed of 17½ knots, but which, it was hoped, would reach a speed of 18 knots. Those seven armour-belted vessels were everything worthy of the name. They enjoyed the confidence of the late Administration no less than of the present; they had received the highest eulogiums that night, and were the vessels referred to by his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty under the last Administration as being not likely to be surpassed. Again, a total transformation had come over the construction of iron-clads since he gave Notice of his Motion. He gave the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Hamilton) credit for having trampled on the theory of construction which had prevailed so long, and for having laid down ships worthy of the name and of the Admiralty. In the Estimates soon to be laid before Parliament those ships would be shown to be fully accepted by the present Board of Admiralty, and would be advanced with considerable rapidity. The gravest grounds, therefore, upon which he gave his Notice had been entirely swept away, and he felt less anxiety for the future of the Navy than he should otherwise have done, because these reforms affected that portion of the Navy to which he attached the most vital importance. His noble and gallant Friend and other naval officers had laid great stress upon the construction of fast cruisers and torpedo vessels. He did not wish to say a word in depreciation of them; but he would say that, while those iron-clad ships were being rapidly advanced, and when ready would be fit to carry the flag of this country against any enemy, the torpedo vessels were of a minor class, which could be produced with great rapidity if the necessity arose. There was a great difference between this country being deficient in those first-class ships which could only be produced by a great expenditure, extending over several years, and being deficient in those vessels which could be turned with extreme rapidity out of 20 dockyards—private establishments—in this country. He thought he had disposed of the contention that a Committee was as necessary now as when he had given Notice of his Motion. It showed the influence of private Members and the value of Parliamentary institutions that such a Notice had not been without effect, but had real influence upon the naval administration of the country. The Gentlemen with whom he was associated might be complimented on having shown their desire to give effect to the manifest wish of the House. Coming to the Motion of the noble and gallant Lord, he admitted there was an element of plausibility about it which he found it difficult to appreciate at what the noble and gallant Lord thought its true value. The noble and gallant Lord had been advised to omit certain words from his Motion; and he (Sir Edward J. Reed) must himself confess that he failed to see what particular use lay in the words. The noble and gallant Lord invited the House to spend £5,500,000 in excess of the Estimates, and told them that the money was to be obtained, not from the taxpayers, but by suspending the Sinking Fund or creating Terminable Annuities. In either case, however, a great addition would be made to the public burdens. He might not have the sympathy of Naval Members so fully as of other hon. Members when he said that, to his mind, the condition of the Public Debt, or, rather, the magnitude of the Public Income which was to be raised annually, was one of vast importance, and in connection with which lay some of the most serious outlooks of our Parliamentary system. He was anxious for the well-being of the Navy; but he was also anxious to see as much relief as possible given in respect of the public burdens. He did not think that the Public Debt should be increased, or that its reduction should be suspended in any light or airy way. Ever since he had a seat in the House he had viewed our Expenditure with the greatest possible concern, for he had to regard it in connection with the Public Income. On what ground was the late Liberal Government driven from Office? On the ground of seeking to produce increased Income from one of the most natural sources of Revenue. He remembered very well on that night how the Prime Minister, from his place at that Table, reminded hon. Gentlemen that they were playing a dangerous game in denying the Government such a legitimate source of taxation, and pointed out how many sources of Revenue had been dried up. His opinion was that the difficulty would become greater. He was speaking for himself in the matter; but he believed he had the sympathy of many with whom he acted when he said that he did not even regard the naval condition of the country with more anxiety than the Public Debt and the raising of our Income. They must not be led away to suppose that they escaped any increased expenditure by suspending the Sinking Fund or creating Terminable Annuities. In anything that he had said or done he had never advocated a lavish expenditure on the Naval Service. What he had advocated before he advocated now, and what he denounced before he denounced now. He advocated the most strict and scrutinizing economy, and he denounced anything like extravagant or unwise expenditure. And the reason he denounced the naval policy pursued for some years was because he thought it extravagant and useless. Just in proportion as the necessity for increasing the expenditure on the Public Services grew, so ought to grow their anxiety for making every sixpence of that expenditure fruitful. He had denounced during the last 20 years the Naval Pension List, which had doubled. It had grown from £1,000,000 to £2,000,000; and, though he would not deprive anyone of the pension he had earned, he thought they had not shown themselves watchful enough in revising the Naval Expenditure. He did not wish to lose another moment before complimenting the noble and gallant Lord upon his speech, which was a valuable one, and had obtained the sympathy of the House; but there were one or two points to which he must advert, as they had struck him as being of considerable importance. The noble and gallant Lord gave the House some very carefully-prepared estimates of the outlay in detail of the £5,500,000. But there were some items of expenditure on some classes of vessels which he deemed as necessary as those of which he had spoken, but of the cost of which he made no mention.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Which?

SIR EDWARD J. REED: The colliers, for instance, which the noble and gallant Lord said were to keep pace with the Fleet.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD said, he did not neglect the colliers; he deemed them of vital importance, SIR EDWARD J. REED said, he perfectly understood that; but he stated that the noble and gallant Lord omitted to state the cost of many things which he considered necessary. The noble and gallant Lord did not include these ships among the matters of prime necessity which he had spoken of; but he failed to understand, however, why colliers were not as much a necessity this year as they would be later on. He would point out to the noble and gallant Lord that if the colliers and ammunition ships were necessary to the formation of a squadron, they must be made to keep the same speed as the other ships of the squadron. If the Admiralty brought the number of *Heclas* up to six instead of three, he might say that, instead of £5,500,000, £11,000,000 or £12,000,000 would be required to carry out the noble and gallant Lord's proposals. The subject of the coaling stations had been brought forward in the discussion. He had never been able to feel that anxiety about our coaling stations which was so strongly felt by others, and for this reason—that at any moment of the year the sea was covered by British coaling stations in the shape of British ships carrying coal. One of the most alarming things in time of war, at any rate for the enemy, was that the sea would be covered by these British coaling stations. For himself, he deprecated any enormous expenditure on coaling stations for another reason—that he thought it was quite probable, before many years were past, that the Navy would be burning liquid fuel. If that was so, they would then go to the sources of liquid fuel, and they would have to defend those sources instead of the coaling stations. He did not object to any moderate expenditure on the coaling stations, but he did object to any unreasonable expenditure. He must say that, gratifying as the debate had been in many respects, it was very alarming to his mind in some other respects. They had had some doctrines advocated by hon. Members, no doubt seriously and conscientiously advocated in the interests of the country, but which, to his mind, would be utterly destructive of the naval eminence of this country. The hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) had had the courage to inform the House that it took a lifetime to build an iron-clad, and on that account he would not build any more. Then the hon. Member also told the House that iron-clads built 10 years ago were obsolete. He might point out, with reference to this matter, that the *Dreadnought*, which was built from his designs he did not know how many years ago, was at the present moment, in the opinion of many distinguished naval officers, the very finest iron-clad which the Navy had at present afloat. Then, again, the *Bellerophon*, about which some anxiety was expressed recently, was a vessel which was not deemed an unworthy representative of the country on certain stations. That vessel he designed as long ago as 1863; therefore, he objected to the statement that ships built 10 years ago were obsolete. But his objection to the abandonment of iron-clads was this. It might suit the other Powers of the world, to which we formed always an object of attack or of contemplated attack, to resort only to torpedo boats and vessels of that kind; but this country might possess 10,000 boats or cruisers, and yet the Navy might not be able to strike one out of the 10 blows such as it had to strike abroad in the course of its history. What would have been the use of torpedo boats during the Russian War, or what use would they have been for the purpose of taking out the frigates from under the guns of the Spaniards at Carthagena? The fact was, the British Navy must comprise ships armed with guns, by which alone they would be able to reach the shores of the enemy; and he hoped that no countenance would be given in that House to the doctrine of the abandonment of armed ships. When they ceased to build such ships, which enabled them to carry their power into foreign harbours, that moment the overthrow of our naval supremacy would be effected. He must express great satisfaction at the fact that it had been decided to construct the two vessels the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*. He was not prepared to say anything about these ships beyond this—that they entirely avoided those features which he had been so long condemning in our vessels. He did not know how far they went in other directions; but he was prepared, on learning that the present Board of Admiralty were going energetically forward with these two magnificent and powerful vessels and with the enlarged programme of Lord Northbrook, to take a seat on the Ministerial Bench. Whatever might be said about torpedo boats, this must be said—that just in proportion as these two large vessels were advanced towards completion, in such proportion would there arise in the Naval Service a confidence in its preparedness, and, at any rate, in the power of some of its ships to pursue an enemy anywhere. He must compliment the hon. and gallant Member for Southampton (Sir J. E. Commerell) upon the speech which he had delivered to the House. He believed that they might reap increased advantage by having naval officers in that House; and he was of opinion that the naval officer element had been too much in abeyance in the work of improving the designs of our ships. It was an unworthy thing for any Controller of the Navy and any Sea Lord or First Lord to accept designs simply because they were produced by their solitary Constructor at the Admiralty; and he hoped that the day was coming when they would see such naval officers as the noble and gallant Lord opposite assisting in Whitehall in the designing of ships for which that House voted money. Before the time came to build additional iron-clads he hoped that such an arrangement would be brought about.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): Mr. Speaker—Sir, I believe that the House will recognize the propriety of many of the observations that have been made by those who have taken part in this debate. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has ostensibly spoken against the Motion; but his arguments have told in its favour, and he has in no way controverted the main portion of the statements of my noble and gallant Friend. The hon. Gentleman did not combat the statement of my noble and gallant Friend that in many respects our Navy is very weak, and not in the efficient condition in which it ought to be. The question before us to-night is whether the condition deprecated by my noble and gallant Friend is such as to necessitate immediate further expenditure upon it; and, if so, whether the mode suggested of raising the money is the best and most appropriate? The late Government, with which I had the honour to be connected, came into Office under peculiar circumstances. The nation had just passed through a great scare, and a large sum of money had just been voted for putting the Navy upon a proper footing; and we had the advantage of coming into Office at a time when that scare had shown the insufficiency of our armaments, and also the necessity for some provision being made for increasing the naval strength of the country. The noble Earl (the Earl of Northbrook), who was at the head of the Board of Admiralty before we took Office some months back, announced to the country that the Estimates for the Navy for the past year were inadequate to maintain it on an efficient footing; and therefore he proposed to expend a very large additional sum upon it, such expenditure to be spread over a period of five years. There is a peculiarity about the Naval Estimates for the present year—and here permit me to say that we all regret the reason of the absence of the Secretary to the Admiralty, whose urbanity, business-like capacity, and thorough mastery of every detail with which he deals has endeared him to the House of Commons. I said that there was a peculiarity about the Navy Estimates for the present year, and it is this—that they are the highest that have ever been laid before the House of Commons; that in every previous year when the Navy Estimates were millions lower than they are this year provision was made for laying down new and additional ships, as well as for making provision for the wear and tear of the Navy; whereas now, for the first time during the 11 years I have been in the House of Commons, it is not proposed to lay down a single new ship. I am not blaming Her Majesty's Government for this fact, because I believe that nothing can be more futile or more unwise than to attempt to carry out too large a programme with inadequate means. It is my opinion that during the last few years too many iron-clads and other large ships have been laid down for the money voted; and, consequently, there has been great delay in their progress and completion, with the result that when we were almost on the verge of war with Russia we had some 100,000 tons of incomplete iron-clads locked up in our Dockyards. Why is it, then, that with the highest Navy

Estimates we have ever had, no provision has been made for laying down new ships? It is because—and I hope that the House will understand that in making this observation I do not make it for the purpose of finding fault with Her Majesty's present Government, inasmuch as the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Admiralty are in precisely the same position in which I was when I was at the Admiralty—it is because the Government have to provide not only for the wants of the Navy for the year, but to sweep off the enormous liabilities that have occurred during past years. When the Earl of Northbrook made his proposals for an increased expenditure upon the Navy, it was estimated that this expenditure would be spread over a period of five years, whereas it is a matter of fact that the great bulk of this increased expenditure will have to be met not in five years, but in three; and this circumstance, strange to say, is largely due to the depression in trade. The object of every Chancellor of the Exchequer must naturally be to lighten the burdens of the country as much as possible when trade and agriculture are depressed, yet, curiously enough, the depression of trade has tended to increase the expenditure upon the Navy, because the contracts of last year have been worked off much more rapidly than was anticipated, owing to our shipyards being almost bare of work, with the exception of that which they obtained from the Admiralty. This is, of course, a benefit to both the Navy and the country, because the former gets more ships, and the latter has the additional security furnished by a stronger Navy. Indeed, nobody suffers in consequence of this increase of Naval Expenditure except the Chancellor of the Exchequer. One of the reasons why the Estimates of the year are so abnormally high is because provision has to be made to meet the additional expenditure proposed by the Earl of Northbrook, and voted by this House. Last year several contracts were put out under that Vote of Credit, and an additional £500,000 is required to meet our liabilities in respect of those contracts during the present year. It is beyond the power of the Admiralty to diminish that sum. That which they can diminish is the normal expenditure of the year. I think that I shall be able to show the House that although the Navy Estimates for the year are so abnormally high, they are even now not high enough, and that we are in danger of rendering that high expenditure inadequate and futile for want of a limited additional expenditure. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone estimated that £5,500,000 were necessary to put the Navy upon a thoroughly efficient footing. I, however, take a more sanguine view of the state of the Navy, and I do not think that so large a sum is necessary. The expenditure upon the Navy last year was enormous, being £6,500,000 more than it was in the preceding year. I think that in making his estimate my noble Friend did not make sufficient allowance for the number of iron-clads and of large cruisers that will be coming on for completion during the course of the ensuing year. Therefore, as far as the iron-clads and the large cruisers are concerned, I should not propose any increase of the Vote this year. But, undoubtedly, we are very deficient in smaller vessels, and the House will have to face that difficulty sooner or later, and considerable sums will have to be spent in order to bring up the number of the gunboats and the smaller vessels to the requisite level. The late Board of Admiralty slightly enlarged the programme of the Earl of Northbrook; and it is satisfactory to us to know that those who have succeeded us have approved of our amended plan. There was, however, a programme which we left behind us with regard to the number of small vessels which we thought it would be necessary to build during the next three or four years; and what I especially desire to ask the attention of the House to is, that unless some such proposal as that which I have indicated be adopted the efficiency of our Navy will be greatly endangered. It is a fact that there is scarcely an efficient gunboat in Her Majesty's Service, although we shall require a large number during the next two years to relieve those which are now in commission. The late Board of Admiralty summarily stopped all the large repairs on vessels that were not effective; and unless new vessels are built the present Board will be compelled to waste a considerable sum in repairing obsolete, slow, and useless gunboats, because the reliefs could not otherwise be found. Therefore, so far as the smaller vessels are concerned, it is in the interests of economy that the House should assent to some such proposal as is made by my noble and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), and place at the disposal of the Government a sum that would enable them rapidly to expedite the laying down and building of small vessels. But, further, unless some addition is made to the Navy Estimates this House will find that a very large proportion of the expenditure already incurred will be rendered more or less useless. If the Admiralty were to send iron-clads to sea without guns it would be little better than idiotcy; but if they were to send them without ammunition it would be almost equally foolish. Now, speaking with full knowledge of the Estimates of this year, I say that unless some addition is made, or the Government take out from the Naval Estimates a certain amount for exceptional expenditure they will have to meet, certain of the iron-clads will not be efficient, because the guns will not be in them, and in some other cases they will be without ammunition. I asked the Secretary of State for War what provision was made for guns this year, and his reply was that the very large sum of £1,000,000 sterling would be provided. Well, that is an enormous sum, and almost treble the normal Naval Ordnance Vote three years ago; but it is not sufficient, because we have recently ordered an enormous number of new breech-loading guns that are absolutely essential for the Service, and until the full number of those guns is completed our ships will be inadequately armed. The amount of ammunition that is required for the new big guns to be made this year should cost £41,000, and this provides no reserves of ammunition whatever. This will only provide 65 rounds for the large guns and 85 rounds for the small guns. The Government have been obliged to strike off one-third of this amount. But the case is worse in regard to the small guns, the machine, and rapidly-firing guns. These are necessary to protect the iron-clads from torpedo boats, and are, in fact, an essential part of the armament of any large vessel. A large number are to be made, but no ammunition is to be provided. Forty torpedo boats were last year ordered, and we were informed that a portion of the gunboats would accompany Admiral Hoskins to the Baltic; but none were forthcoming. If they are fitted with guns they will have no ammunition. Therefore, in order to curtail the Vote by about £70,000, we are compelled to mar, if not to nullify, the efficacy of an expenditure of something like £3,000,000 for iron-clads. It would be much better never to have sanctioned that expenditure than to be compelled now, when that expenditure has been made by the House, to frustrate its utility. Under these circumstances, what would be the best course for the House to take? I am quite aware of the financial difficulty in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is placed. Self-preservation is an instinct with everybody—even with a Chancellor of the Exchequer—and the right hon. Gentleman knows that during a period of depression there is a limit to the amount of taxation that can be imposed upon the community. It would not be possible to take out of taxation this year the sum that would be necessary for this year and next year to put the Navy in a state of complete and thorough preparation. But the sum which I myself estimate to be necessary is far less than that named by my noble and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). I take it at not more than £2,000,000, which might be spread over three years. I believe that out of the Vote of Credit £2,000,000, if not more, was absolutely wasted, and that the Navy is not one whit the better for that expenditure. I am perfectly satisfied that unless the small ships, torpedo boats, and complete stores of ammunition are provided, we shall be liable to another scare; then the same wasteful extravagance will occur, and we shall resort again to expedients which leave the Navy no better than it was before. In these circumstances, what would be the best method of meeting the difficulty? I agree with the hon. and gallant Member for Eastbourne (Admiral Field) that the part of the Motion of my noble Friend relating to the Sinking Fund and Terminable Annuities might with advantage be struck out of his Resolution. I have a very great objection to touching the Sinking Fund. I regretted last year the proposal that was made, and to which the House assented. The

Sinking Fund is an instrument of great potency for reducing the National Debt. Have hon. Members calculated the result of allowing the full operation of the present Sinking Fund to take effect for the next 50 years? At the end of 50 years, if the Sinking Fund is untouched, we shall have paid off the whole interest and principal of the National Debt, which means a permanent reduction of £28,000,000 sterling per annum from the dead weight of taxation now pressing on the community. Now, Sir, it is absolutely impossible by any other means to confer so great a benefit on posterity, because the great advantage of the Sinking Fund is that the process of reduction goes on unseen, unheard, and not generally known; and therefore the community, in periods of depression, cannot lay hands on the Sinking Fund. No one has an objection, when times are good and trade is prosperous, to pay for reducing the liabilities of the nation; but when the times are bad there is a strong objection to imposing more taxation than is absolutely necessary. Therefore, my great objection to touching the Sinking Fund is not only that you will suspend what I believe is a most beneficent operation for posterity, but that if my noble and gallant Friend sets the example of a private Member being able to lay his hand on the Sinking Fund, the advocates of fads and crotchets in their turn may come and make similar demands. This House, like every other distinguished Assembly, is subject to occasional fits of mental aberration; and, therefore, if this example is set by a private Member, even for so worthy an object as strengthening the Navy, we may have constant changes proposed, which will not only leave us with no Sinking Fund, but, in all probability, with a largely increased national liability. But in regard to Terminable Annuities the case is quite different. I hope I shall be more successful with the House of Commons than I was with the Treasury when I was a Minister. The Treasury rejected the proposal which I laid before them, and which I will now repeat. I would spread the payment for giving additional strength to the Navy over the period originally contemplated —namely, five years; and if a sum such as after consideration the Admiralty and the Chancellor of the Exchequer may think necessary is raised and paid off by Terminable Annuities in five years, you will then be able to separate the normal from the abnormal Navy Expenditure. In two years I believe your Navy Expenditure will very considerably diminish, and this House will always have a much greater control over that expenditure if they are able to discriminate between the expenditure which is exceptional, and which makes up for past neglect, from that which is normal and necessary to keep up the annual expenditure upon the Navy. Supposing my proposal were adopted, I would suggest, first, that whatever sum is raised should annually form, until paid off, a charge on the Navy Estimates, and form as much a part of the Navy Estimates as the non-effective charge. There are two precedents I may quote for my suggestion. The fortifications which Viscount Palmerston proposed were erected with money found by the present Prime Minister and raised by Terminable Annuities; but the period in that case was a long one—namely, 25 years. I am informed that there is no precedent for raising Terminable Annuities for so perishable an article as a ship or a gun; and I quite agree that the raising of Terminable Annuities extending over 25 years for the building of ships is a proposal which ought not to be assented to. But, at the end of five years, ships will still be efficient; and if it was justifiable 25 years ago to raise Terminable Annuities for building fortifications, surely it would not be wrong to raise them for the purpose of making the Navy properly efficient when the period is only five years. A ship at the end of five years is surely not more likely to become obsolete than the fortifications erected in 1860 were at the end of 25 years, when the Annuities were paid off. Well, Sir, that is the suggestion which I venture to make. I support the proposal of my noble and gallant Friend; but if that proposal were to become a substantive Motion I should move to omit all the words in the first line after the word "opportunity" down to the words "in order," which would make the Motion read thus—

> "That now would be a suitable opportunity to put the Royal Navy in that state of efficiency which is necessary for the safety of the Empire."

A great many extraneous matters have

been introduced in the course of the debate with which I do not think it necessary at this time of night to trouble the House; but there was one observation made by my noble and gallant Friend in reference to coaling stations which I think is worthy of notice. A coaling station becomes of necessity a source of weakness unless it is properly fortified, because the Admiral upon whose station that coaling station is situated must detach vessels to protect it, unless it can be protected from the land. This, of course, entails a diminution of the cruising strength of the squadron in the seas in which the coaling station is situated. Unless the Government completes, which I hope they will do, the fortifications which are being carried on, our coaling stations in different parts of the world will be a source of weakness rather than of strength to us during a time of war. This has been particularly brought home to my mind by the present condition of Port Hamilton. Our Predecessors occupied Port Hamilton at a time when we were on the verge of war with Russia. Let any Member of Her Majesty's Government now ask the Admirals who have been, or the Admiral who now is, in command of the China Squadron whether Port Hamilton, unfortified, is a source of strength or of weakness to our Fleet, and I am sure he will be told by one and all that it is better to abandon that station if it is not to be fortified, because it entails the detaching of a certain number of ships, which diminishes the effective cruising strength of the squadron. The hon. and gallant Member for Eastbourne (Admiral Field) made a strong attack on the present system of administration in the Admiralty, and was good enough to say that the different Naval Members of the Board are nothing more than mere clerks. Well, Sir, I had some six months' experience of the working of the system as at present established in the Board of Admiralty.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg pardon; I did not say they were mere clerks; they are infinitely superior to clerks; but I said that they occupied the position of chief clerks.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have had some experience of the system, and I do not believe that a system was ever in force for administering the British Navy superior to that which exists at the present moment at the Admiralty if properly worked. You have a Board of Admiralty of which the First Lord must necessarily be a politician, and who has the pick of the Service as his Naval Colleagues. Every Naval Lord is made the Executive head of a Department, and he transacts all the business of that Department, his decision on all minor matters being final. It is only questions of importance which are referred to the First Lord; and I believe that it has never happened—certainly not in my term of Office—that the First Lord of the Admiralty gave a decision on important matters which would override that of the Naval Lord in the Department of which he was the head until after full consultation and thorough discussion with the other heads of Departments. Not only have you got the pick of the Naval Service as Executive officers, but, whenever a question of real importance is to be considered, the Board is invaluable in its consultative capacity. I have had some experience of the India Office, the business of which is transacted under forms prescribed by statute. The great mistake in the method of conducting affairs there is that 16 gentlemen act as an Executive Body, and without their consent nothing small or great can be done. That difficulty had been avoided at the Admiralty; and I believe there is no Department, with a few exceptions, where the business is so rapidly transacted, or where, with some exceptions, business is better done than under the system which has been denounced by am hon. and gallant Friend. I am certain that if a similar system were introduced at the War Office you would get rid of the friction between the military and the civilian element which prevents the War Office deciding on important questions without a delay which is unknown at the Admiralty. I know there are many Members in the House pledged to economy who may consider the suggestion I have made for the grant of the small and limited sum necessary to put the Navy in order, and to be raised by Terminable Annuities, as an extravagant proposal, and one which, as economists, they are bound to protest against. If there be any such who take this view of the present suggestion, will they allow me to place before them one or two considerations. Nobody can occupy, even for the short time I did, the post of First Lord of the Admiralty without being impressed with the paramount importance, not only of our being able to maintain our naval supremacy, but to give adequate protection to our carrying trade in time of hostilities. We are more closely packed together in this community than any nation has ever been before, and our sole means of subsistence depend on the maintenance of our carrying trade. If in any time of trouble and hostility that carrying trade were to be undermined, or allowed to pass into other hands, it is no exaggeration to say that a large proportion of the population of these Islands would starve for lack of food, and another large proportion would starve for want of wages. This is a contingency which no man can face with equanimity or indifference. Can the Admiralty protect our carrying trade? I believe it can. So far as I know—I speak with the advice and the sanction of the naval men who constituted my Board—I believe that by the expenditure of a small sum of money we can protect and make our carrying trade safe. If it be clear that the sum is not extravagant, that the proposal is one that can be met without putting undue taxation on the community, and that it will secure for our carrying trade that safety which we all desire to see, then I trust the House will not, from any excessive deference for the pedantry of finance, refuse to support the Motion of my noble and gallant Friend. [*A laugh.*] The Chancellor of the Exchequer laughs at my expression—"The pedantry of finance." I say that anybody who will get up and maintain that the proposal which I make is one which, on financial grounds, ought to be objected to, must entirely shut his eyes to what has occurred during the past year. I am obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his laugh.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): It was the other Chancellor of the Exchequer who laughed.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Then it was the reflection of a laugh which I caught on the face of the right hon. Gentleman. During the past year the expenditure on the Navy has been enormous. It has been between £17,000,000 and £18,000,000 sterling. There is an excess of expenditure during the past year of between £6,000,000 and £7,000,000 over that of the preceding year. Well, Sir, how has that expenditure been met? It has been met entirely out of borrowed money. It has been met either by the Sinking Fund, or by the issue of Exchequer Bonds. Then, if the House has assented to the raising of no less than £6,000,000 or £7,000,000, which was necessary last year to put the Navy in order, is it now to decline, on the ground that the symmetry of the financial system will be upset, to support a proposal which I make to raise by Terminable Annuities this small sum of £2,000,000, and to spread the repayment of that sum over the next five years? I think I have made out a case for the Motion of my noble and gallant Friend. I hope I have done so in such a way as not only to enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to support it, but I have suggested to him the means by which he can raise the money so as to enable him to retain his popularity and, at the same time, probably to prolong his tenure of Office.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): Sir, up to 3 o'clock this afternoon I had hoped that my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) would have been able to come down to the House prepared to undertake the charge of these Votes instead of the Civil Lord of the Admiralty. As, therefore, I am called upon somewhat unexpectedly to fulfil the duties which belong to the Secretary to the Admiralty, I hope that I may not ask in vain for the indulgence of the House. I listened to the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) with pleasure, inasmuch as he tells the House that he is satisfied with the Estimates of the present year as far as they go, but that he desires to raise £2,000,000 more by Terminable Annuities. I confess that I was somewhat astonished at the position taken up by the noble Lord, because only six weeks ago he was the First Lord of the Admiralty, and left a programme for his Successors. Certainly, that programme did not include the £1,500,000 of additional money which he now suggests should be raised. I scarcely know how to deal with these figures. I will explain what I mean. The Government have presented to the House an Estimate of £12,900,000, and this was £500,000 less than the programme called by the noble Lord the programme which we found at the Admiralty. I should not have alluded to the programme of the noble Lord, because I was not aware how far what the noble Lord proposed had received the sanction of the whole Board of Admiralty; and, therefore, as I have said, I do not quite know how to deal with it. All I know is that we now present Estimates which are £500,000 less than those of our Predecessors. At all events, I do know that the noble Lord was willing to conduct the Naval Service of the country for £500,000 more than is now asked for by the present Government.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I do not want to interrupt the hon. Gentleman. The programme which I left behind me was £500,000 more with regard to ships, and the additional sum of £2,000,000 I ask for now would be expended, although not in the present year, to put the Navy in a state of complete efficiency.

Mr. R. W. DUFF: I quite understand the noble Lord; but, as a Board, we know nothing of these £2,000,000 additional; and £500,000 is all the reduction we have made in the Estimates as prepared by our Predecessors. The Estimates we propose to pass now are within £500,000 for shipbuilding of those left by the late Board of Admiralty. The noble Lord says he is not satisfied with the programme of the present Board because we have not laid down any ships. Our reason for not doing that is, in the first place, this—that at this moment we have liabilities to the extent of £3,186,000 for ships now building. We think that that is a heavy liability, and we are of opinion that it is advisable to make progress with the programme to which we are committed before laying down any more ships. There are large questions as to the naval policy involved in laying new ships down. I believe there is a consensus of opinion that we do not need any armoured line-of-battle ships beyond the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*. If new ones are contemplated there are perplexing problems to be solved as to the distribution of the armour; and, having regard to all the circumstances, it would not have been wise in a Board of Admiralty, only six weeks old, and whose First Naval Lord, Lord John Hay, has, in consequence of his absence abroad, not yet attended a Board, to commence at once by laying down a new building programme, having regard to our liabilities. I think that is a sufficient reason for our not laying down additional ships just now; but I may add that the present Board of Admiralty intend to carry out in its integrity the programme of the Earl of Northbrook, which it is to the credit of the noble Lord opposite that he has himself carried out so well. I believe the noble Lord admits that the programme he carried out was the programme of the Earl of Northbrook. [Lord George Hamilton: Certainly.] As far as it went it was quite satisfactory, and the present Board also intended to continue that programme. The noble Lord tells us that there have been £2,000,000 absolutely wasted. I think that is a very heavy charge to make against the former Board of Admiralty, and I should like to know what the noble Lord means about the waste of these £2,000,000? I understood him to say that it was during the scare that the money was wasted. Now, I presume that the noble Lord is referring to the hiring of merchant vessels—hired of private firms on the responsibility of the late Board of Admiralty. What do I find? I find that the cost of these armed cruisers, exclusive of coaling and guns, came to exactly £550,000. There were five ships obtained in England at a cost of £244,000; 11 ships procured on foreign stations at a cost of £280,000, and 10 small vessels which cost £22,000, making altogether £546,000. You cannot put down coal as an extra charge, because the expenditure for it would have been incurred if we had had men-of-war instead. Therefore, I think the £2,000,000 the Earl of Northbrook and the Board of Admiralty are supposed to have wasted dwindles down to £550,000. The noble Lord has asked me about the guns. I have here a programme from the Ordnance Department of the Admiralty, from which I find that we shall have guns for all the vessels as soon as the vessels require them. The guns will be completed as soon as the vessels are ready. I have a complete programme, which I propose to print as a Return and lay upon the Table of the House by-and-bye. Complaint has also been made about the smaller class of guns. Of the smaller class of guns there are 450 already provided, and 159 to be received this year will give a total of 609 altogether. Let me now refer to the very able speech of my noble and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). The Board is happy indeed to see in this House Naval Officers who, like the noble and gallant Lord, have distinguished themselves on recent active service. The noble and gallant Lord and the gallant Admiral the Member for Southampton (Sir J. E. Commerell), both of whom I am glad to see in the House, but whom I should prefer to have on this side, have laid down an exhaustive programme; but it is satisfactory that we have at present a sufficient number of large iron-clads. I understand that they quite approve of the policy of building the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*, and I believe that when they are completed those vessels will be two of the most powerful vessels in the world. However much we may need torpedo boats, it is certain that we must keep up in the Navy a certain number of line-of-battle ships. With regard to torpedo boats, we have been told several times this evening that we are short of boats of that description. We should, no doubt, be glad to have more torpedo boats, but of first-class torpedo boats, although the hon. and gallant Admiral the Member for Southampton says we have only 18, we have 23 complete with torpedo gear and 53 building; and, of the latter number, 35 are now overdue. With the late First Lord the present Board are very anxious to push forward these torpedo boats, and we hope to have those which are overdue delivered immediately. There are 18 of these not yet due, so that there is a total of 80, including four for which no date has been fixed. These are torpedo boats of the first class. Of second-class torpedo boats we have 59, 21 complete with torpedo gear, two building by contractors, 27 attached to ships in commission, and nine wooden boats, of which six are complete and three incomplete, bringing up the total to 139. We hope to have them ready very shortly, and I hope that those which are now overdue may be delivered in the course of a month. With reference to the remark of the noble and gallant Lord that there are only three places where torpedo boats can be built, that is undoubtedly the case; but the Constructors' Department are considering the desirability of building these vessels by the Admiralty themselves; and it is very necessary that we should have the power of constructing them at the Government Dockyards, so as to have them entirely under the control of the Department. My noble and gallant Friend has said that naval officers have not had sufficient experience in manœuvreing, and we want more of an experimental squadron. In that connection I am reminded of the interesting manœuvres that took place last year at Bantry Bay, and it cannot be denied that the experiments on that occasion have been of great advantage to the Service. I can only say that I believe the present Board of Admiralty intend to continue these experiments, and I hope that they will be of advantage to the country. Then, lastly, I come to the general question of the Channel Fleet. In the Channel Squadron we have vessels which hold a great many men. They are broadside vessels, and, no doubt, are not the best fighting ships we can get. They constitute a sort of gymnasium in which the men on board these vessels are able to obtain a kind of practice which they cannot acquire at any other school. Therefore, it is desirable to keep them in the Channel Squadron. In the event of war, the crews in the ships of the Channel Squadron would be transferred to the vessels of the First Class Reserve; but in ordinary times the vessels of the Squadron are kept afloat because they are most convenient afloat for training the men. And now I should like to say a word in regard to the coaling stations. The question of the coaling stations is, no doubt, an important one; and I will just tell the House what has been done already. I am afraid that we cannot look forward to the time when we shall be able to relieve ourselves of the necessity of protecting the coaling stations by vessels consuming oil instead of coal. That may be a dream of the future; but, in the meantime, we must make ample provision for their protection. As to what has been done already in regard to the coaling stations, I may say that the work is well in hand.

The guns at Hong Kong have been contracted for, and the works are approaching completion. The same remark applies to Singapore, where the guns required are well in hand, and the Imperial Government is paying the whole expense; so also with regard to Aden. At St. Simon's Bay the works are well in hand; new guns are being made; and there, also, the whole expense is being defrayed by the Imperial Government. Progress is also being made at St. Helena, Sierra Leone, St. Lucia, and at other stations. It is not right, therefore, to say that the Admiralty are doing nothing in regard to the coaling stations. The work is being proceeded with; and the Admiralty are very anxious that, as far as lies in their power, they should be proceeded with expeditiously. It is, however, more a matter which belongs to the War Office than to the Admiralty. We have had a very interesting speech this evening from the hon. and gallant Member for the East Riding (Commander Bethell). I am sure that the House listened to that speech with a great deal of interest; but in coming to a decision upon this matter it is, no doubt, very difficult to say what effect the employment of torpedo boats may have in the future. At present they form a valuable and important part of naval warfare; and I quite agree with what has been said by my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), that on no account will it be possible to dispense with the services of line-of-battle ships. They must always form a due proportion of our Royal Navy. The hon. and gallant Member for Southampton (Sir J. E. Commerell) is rather alarmed about the state of Bermuda. Some years ago I was at Bermuda myself, and I have some recollection of the place. I do not think that it is an easy place for large vessels to get into; and I think that the hon. and gallant Admiral, if he were in command, would, without much difficulty, find some means of stopping the passage to Bermuda, with the aid of torpedoes, so that it would take a long time for an iron-clad to get there and be able to do mischief.

SIR J. E. COMMERELL (Southampton): Two 80-gun ships got there in 1812, and got out again. But then there were no torpedoes.

MR. R. W. DUFF: The noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) gave an account of the number of men in the Service which is not quite in accordance with the official Estimate. I think the noble and gallant Lord set down the number at about 79,000. As far as I can make out, however, from the Government list, we have 61,398 officers, seamen, and Marines on the Navy List; and we have 18,215 men in the Royal Naval Reserve; 2,072 in the Seamen and Royal Pensioners Reserve; and 1,427 in the Royal Artillery Naval Reserve—making, altogether, 83,112; and adding 355 officers on half-pay, and 84 officers not borne on the ship's books, we have a total of 83,551. In addition to this, all pensioners under 55 are liable to be called out for active service in case of war; and the number available is probably about 10,000. I will not detain the House at any greater length, because the official statement will, I hope, be made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty on Thursday. I have endeavoured to reply to some of the points which have been raised; and I can only assure the House that the Government believe they have asked for a sufficient sum to place the Navy of this country in a thoroughly efficient state. ["Oh!"] Yes; I am strongly of that opinion; and I cannot agree with my noble Friend opposite with regard to his proposal for voting extra money. I would remind the House that within the last three years we have been spending something enormous on the construction of our ships. I find that in the year 1885-6 we spent no less than £3,115,000; and in the year 1886-7 we propose to spend £3,644,000. I think the House will agree that that is a very large Estimate; and I must say that the question raised by hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) that we are spending £3,644,000, while the expenditure of France is only £1,310,000, is an important matter for our consideration. I do not wish to draw an invidious comparison; but we have been generally told that France was ahead of this country; and I therefore think it right to give these figures. I am very much obliged to the House for the indulgence with which it has listened to me; but I have no doubt that the task which I have performed would have been much more satisfactorily discharged by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, if he could have been here to-night.

Mr. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am sure that we all regret the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, and especially the cause of his absence; but, at the same time, the House will agree with me in expressing an opinion that my hon. Friend the Civil Lord of the Admiralty has discharged the duties which suddenly devolved upon him in a manner highly creditable to himself, and that he has shown that he possesses thorough command of all the details connected with these questions. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has said, very truly, that enormous sums have been spent on the Navy during the last two or three years—larger, indeed, than in any previous year. But why has that been so? It has been because the Navy has been allowed to go down much below the strength at which it ought to be kept; and, as a matter of fact, the Admiralty have been forced by the pressure of public opinion to endeavour to bring up the Navy to that position which it ought never to have lost. I suspect that that is the natural result of false economy, whether of a public character or otherwise. The result has been that large additional expenditure—not always an economical expenditure—has been entailed upon the country by the false economy of previous proceedings. There is nothing more remarkable, I think, as an illustration of that result, than the hurried and extravagant expenditure on which we embarked in the late war scare; and I have no hesitation in saying that a large portion of the money spent at that time was as uselessly spent as if it had been thrown into the sea. The hon. Gentleman opposite has stated that the amount spent in the time to which I refer was something under £500,000; but I had a good deal to do with the expenditure on that occasion when I was at the Admiralty, and I am satisfied that I am much more accurate in estimating the amount at nearly £1,000,000. I believe that it will be found that my estimate is considerably more accurate than that of the hon. Gentleman. I remember not only the expenditure incurred on the mercantile vessels which were converted into cruisers, but I recollect going round the Dockyards, and seeing them strewed with antediluvian tugs on which large sums of money had been spent, and which were altogether useless for the purposes for which they were intended and for which they had been purchased. I may mention the case of an expensive tug in one of the Dockyards, on which it was proposed to spend a large sum of money in order to convert it into a ship of war. It never could, however, have been converted into a ship of war; and if we had not stopped the expenditure it would also have fallen into the category of wasted money. I have not got the details of the Estimates we left behind us at the Admiralty; but my recollection is that, in addition to what I may call the programme we left behind for building gunboats, which amounted to about £500,000 during the year, our ordinary Estimates were about £500,000 in excess of those now presented to the House. [Mr. R. W. Duff made a remark which was inaudible.] Yes; but I understood the hon. Gentleman to say that our whole Estimates were £500,000 more than the present Estimates; and he further stated that this £500,000 included the proposal we made for the building of gunboats. But I maintain that, in addition to that proposal, we proposed further outlay in shipbuilding more than is now provided.

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff): I was talking of the shipbuilding at home.

Mr. RITCHIE: Yes; but there are two Shipbuilding Votes. There is the Vote for Shipbuilding in the Dockyards, and the Vote for Shipbuilding by Contract; and, as far as my recollection goes, we were perfectly satisfied with the proposals of the Government as to shipbuilding in the Royal Dockyards. But I think if I had the Estimates before me—and it is rather inconvenient to discuss these matters in their absence—it would be seen that the present Board of Admiralty have considerably cut down the expenditure proposed by the late Board in regard to building ships by contract. That, I think, will be seen when we come to discuss the matter more fully upon the Estimates. My noble Friend the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) has stated that, in his opinion, £2,000,000 more ought to be spent in order to bring the Navy up to a proper state of efficiency, and he proposed that as an alternative proposal to that of my noble and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), who considers that £5,000,000 are required. My noble Friend the late First Lord of the Admiralty proposed, in addition to the normal Estimates of the year, that a sum of £2,000,000 should be spent in giving out work by contract, in order to place the Navy in a proper state of efficiency with special reference to small vessels, and that the expenditure should be distributed over three years instead of being borne upon the Estimates of a single year. I agree with what he has said in regard to the condition of many of the small craft of the Navy, and certainly with regard to the gunboats, upon which a considerable expenditure for repairs will have to be incurred, if new vessels of that kind are not built. Expenditure on obsolete vessels is a wasteful expenditure. I remember one of the first proposals made to us at the Admiralty—a proposal which had been assented to by the previous Board of Admiralty—to spend a large sum of money in the repair of gunboats. The first proposal was to spend £10,000 in the repair of a gunboat called the *Moorhen;* but we found that after we had spent a considerable sum of money upon it, its utmost speed would not be more than eight knots an hour. Looking at the obsolete type of the vessel, and its low speed, and the sum which it was proposed to spend upon it, we came to the conclusion that it would be a waste of expenditure; and, therefore, we declined to expend our money upon it. The decision then arrived at governed our decision with regard to other gunboats in the Service. We found that the sums of money required to be spent in placing them in a proper state of repair would be far more than the whole value of the vessels after they were repaired; and we came to the conclusion that it would be better to apportion the money on the building of gunboats of the newest type. We left a proposal behind us at the Admiralty for building eight of these gunboats; and although I do not blame, and I am sure my noble and gallant Friend behind me (Lord Charles Beresford) has no intention of imputing blame to the Admiralty for their programme, I do not believe that any expenditure could have been more usefully made than upon that programme of building gunboats and small vessels which we left behind us. Something has been said as to coaling stations. I regretted to hear the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) deprecate expenditure upon coaling stations. For my own part, I think if these stations are not vigorously taken in hand, and a proper sum spent on them to bring them in a position to stand on their own legs without the assistance of the Navy, it would lead to a large waste of strength in time of war, because it is perfectly certain that if we are not willing to let these stations fall into the hands of the enemy they would not be a source of strength, but would be the means of detaching naval force from the Fleet which would be useful elsewhere. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty has made some reference to these coaling stations, upon which I should like to say a word. I gather that there seems to be an impression that the Colonial Government may undertake the fortification of Colombo; but I cannot agree that the Colonial Government would be in a position to place that splendid harbour in a position of defence. I hope that the Government will not lose sight, not only of that particular port, but of the general importance of this question of fortifying our coaling stations. All naval men agree that it is one of the most fundamental points which require the attention of the Admiralty. Something has been said also with regard to repairs. I have alluded to one question of repairs which came before the late Admiralty with reference to gunboats; but that is only a small portion of this great question of repairs, and I wish strongly to impress upon the present Board of Admiralty that they should be careful not to spend money upon vessels which are not likely to be worth the money expended upon them. Let me give an illustration. There is one vessel in particular upon which a large sum of money, unfortunately, has been and will be spent, and in my opinion very unwisely—I refer to the *Tourmaline.* When we came into Office we found a proposal to spend £40,000 in repairing this ship, a very large sum in proportion to her original cost, which was £90,000; and when spent you would have a vessel that could not steam more than seven knots an hour. It was proposed to fit her up with new armaments, and to bring her up as far as possible to the necessities of the day. We would have stopped these repairs if it had been at all possible; but we found they had been undertaken before we came into Office. We considered that it was a wasteful expenditure of public money to lay out large sums in endeavouring to bring vessels up to a condition suitable for the wants of the Navy, when, as a matter of fact, no expenditure could increase their speed; and, after all, speed is one of the main questions for consideration. I rose mainly, however, for the purpose of disabusing my hon. Friend opposite of the idea that we have a wish to attack the Government. I can assure him that we, who were at the Admiralty before, will, as far as lies in our power, give the Government every assistance in following up the programme they have taken in hand of building quickly and cheaply the vessels required for the Public Service; and I can assure the Government that, as long as that continues to be their policy, they will meet with no factious opposition from this side of the House, but, on the contrary, cordial support.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): I will not detain the House for more than a few moments, and I should not say a word if it were not for the appeal which has been made to me upon the financial aspect of this question. I shall not endeavour to enter into the naval controversy. The late First Lord of the Admiralty, I am bound to say, with perfect good humour and taste, denounced and rather lectured me on the pedantry of finance. Now, as regards the pedantry of finance, the views expressed by the noble Lord would have carried a little more weight if they had come from his Colleague who sits beside him, who lately occupied the position I have now the honour to hold. I have made myself acquainted, as far as I could, with the financial arrangements of the late Administration; but I have certainly found no record in the Treasury of any plan for a considerable expenditure upon the future of the Navy. I need not answer the proposal of my noble and gallant Friend who introduced the Motion as to the Sinking Fund, because the late First Lord of the Admiralty has, extremely well I think, explained why it is not desirable to employ that Fund for the purpose for which the noble and gallant Lord would wish to lay his hands upon it. I remember a time—a good many years ago—when in this House the Conservative Party was an economical Party. Under Sir Robert Peel they were a great economical Party; but even under the Earl of Beaconsfield I remember a great speech in which he denounced bloated armaments, and pointed out what I hope the noble Lord and his gallant Colleagues who sit near him will not forget—namely, that besides ships and torpedoes there is a great resource in war—namely, the sinews of war, in the credit of a nation whose finance is sound. The Earl of Beaconsfield enlarged on that text, and he said that if you overcharge the finances of your country in a manner and at a time when they cannot well bear it, you are providing a great weakness to yourselves in the time of your extremity; that when you come to a great emergency your prospects of success will depend upon the credit of the nation, and the credit of a nation in a time of war depends in the great struggle upon the manner in which it has husbanded its resources in the time of peace. It was that which Mr. Pitt found in 1793, and he could not have entered into the great struggle which commenced at that time but for the enlightened policy which he had laid down for this country before. Well, the late First Lord of the Admiralty condemned the appropriation of the Sinking Fund; but he proposed a plan of his own for raising money on Terminable Annuities. I wish that I could only advise the right hon. Gentleman opposite (the late Chancellor of the Exchequer) to rise and take part in this debate, for I think that he would feel compelled to say something about this plan of Terminable Annuities. If there is one fallacy in finance that has been thoroughly exposed it is that of borrowing money for the purpose of keeping up the Sinking Fund. That was a mistake which even so great a financier as Mr. Pitt committed; but the Sinking Fund of Mr. Pitt was soon found out to be a delusion. The Sinking Fund can only be kept up by economy out of the resources of the year, and not by borrowing money. What is the proposal of the late First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to Terminable Annuities? He says that we ought to keep up the Sinking Fund which is paying off Debt, and that we ought to borrow £2,000,000 on Terminable Annuities. I will not call the plan of the noble Lord the "pedantry of finance;" but it is something more like the heresy of finance. Therefore, I cannot accept the doctrine of the late First Lord of the Admiralty in finance of this character. He did not even tell us what was to be the length of his Terminable Annuities.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Five years.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I hardly think that it is worth while to enter into the question of Terminable Annuities. They do not lighten the burden, and in the end they come to very much the same thing.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I can quote a precedent. Sir Stafford Northcote, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, adopted a somewhat similar course, and paid off £7,500,000 in seven years by Terminable Annuities.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: And we thought it very bad finance. That was the great doctrine of credit; and I recollect how indignantly it was denounced by the present Prime Minister. You had deficits year after year, and spread out these accumulated deficits by means of Terminable Annuities. The late First Lord of the Admiralty and his friends are trying now to force on us expenditure which, when in Office, they did not intend to recommend. Now, let me say a word very seriously as to how the financial aspect of the case strikes me. In the year 1870—not so very long ago—only 16 years—the Naval Estimates were £9,500,000; they are now £13,000,000—an increase of about 50 per cent. The Army Estimates at that time were £12,000,000; last year they were £18,000,000, again an increase of 50 per cent in 16 years. I do not speak of one Government more than another; but that is the history of the question, and the Conservative Government were in Office for six years out of that period, and the Estimates increased greatly during their time. Look at the effect upon the country. Look at the burden on the country. You have increased the Expenditure of the country by 50 per cent, and are the Services satisfied? Is it because you have increased your Naval Expenditure by £4,500,000 and your Military Expenditure by £6,000,000? Oh, no! We are told that we have got no Army and have no Navy. Aye, and if you give the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) the wretched £2,000,000 which the noble Lord the late First Lord of the Admiralty suggests, or the paltry £5,000,000 which he asks for himself, we are told that it would not include all that it is necessary to make provision for. If we were to add £5,000,000 to the Naval Estimates this year, would he be satisfied? Would the gallant Admiral the Member for Southampton (Sir J. E. Commerell), and the eminent shipbuilders who have supported him to-night, be satisfied with this £5,000,000? Not at all. It will be only the beginning of it. It is like the case of a man suffering from dropsy, of whom it was said—"The more he drinks the more he wants." It is so with the increase of these items of Expenditure. If I thought I could see any signs of the addition of millions of Expenditure on the Navy satisfying the people who call for it, then I should derive some consolation. But that is not the case. I find that the more millions you spend the more you are asked for. Look at some of the language we have heard to-night. The late First Lord of the Admiralty said that we had hardly any efficient gunboats in the Service. Yes; you spend £13,000,000 more than any other country in the world, and yet it is said that you have not got an efficient gunboat. I do not wish to lay the blame on one Administration more than another. A gunboat will last more than five years. How is it, then, that with such an immense annual Expenditure we have not an efficient gunboat in the Navy? Then we have been induced to spend millions on iron-clads because we have been told that France has been building iron-clads at so fast a rate that we must keep pace with her, and then we proceed to enter into contracts for iron-clads. But an hon. Member gets up—the hon. and gallant Member for the East Riding (Commander Bethell)—and, in one of the best speeches we have heard in this House, tells us that it is all a mistake to build iron-clads at all. That is the enormous difficulty we have to contend with. We get the opinions and plans of these gallant experts, and we follow their advice; but no sooner have we done this, and incurred enormous liabilities, than we are told that the whole thing is a mistake—that gunboats are wrong, iron-clads are wrong—and now we are told that we have wasted our money altogether; that we ought to have done something else; and that the type of ship decided on is all wrong. The late First Lord also said that we have no guns and no ammunition. It is certainly a very extraordinary thing that, with an Expenditure of £13,000,000, we should have no guns and no ammunition. The hon. Member for the East Riding (Commander Bethell), I must say, was most candid. He admitted that there was no finality in these matters. Of course, there is no finality. He tells us himself that we ought to expend our money on things upon which other countries are expending theirs. The great argument that used to be brought forward years ago was that, although superior to France, France was building so rapidly that we must take care that she did not overtake us. If the noble Lord wants to have a lesson in finance, which has nothing to do with the pedantry of finance, will he permit me to advise him to read the letter from the Paris Correspondent of *The Times* to-day, and he will see what is the financial condition to which France has been brought by successive Governments agreeing to such Motions as this, and by a policy which leads to Motions of this kind, as the result of Expeditions for the extension of Empire. You take a place, and then you are told that it is a source of danger unless you spend millions in fortifying it, and then that you must have ships to guard it. It is exactly like the case of a man who wants a house and over-builds, and who then finds it necessary to keep it up by an establishment of servants who will ruin him. That is the policy of unsound finance that has led countries to ruin, and would ruin even such a country as England if persisted in. These are not times, I venture to say, when anybody responsible for the Government of this country can afford to add £5,000,000 to the Expenditure of the country, or even £2,000,000 to the highest Naval Estimates that have ever been presented to the House. In these hard times, it is perfectly well known that every class is suffering from distress, and the Revenue, it is also perfectly well known, is day by day diminishing. Surely these are not times when we should be justified in making these demands upon the country, and in laying additional burdens of this character upon the people. There was an old rule in Greece or Rome—I forget which—that a man who introduced a new law must do so with a halter round his neck, and if he did not carry the law the halter was put into operation. I should be the last man to apply such a rule to my noble and gallant Friend; but I should like that every man who produces a proposal for additional Expenditure in this House should be compelled to accompany it with a proposal for a tax to meet that Expenditure, and that unless he should carry his tax he should have no chance of obtaining the Vote for his Expenditure. The principle of the noble and gallant Lord's Sinking Fund is not accepted by the Front Bench below him. He seems to imagine that there is something like a well at the Treasury, and that the money does not come out of the pockets of the people. I doubt whether the Terminable Annuities of the late First Lord will find greater favour with financial authorities. Having proposed these Estimates, I trust that no real attempt will be made to force greater Expenditure at the present moment upon the country, especially by responsible persons, who must be aware that the people are not able to bear those burdens which you must impose upon them, unless you are prepared to take the fatal course of borrowing money for your ordinary Naval and Military Establishments in a time of peace—a course which, in my opinion, when you have once commenced it and once set the example, will be followed, you may depend upon it, to a dangerous extent, and a course which means nothing less than unsound finance and possibly national bankruptcy.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I may not be entirely disposed to agree with my noble and gallant Friend behind me (Lord Charles Beresford); but I think he has, at any rate, approached the consideration of this question with greater knowledge and on broader grounds than the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It does not seem to me that the question for the House to consider is whether the Naval Estimates are £13,500,000 now, and were £9,000,000 in some previous year, or whether we are spending more or spending less than any other country. The great question for this House to consider is whether the Naval Estimates are sufficient to keep up our Navy in an efficient state, and whether the money voted by this House is properly expended. Now, Sir, that is a matter which has been entirely left out of consideration by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. My noble and gallant Friend, approaching this question from this point of view, is dissatisfied with the Naval Estimates. He would desire, by some financial process with which I am afraid I cannot quite agree, to increase the expenditure of the present year in connection with these Estimates. But my noble and gallant Friend has placed before the House, in a very able speech, his view of the present state of the Navy, on which he is competent to speak with authority; and I am not quite sure, in the absence of the Secretary to the Admiralty, that the responsible Ministers on the Bench opposite have entirely answered his contention. Now, Sir, it is not fair, I will venture to say, to treat this question as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has treated it—as a question merely brought before the House by hon. Gentlemen who, in speaking in this House or in writing to the Press, represent the Services. The question is not whether the Services are satisfied or not. It is a far larger one; it is this —is the country satisfied, and ought the country to be satisfied, with the present condition of the Navy? I am not here to find fault with the Navy Estimates. I am inclined to the opinion that, looking to all the points of the case, these Estimates have been fairly considered, and that they are, perhaps, as large as any we can expect from the present Government. But the policy which I think my noble Friend the late First Lord of the Admiralty was anxious to impress on the House was this. He referred to the expenditure for naval and military purposes during the past year, and argued that the amount of it was partly due to insufficient expenditure in previous years. Do we not all know that expenditure in a moment of panic is as wasteful as any expenditure that can be conceived? And will anyone venture to say that there was not very much that was wasted in the expenditure of last summer? Why was that? May it not have been that the state of the Navy and of the Army, was at that moment not as efficient as it ought to have been; that the Navy was not as well supplied with stores as it ought to have been; and that possibly the sum which Parliament was called upon to vote in a sudden emergency last summer might really have been saved to the country by the exercise of ordinary prescience? That I understand to be at the bottom of the contention of my noble Friend. My noble Friend suggests that, for the purposes contemplated by him, £2,000,000 should be raised by Terminable Annuities. Well, I confess that I do not agree with that proposal. I hold very strongly that although we adopted this mode of raising money for erecting fortifications, at the instance of a Liberal Government, at a time when we were paying off a debt previously incurred, yet that is not a precedent which ought to be readily followed, and I do not think that Terminable Annuities ought to be resorted to except for some object of permanent benefit to the country. Then the question remains, Can you meet these requirements in any other way? Certainly, you might meet them by adding to the taxation of the year. It is not for me to enter upon the details of the Estimates, of which I am not competent to judge; but if, in the Navy Estimates of the year, some provision is not made for placing the Navy in a more efficient state than it was in in April and May last, when that additional and wasteful expenditure was required all of a sudden, then I think Her Majesty's Government have in some degree failed in their duty to this House. I understood from the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff), who has with much ability fulfilled the duty of the right hon. Member (Mr. Hibbert) who is, unfortunately, obliged to be absent to-night—I understood from him that Her Majesty's Government were carrying out the policy of the Earl of Northbrook. Well, but I am very much afraid that Her Majesty's

Government are not carrying out in these Estimates the policy which the Earl of Northbrook enunciated in December, 1884. I am very much afraid they have receded from that policy, and are really about to cripple our Fleet, in the future, by not providing for an adequate expenditure on the defence of these coaling stations abroad, on which so much of the efficiency of our Fleet depends.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): The armaments are provided by the War Office.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Yes; but the hon. Gentleman who represents the Admiralty on this occasion told us something to-night about the fortification of these coaling stations, and I confess I was not satisfied with the account he gave, either as to the progress of these works, or as to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with regard to them. We are not now dealing with the armaments, but with the works themselves. They are, I understand, in the Estimates, and that is the question we are now upon. At any rate, what did the hon. Gentleman refer to? He referred to a matter which is essential to the efficiency of our Fleet. That matter may not be technically included in the Estimates; but it is perfectly certain that, having regard to the fact that our Fleet depends for its usefulness on these coaling stations, that Fleet will not be efficient unless these coaling stations are safe from the attack of an enemy. Therefore, nothing can be more pertinent than the consideration of the question whether Her Majesty's Government are doing what they consider necessary, and what their Predecessors in Office considered to be necessary, to secure the defence of these coaling stations abroad. I very much wish we had had from Her Majesty's Government, and—if I may say so without disrespect to the hon. Gentleman opposite—from some more important Member of Her Hajesty's Government, a more reassuring statement on that point. I confess, remembering my own experience as to Colonial affairs, remembering the defenceless nature of many of these positions which are of such vital importance to this country, I do not think that any money can be better spent than in placing them in a position to defend themselves as quickly as possible. And if it be that Her Majesty's Government for this year are taking only half the Vote which the Earl of Northbrook had intended to take for this purpose, then, I will venture to say, they are dealing with a matter which they ought to put forward as rapidly as possible to the very great danger of the country. I do not wish to dwell any longer on the Estimates that are now before us. I am unable to support the Motion of my noble and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). The Sinking Fund is, I suspect, though the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not say so, already mortgaged for other purposes, and I very much agree with the right hon. Gentleman in his opinion, as I have already stated, as to the policy of the creation of Terminable Annuities; but what I do hold strongly is that Her Majesty's Government ought to do their very best to secure the efficiency of this great line of the defence of our country, and in no way can they more thoroughly secure it than by devoting the means they have at their command, as rapidly as possible, to preserve these coaling stations, which are so essential to the good working of our Fleet against the sudden attack of an enemy.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Sir, I have been present during nearly the whole of this naval debate, and can only picture the House, while it has been going on, as the Board Room at the Admiralty; and I am disposed to regret that the able Gentlemen who have taken part in it had not been gathered around the Table there with the First Lord of the Admiralty, because the intervention in the debate of a civilian is regarded as almost entirely out of place. I do not wish to say that the debate has not been most entertaining, although I regret that I am not, with the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), able to say that it has been gratifying. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite have deprecated a scare with regard to the condition of the Navy. No doubt, such statements as we have listened to are very readily uttered; but I think if the utterances which we have had to-night are taken seriously by the public when they are read to-morrow in the Press, that there will be very considerable alarm. The only thing that, in my opinion, may have the effect of lessening that alarm, will be that these utterances will be taken for what they are worth, and no more. I am willing to admit that the noble and gallant Lord introduced his Motion in a speech which shows conspicuous ability; I readily acknowledge the experience which he has in his Profession; and if to kill, burn, and destroy, were among the highest Christian duties, then I should say that he would be one of the most eminent Christians of which this country could boast, and that when the noble and gallant Lord departed from this scene, he would be entitled to be canonized and regarded as one of the most conspicuous in the Calendar. Sir, I hope the House will receive with great caution, if not with suspicion, utterances from interested sources. I do not doubt the sincerity of the utterances of these naval Gentlemen; but I think that they take altogether a one-sided view of the case. They forget the taxpayer and other considerations which we, as guardians of the taxpayer's interests, have to keep in view, the whole tendency of their arguments being to show that "there is nothing like leather." I venture to think that the two reasons which the noble and gallant Lord gave in support of his Motion are altogether untenable. The noble and gallant Lord speaks of the cheapness of materials; but I would remind him that cheapness is altogether a question of relativity. The taxes laid upon the people are already very difficult to get, and the burden would be felt more acutely if the proposals of the noble and gallant Lord were adopted, and I venture to say that the taxpayers of the country deserve a little breathing time. Last year we were indulged with an increased expenditure on the Navy alone of £6,500,000, and we have been reminded by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the leaps and bounds by which our Naval and Military Expenditure is increasing; and I wish to tell right hon. and hon. Gentlemen that while the expenditure on the Naval, Military, and Civil Services has increased of later years in a greater degree than before, the trade of the country has been, during that time, diminishing. We have had very important debates in this House of late as to the existing depression in the country, and I believe there is a universal concensus as to the nature and extent of that depression. Mr. Speaker, I think we must now admit that this has become chronic, and, further, that it is not affecting Great Britain alone, but that it is having very serious effects upon those nations who are our best customers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has made a most significant allusion to what is passing in France at this moment. France has found that there is something for her to do to-day beyond making provision for naval and military operations. She has to meet a deficit, and if the spirit which has been manifested in this House is to be further exhibited I believe that this country will find itself in a position scarcely more fortunate. Now, Sir, there have been various remedies suggested for this widespread depression. Some of them have been, in my judgment, unsound, such, for instance, as the adoption of the principle of "Fair Trade;" but of all the absurdities suggested for meeting the depression in the country, the most singular of all is that we should add an additional charge of £5,500,000 to our Naval Expenditure. Now, I should like the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) to have been a little more candid as to the way in which he would propose to meet this expenditure. He has admitted that he is opposed to the raising of Terminable Annuities. What, then, is left to us except to increase the taxation on the shoulders of the people? I confess that I had some regrets on account of the recent change of Government. I should like the right hon. Gentleman the late Chancellor of the Exchequer to have an opportunity of explaining to us in a Budget Statement the way he would have acted, and maintained the opinion which he has to-night expressed. [*Interruption.*] It is my intention to go through with the observations which I think it my duty to make, and I venture to think that this House has fallen upon an evil period if the cries of Gentlemen opposite are to drown the voices of those who represent the people. I have never been backward, when the Governments with which I have been in some way identified have been extravagant in expenditure, in protesting against such expenditure, and in this way I feel bound to make a verbal protest against the proposals of the noble and gallant Lord. The noble and gallant Lord has given it as one reason why this enormous additional expenditure should be incurred, that at this moment there is a large number of artizans accustomed to shipbuilding out of employment. Sir, the very worst form of Socialism is to expend public money on unproductive public works; but there is another more monstrous and ruinous, and that is to spend money lavishly on instruments of destruction. For my own part I would warn the House of Commons—it is not necessary to warn hon. Gentlemen who have seats at the Admiralty, because they are accustomed to these debates; but there are a great many new Members in the House—to look very closely to this question, and conscientiously discharge their duty by preventing the noble and gallant Lord from emasculating his own Motion and getting it carried in another form. We have been reminded by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there seems to have been no additional security given to the country by these Army and Navy Estimates. I say there is no finality to the spirit which prevails in Europe; there is no finality as between ships and guns; and ships and other implements of war will in a few years become obsolete, such is the stimulus given to invention by this competition in instruments of destruction. I do not think we shall have either undor a Liberal or Conservative Government any very active measures taken to check this extravagance which is going on at home and abroad; but I do appeal to hon. Members to remember that in their places they are bound to speak for the down-trodden people over the heads of the Government and over the heads of highly-paid officials, appealing to them to consider that there is widespread depression in this country, to abandon this rivalry which is so fraught with evil consequences, to come to an understanding as to the means whereby the condition of the people may be improved, and to learn how the relative security of every State in the world may be increased by means other than those suggested by the noble and gallant Lord. For my own part I can see nothing but great disaster before us, if we continue in the spirit which has been shown in this debate; and I am not sure that it would not be wise for the House to resolve that, if it is considered well to admit naval and military officers into its deliberations, they should be bound to silence, and that, if they have anything to communicate that is worth knowing, such communication of their knowledge should be made privately to those who preside over the Naval and Military Departments. Why, Sir, what has happened to-night? Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen have spoken with the greatest candour, and have no doubt in all sincerity made suggestions to the Government; but what is the result of this candour? All their suggestions are in the Press, and they will be known in the newspaper offices in every country in Europe; the suggestions we make here will immediately be made public and available to Foreign Governments. It is because I see no limit to and no advantage in the course we are now pursuing that I venture to make this protest against the proposals of the noble and gallant Lord.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): Mr. Speaker, with your permission and with the permission of the House, I would ask leave to withdraw my Amendment, and substitute another omitting certain words now contained in that Amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The noble and gallant Lord asks the permission of the House to withdraw his Amendment for the purpose of omitting certain words. Is it your pleasure that the Amendment be withdrawn?

ADMIRAL EGERTON (Derbyshire, N.E.): I venture to suggest to the noble and gallant Lord that it would be better if he withdrew his Amendment altogether. I am sorry to find myself obliged to vote against the Motion of the noble and gallant Lord, and that, as it seems to me, on very good grounds. I submit to the noble and gallant Lord that he should be satisfied with the discussion that has taken place. For the first time since I have been in Parliament, an Amendment to the Motion for going into Committee of Supply on Naval Estimates, has induced the occupants of the two Front Benches to enter into a contest not as to what is for the benefit of the Navy itself, but as to which Government has produced the largest Estimates. I think we must also appeal to the noble and gallant Lord to bear in mind, among other things, that he has been thrown over by both his Leaders, and also that he has not been entirely supported by hon. Members sitting on his own side of the House behind him. I think also we ought to remember what has been said by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), that the great point is not whether we are to spend large sums of money, but whether they are properly expended. If the £5,500,000 were voted, it is not at all certain that the money would be properly expended, I remember that in the last Parliament a right hon. Gentleman sitting in the place which he now occupies was perpetually informing the House that we wanted no less than 33 iron-clads. Well, Sir, if the money had been invested in that way, I think we should all have come to the conclusion that it had been thrown away. I am of opinion that the House and the country should be satisfied with the Estimates which have been produced by Her Majesty's Government; and I venture, for the reasons I have stated, to ask the noble and gallant Lord to withdraw his Amendment absolutely and allow you, Sir, to leave the Chair.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 206; Noes 98: Majority 108.—(Div. List, No. 31.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) 61,400 Men and Boys.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): Of course, under ordinary circumstances this is the Vote upon which we should expect the annual Statement of the policy of the Government in regard to the Navy; but, in the unfortunate absence of the Secretary to the Admiralty, I think we may allow this Vote to be taken now, and then, on Thursday, when the remaining Vote for money will be taken, the explanation can be given which is usual on this Vote.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): I am very much obliged to the noble Lord for his suggestion. I hope by Thursday next my right hon. Friend will be in his place.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

MARRIAGES VALIDITY BILL [*Lords*].

(*The Lord Advocate.*)

[BILL 137.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) (Clackmannan, &c.): Perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words on this Bill which has come down from the House of Lords. The Bill is directed to the removal of doubts regarding the validity of marriages contracted in some of the Border counties between two persons one resident in Scotland and another in England. Where such persons desire to be married after banns in an English church, the Scotch person, not infrequently, comes over the Border, bringing with him a certificate of his intended marriage having been proclaimed in a Presbyterian church, and the English clergyman accepts this certificate as publication of banns, which it is not, according to the definition given in *Geo.* IV. c. 76, p. 2. It is plainly desirable to remove any doubt as to the validity of such marriages contracted *bonâ fide.* The Bill was introduced into the House of Lords by the Bishop of Carlisle, and was expressly approved by the present Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell), as also by Lord Selborne and Lord Halsbury; and I hope, under the circumstances, the House will allow it to go through.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Thursday.*

LUNACY (VACATING OF SEATS) BILL.—[BILL 85.]

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Puleston, Mr. William Corbet.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.): I beg to move, Sir, that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy), who is not here now, has a very important Amendment, and I think he ought to have an opportunity of bringing it on.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. W. O'Brien.*)

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I hope the hon. Member will not press his Motion, and for this reason. The Bill has been on the Paper for several weeks past, and the hon. and learned Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) has put down a Motion on it for the discussion of another matter altogether. The difficulty which the Bill is intended to meet is this—that in the case of a Member being elected to this House who was a lunatic, there would be no means of vacating the seat, as his state of mind would incapacitate him from resigning his seat. Such a case has been before the House, and therefore a measure on these lines is very necessary. There is another Amendment on the Paper which I am perfectly willing to accept. It is simply the matter of the alteration of a word in the title of the Act. I trust that, under the circumstances, the hon. Gentleman will not interfere with the passage of the Bill through Committee.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I have no desire to delay the Bill; but I cannot understand the extraordinary haste of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) in this matter. If the Bill is worth passing at all, it is worth passing properly; and in the absence of an assurance from my hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy), we cannot allow this Bill to go on at the present time.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Charles Russell) (Hackney, S.): The Government do not desire to go on with the Bill at the present time, if the hon. and learned Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) seriously desires to move his Amendment.

Mr. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.): The hon. and learned Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) does most seriously intend to move his Amendment, and until we get an assurance from him that he is satisfied, we cannot allow the Bill to go on.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): I have no desire to push this Bill through with too much haste. It has, however, been postponed already to enable the hon. and learned Member for South Derry (Mr. T. M. Healy) to bring on his Amendment, but he has not done so.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): If the hon. and learned Member for South Derry is not here on the next occasion, we will arrange that someone else on these Benches shall move the Amendment for him.

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin): I would point out, as a matter of Order, that it is very doubtful if the Bill could be enlarged as suggested in the Amendment. As it at present stands, the Amendment means nothing in relation to the Bill.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

COAL MINES BILL.—[Bill 92.]

(*Sir Richard Cross, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Forwood.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I would like to call attention to the fact that the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) has already brought in a Bill on this subject, and the Government have also consented to bring in a complete measure dealing with the whole question. It seems to me that we shall get into difficulties if we go on with the Committee on this Bill before we have an opportunity of dealing with the Government Bill. If we have this confusion of Bills before the House and the Committee, it will be very difficult to deal with the question; and, therefore, Sir, I beg to move that you now report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir Joseph Pease.*)

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): I wish to point out why I want this Bill to go on at once. After the Report of the Royal

Commission on this subject, it was the intention of the late Government—and I have no doubt it is the intention of the present Government—to introduce such a measure as will conduce to the saving of life in coal mines. I should like to pay a tribute to the Gentlemen who served on that Commission, because, although they have been a very long time in coming to a conclusion, they have taken a very large amount of trouble in the matter; and it must be remembered that they were all scientific people engaged on other matters. I am quite sure that their Report will be satisfactory to the country. But about this particular Bill. It was brought before the late Government, and the reason why I want to go on with it now is the same reason I had for pressing it on the then Cabinet, because there are one or two questions dealt with in the Bill seriously affecting miners, which had nothing to do with the Royal Commission at all. Therefore, this Bill was introduced. Of course, we cannot regulate the time at which colliery accidents shall take place; and they may take place at any moment under these constant changes of temperature. When an accident did occur, during the time that I was Secretary of State, I always sent down and held inquiry into the matter; but, although in the case of a gunpowder explosion, it was possible for me to send down a Commission, I found that in the case of coal mine explosions, we had no power to take evidence on oath.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): The right hon. Gentleman must confine his remarks to the Motion to report Progress.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: That is precisely what I was trying to do. I hold that matters are urgent, and that it is not necessary to wait for the Report of the Commission, at any rate, on these points—that is to say, the points relating to the appointment of a check-weighman, to the right of the relatives of men killed in mines to appear before the Coroner, and to the power of the Home Secretary to send down an official to inquire and take evidence on oath. The late Government had decided to bring in a measure bearing on these points without delay, irrespective of any larger measure that might afterwards be introduced to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission; and, therefore, I hope that the Government will not consent to report Progress, but will go on with the consideration of the Bill to-night.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I hope that this Bill will be allowed to pass to-night. I represent the coal mining district of Wigan, and I can say that in that district there is great anxiety that this Bill shall pass. It is greatly desired by the working colliers of Lancashire generally; and, therefore, I hope the Committee will promptly and readily pass it.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST) (Birmingham, Bordesley): I feel some difficulty in following the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), for fear I should transgress the Rules of Order. The Committee will remember that a Bill was down for second reading a fortnight ago, in the name of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). That Bill was read a second time by general consent without a division. This Bill stood on the Paper lower down, and the Government consented to the second reading of it on one distinctly expressed condition—namely, that the Committee stage should be put off to the date agreed to for the discussion of the hon. Member for East Donegal's Bill. That time was fixed to meet the time at which the Government would be able to bring in their Bill. Those conditions have been honourably fulfilled by the hon. Member for East Donegal, and the Government understood that they were agreed to also in the case of the right hon. Gentleman's Bill. That being the arrangement, it is now impossible for the Government to break faith with the hon. Member for East Donegal, and to agree to go on with the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman. I should like the Committee to remember that these are not the only proposals before the country with regard to mining legislation. We have a very valuable and elaborate statement from the Miners' Conference; their proposals are contained in resolutions exceedingly important and valuable. Then we have also proposals of a very valuable nature from the hon. Member for East Donegal, as well as the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. Then we have, in addition to that, the very valuable suggestions which have been made in the Report of the Royal Commission, which Report is now in the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and will, I believe, in a very few days be in the hands of every Member of this House. Under these circumstances, the Government think that it is only reasonable and right that the Committee on the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman should be postponed in order to be considered with the other proposals that are to come before the House, and that we should not be asked to legislate piecemeal. Under these circumstances I feel bound to support the Motion.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): I cannot allow the moment to pass without disputing the statements of the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Broadhurst). As to what took place on the second reading of the Bill of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), it is quite true that the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) asked me if I would consent to the second reading of my Bill on the same terms; but I distinctly said I would do nothing of the kind. If the hon. Gentleman will look at the report in *The Times* newspaper of the following day, he will see a distinct refusal on my part to accept the second reading on the terms mentioned under any circumstances whatever. It is not for me to state publicly what has taken place between myself and the Home Secretary; but perhaps the hon. Gentleman had better consult the Home Secretary. But I mean to go to a division on this matter, and if the hon. Gentleman stops this Bill, on him will rest the responsibility. These are questions upon which there is no dispute whatever, and the reason why I strongly press this Bill is, that in case of an accident taking place in a mine, the Secretary of State will not be able to hold the inquiry which this Bill enables him to hold. Let it be known, therefore, to all the miners throughout the country, that if this Bill is stopped, it is stopped in consequence of the opposition of the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department; and although the late Government regarded this Bill as being independent of the larger Bill, Notice of it was given before they left Office. It shall be known throughout the length and breadth of the country that it is the Under Secretary for the Home Department who has stopped it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.): I do not quite understand why the right hon. Gentleman should import so much heat into the discussion. He differs from the impression which my hon. Friend the Under Secretary has as to certain arrangements which have been made. I am quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman has stated his clear understanding of what took place; but because it appears in *The Times*, it does not follow that it is absolutely correct. My hon. Friend the Under Secretary is only stating what he understood to be the arrangement, and he may fairly claim exactly the same tolerance that was shown to the right hon. Gentleman. But then the right hon. Gentleman went on to attack my hon. Friend, and indicated his intention to appeal from this House to the country in order to show up my hon. Friend, as if he is not interested in the miners, as if his life has not shown, and strongly so, his interest in the matter, and as if the right hon. Gentleman, forsooth! has greater interest in this matter than he. The right hon. Gentleman forgot, however, that the opposition to proceeding with the Committee on this Bill does not turn merely on who is right or who is wrong as to the understanding with the Home Secretary. It has been pointed out by the hon. Baronet (Sir Joseph Pease) and by my hon. Friend, very clearly, that this is only one part of a very large subject; and one thing to be avoided, if possible, is that it should be dealt with in this fragmentary manner.

MR. BURT (Morpeth): I was in the House when the Bill of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) and that of the right hon. Gentleman were moved, and I was certainly under the same impression as my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst). At the same time I frankly accept the disavowal of the right hon. Gentleman. Now, in my opinion, this Bill is a very good Bill. It is good as far as it goes; but it only deals with a very small part of the question, and I am of opinion that it is very undesirable to deal with a subject of this kind in a piecemeal and fragmentary manner; and, therefore, at all risk, I, for one, will support the Motion for reporting Progress.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): The Committee must remember that the existence of Governments is precarious; therefore it is desirable to pass this Bill, although it only deals with a part of the subject. This is not the first time that it has been argued that because a proposal only dealt with a part of the question it should wait for a complete measure, or in which Bills so put off have been put off for an almost indefinite time. The Committee will also remember that on the last occasion not only did my right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross) not accept, and absolutely refuse, but he also evidenced that refusal by putting this Bill down for the following Monday. Then, again, if my right hon. Friend's memory is backed up by the report of *The Times*, that in itself is a very significant fact. This Bill contains the minimum of what cannot be accepted without question by all concerned, and if it is passed now it can be easily repealed on being superseded by more comprehensive legislation.

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL (Renfrew, W.): As a large number of my constituents are miners, perhaps I may be allowed to say that this Bill, although it does not go so far as I could wish, is a very good instalment. It will extend to Scotland great benefits; and I do hope that, if it is to go on at all, it shall be passed through as rapidly as possible.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I am compelled to support the Motion of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Joseph Pease). What happened on the last occasion was this. After the second reading, my hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) said—"This day month." The Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) then offered to accept the second reading of the right hon. Gentleman's Bill on the same terms. The right hon. Gentleman below me (Sir R. Assheton Cross) remained silent, and made no sign of dissent. [*Cries of* "No!"] I observed him very closely, because I was once played a similar trick. When the right hon. Gentleman named an earlier day for the Committee than that named by the hon. Member for East Donegal for his Bill, the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) immediately gave Notice that he would oppose the consideration of the Bill, and would move to put it down for the same day as the other Bill. I do not know whether he did do so; but I will tell you what the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) did on Wednesday. At a quarter to 6, he managed to smuggle the Speaker out of the Chair.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): I must appeal against those remarks. The Home Secretary was sitting exactly in front of me when I made the Motion to go into Committee. I must appeal to the only Cabinet Minister present to let this Bill pass. I want it to pass, and I hope it will be taken now.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I was not present when this arrangement with the Home Secretary was made; but it is very evident to me that to-night the feeling of the Committee is very strongly in favour of postponing the consideration of the measure.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 128; Noes 69: Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 32.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee have leave to sit again To-morrow."—(*Sir R. Assheton Cross.*)

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I beg to move that the Bill be taken on the 31st of March. It was well understood, and the Committee has by the division just taken resolved, that the Bill should not be taken before that of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor).

MR. SPEAKER: Does the right hon. Gentleman agree to that?

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): No, Sir; not at all.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "To-morrow," in order to insert the words "upon Wednesday, the 31st day of this instant March,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) was present when this Bill was at the stage that you, Sir, should leave the Chair, and he did not raise the slightest objection to the Motion to that effect.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I think that, considering this rather disagreeable misunderstanding, it would be better if the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) were accepted, so as to give the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) an opportunity of making any explanation he may have to make. I, therefore, ask the hon. Member for Sligo to withdraw his Amendment,

MR. SEXTON: Upon the understanding that it is to allow the Home Secretary an opportunity of explaining, I do ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 10.]

(*Mr. Mayne, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. William O'Brian, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Sheehy.*)

COMMITTEE.

[*Progress 12th March.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 3 (Amendment of 46 & 47 Vict. c. 60, s. 5, as to certificate of sanitary officer).

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do report Progress. At this hour (1.30), I do not think it is unreasonable to propose that we should report Progress, and endeavour to elicit from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) whether, in pursuance of the understanding we arrived at the other night, he has made any arrangement with his Colleagues to take this Bill at a reasonable hour. It is scarcely fair to ask us to enter on the discussion of the Bill at the hour at which the House decided to adjourn the discussion the other night. We have done a great deal of varied work this evening. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members below the Gangway seem amused; but I may venture to point out to them this fact, that on the last three measures in Committee they have strongly supported to report Progress. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) has moved to put off two measures. The Government are willing to give full consideration to the measure, and hon. Members on these Benches are most anxious to ensure the passing of the measure. I rose to make this Motion without any consultation whatever with hon Gentlemen representing constituencies in the North of Ireland, and who sit near me, and I did so simply in the interest of the House. I think it is wrong that at this hour of the night we should be asked to consider a question which involves three intricate Acts. Besides, there is no reason why we should hurry on the consideration of this Bill. The measures with which we are dealing were passed in 1883 and 1885. One of them was only passed in August last, and has not yet been six months in operation; and I submit that a measure to amend a measure, before it is possible to test its operation, ought to be considered at a time when the House can deal with it properly. For my own part I have no wish to obstruct the Bill. I never have obstructed any measure in this House, and I am perfectly prepared to discuss this measure on its merits. I took up the question of the labourers long before hon. Members below the Gangway—["Oh!"]—and I can justify the statement when the time comes. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give some assurance on some later day this week, or on some day early next week, that he will do his best to get this measure taken at a reasonable hour, say, not later than midnight. I should think it might be arranged that the Bill should stand as the second Order of the day.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I hope the Committee will proceed with this Bill. On a former occasion I supported the Motion to report Progress made by my hon. Friend (Mr. Brodrick); but in the interest of the labourers of Ireland I do not think it is well the progress of the measure should be any longer delayed.

Question put,

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes, 47; Noes 125: Majority 78.—(Div. List, No. 33.)

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): The Amendment which I propose in this clause is one which I hope will meet with the sympathy of the Committee. It is one directed to an enlargement of the operation of this Act, though it does not interfere with the principle of the two previous Acts, or introduce any novel element into the legislation. These Acts, which were supposed to confer benefits upon the labourers of Ireland, have not, in many instances, operated, owing to the fact that it was difficult to put the preliminary machinery of the Acts in force. The representation which it is necessary to make under the Acts, and which must be signed by 12 ratepayers, cannot, in many districts, be made, because 12 ratepayers cannot be found to sign it. Now, this Amendment proposes to repeal that portion of the 5th section of the Act of 1883 which makes it necessary that the representation, which is the basis of the improvement scheme of the Act, shall be signed by 12 ratepayers. This will not in any way invalidate the rights of the ratepayers or the rights of the owners or the occupiers of the districts which will be chargeable under any scheme of improvement formed by the Sanitary Authority or indicated in the representation. They will have ample opportunities afterwards of protecting their rights or regulating the charge that may be made on the area either before the Sanitary Authority or before the Local Government Board. My Amendment simply enables that portion of the population of Ireland for which these Acts were passed, and which the Acts were designed specially to benefit, to put in motion the preliminary machinery of the Acts. The Amendment, of course, is not complete. I do not know whether I am in Order in alluding to the Amendment, in line 10, which stands in my name. That Amendment enables "12 householders" to be substituted for "12 ratepayers." I earnestly hope the Committee will allow this slight alteration to be made in the Bill, and that they will thus facilitate the material amelioration of the house and sanitary accommodation which the Acts had endeavoured to extend to the labourers of Ireland. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 21, after the word "alleged," to insert the words "and so much of the fifth section of 'The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883,' as enacts that a representation in pursuance of the said Acts shall be signed by not less than twelve persons rated for the relief of the poor within the sanitary district."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): I sincerely hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) will not accept this Amendment. I do not think that my hon. Friend the Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) has at all made out a case for the acceptance of so broad an Amendment as this. The principle of all the measures we have passed for the amendment of the condition of the labourers in Ireland is that those who are to pay for these experiments—for they are nothing more than experiments—shall be the persons who shall set the Act in motion, and who shall carry out its provisions; and the proposal of my hon. Friend (Mr. Macartney) is that those who are not to pay a farthing are to set the Act in motion. I hope the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) will consider that point in the reply he is about to make, and I hope, also, that if he advises the Committee to accept the Amendment, he will acquaint us with some previous instance in which Parliament has given so extraordinary a power to those who are in no sense affected by it except beneficially, and who are not in any way responsible for any payment in regard to the benefit they are to receive. I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the evidence given to the Committee which sat in 1884, and on which I had the honour to sit. Before that Committee it was plainly stated that the Guardians and those rated to the relief of the poor looked with the utmost concern at the prospect of carrying out schemes hurriedly, knowing, as they did, that in time of pressure, such as the present time, there would be most extreme difficulty in collecting the rates which would have to be levied in order to provide labourers' cottages. Every step which we take in the direction of taking the matter out of the hands of those who have to provide the necessary funds will be a step of political danger. On that ground I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will not accept this Amendment.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I confess I do not see my way to recommend the Committee to accept the Amendment, or rather the two Amendments, of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney). The two Amendments undoubtedly go together, because the first would not be complete without the second. Now, the effect of the Amendments is to substitute "householders" for "ratepayers" as the source of the representation which sets the Act in motion. That, of course, is a vital alteration in the whole principle of the Labourers' Acts; for what is that principle? It is this—that the ratepayers are to have a voice in the proceedings at every stage, from the signing of the representation down to the ultimate settlement of the scheme; and it is obviously right, for the reason the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Brodrick) pointed out, that they should have this voice. It is upon them that the sacrifice, whatever it may be, will ultimately fall. The whole weight and force of this security is involved in the representation proceeding from the ratepayers, and the whole weight and force of the security would, as I take it, disappear. The representation would become, shall I say a farce, if it is allowed to recede from the ratepayers to those who expect to get certain advantages at the price of others. If the Amendments of the hon. Gentleman are carried, the ratepayers would be placed in a worse position than they are in now; therefore I am unable to accept the Amendments.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): I cannot allow this Amendment to be disposed of without saying one or two words in its support. I think the right hon. Gentleman has failed to show sufficient reason why it should be so peremptorily rejected. It appears to me that the persons who are the sufferers under the evil are the natural persons to originate the complaints against it. The rights of the ratepayers are sufficiently guarded in the stages subsequent to the representation, and therefore I think it is monstrous to expect a labourer to get the signatures of 12 ratepayers before he can set the law in motion. I do not apprehend that the interests of the ratepayers would be damaged by this alteration. If I did, it is not likely, paying, as I do, a very large proportion of the rates which are imposed on the property in the district in which I live, I should be found advocating the Amendment. I hope this small but very important alteration will be agreed to.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I should have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. John Morley) had seen his way to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney). It does not follow that the 12 householders shall not be ratepayers; but even 12 householders who are not ratepayers are perhaps more likely to have sympathy with those who need the benefit of the Act. It cannot be said that 12 ratepayers are selected because they have to bear a portion of the burden. They may be spread over a wide area and not liable. I should be more reconciled to the view of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) if I could learn from him whether he proposes to accept the Amendment of which I have given Notice lower down, which provides that where there are fewer than 12 residents in a division, six may send a representation, and three may appeal to the Local Government Board to amalgamate divisions. The representation signed by the 12 persons, whether they be ratepayers or householders, only sets the Board of Guardians in motion. If the Board choose not to proceed they need not do so; and even if they act, the Local Government Board may withold its assent. There is abundance of security, and, therefore, I think no harm could be done by the acceptance of this Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 55; Noes 85: Majority 30.—(Div. List, No. 34.)

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Appeal from certificate of sanitary officer in certain cases).

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Lancashire, N.E., Darwen): Sir, I rise to move that you do now report Progress, a course which I think is rendered really desirable by the condition of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen. On the last Amendment, I was listening to and watching with great commiseration the voice and expression of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and I know, from personal acquaintance with the subject, that the right hon. Gentleman, who is leaving the House at this moment, was engaged this morning in duties of a very exalted kind, and must be quite exhausted. I am also sure that many hon. Gentlemen who took part in the last division were not in the least aware what they were voting for, and that, under the circumstances, the Government will be the first to say that the hon. Member who is now speaking was quite right in moving Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Viscount Cranborne.*)

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I think the next three Amendments will not take more than five or ten minutes; and perhaps, under the circumstances, the noble Viscount will withdraw his Motion.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I would point out that it is not an uncommon thing for Members of this House, at 2 o'clock in the morning, not to know what they are voting about.

MR. MOLLOY (King's County, Birr) said, if the noble Lord was fatigued with the amount of work he had done in the House that evening, he should go home to bed.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: After the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, I shall be most happy to withdraw my Motion, on the understanding that after the Amendments are disposed of the right hon. Gentleman himself will move Progress.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 5 to 8, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Extension of powers of compulsory purchase).

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): This is a very important clause, and one which we should, consequently, discuss with great care. I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to say whether he can hold out any hope that we shall have an opportunity of discussing this clause at a reasonable hour on another night?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I shall not oppose the Motion of the hon. Member. With regard to his question, however, I must point out that it is quite impossible for me to fix anything in the shape of an hour of the day for the discussing the clause. I can only say that I hope it will be brought on at a reasonable time.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

ULSTER CANAL AND TYRONE NAVIGATION BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [1st March],

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the transfer of the Ulster Canal and the Tyrone Navigation or Coal Island Canal from the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland to the Lagan Navigation Company; and for other purposes."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. JOHN MORLEY and Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 141.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL VETO) ULSTER BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to enable voters in towns and districts, in the province of Ulster, to prevent the common sale of Intoxicating Liquors, or otherwise to have effectual control over the Drink Traffic within such areas.

Resolution *reported:*—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Johnston, Lord Arthur Hill, and Mr. D. Cobain.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 142.]

House adjourned at a quarter
after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 16*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—Government of India, *nominated.*

Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Women's Suffrage (10), *negatived.*

Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Parish Churches (5).

PARISH CHURCHES BILL.—(No. 5.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Peterborough.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Bishop of PETERBOROUGH (Dr. Magee), in moving that the Bill be read the second time, said, that he spoke with some anxiety, as the Bill had been a good deal misapprehended and unintentionally misrepresented in a manner which might rouse some prejudice against it in their Lordships' minds. His anxiety was not diminished by the thought that he had so able an opponent. But the Bill was not by any means the rash, revolutionary, and confiscatory measure which it was by many supposed to be. He hoped to show, on the contrary, that it was really a very moderate measure of reform, although it was extensive as regarded the area to which it applied. It was not, in fact, a measure enacting any new law, or making illegal what was legal before. It only enforced old principles, and sought to bring existing practice into conformity with existing law. From its very moderation he feared it might lack some interest in their Lordships' eyes, at least in comparison with some more ambitious reforms of which lately so much had been heard. It was not a Bill for turning the Church of England inside out or upside down. He could not ask their Lordships to join with him in the exciting pastime of abolishing the old historic Church of England and substituting for it a modern and brand-new State Establishment for the teaching of morality without distinctive religious doctrine—a sort of common denominator for all the religious fractions of the country. There was not the excitement of any great novelty about it. It was not one of the Reform Bills of the Church which the Bishops were supposed to be bringing now in a panic to the House in consequence of the recent attack upon the Church of England. It was not a new measure of reform; it had been advocated for many years and urged by more than one Bishop. It had been read a second time in the House of Commons, when it obtained the support of a leading Member of the present Government; and, above all, it embodied and gave effect to the Resolutions of a large and representative Committee of their Lordships' House which sat as long as 28 years ago to report to the House upon the spiritual destitution of England. The Bill divided itself into two parts. The one would affect old parish churches, the other would affect newer churches created under special Acts of Parliament since 1818. The old parish churches were those built before that date. The object of the Bill was to re-enact and re-declare, not in any way to alter, the old law of the Church—namely, that parish churches should be free for the common use of all parishioners. That had been the common law of the Church and the land from time immemorial. Numerous judicial decisions had been given upon it. Their Lordships' Committee expressly gave the same view of the law in these very remarkable words—

> "It is a return to the normal state of things when it remains unaffected by special privileges. The body of every parish church belongs, of common right, to all the parishioners, and is a right which cannot lawfully be defeated by the permanent appropriation to particular persons."

That was the principle of the Bill. It was a natural and necessary corollary of the principle of a Parochial and National Church. Much had been said as to the meaning of a National Church, and strange interpretations were given of it. Their Lordships would agree with him that, whatever privilege or status or emoluments might be implied by the term, the idea of a National Church involved an obligation and duty of all its ministers to all the nation. Every minister of the Church was bound to render his services gratuitously in the church and out of it. The Church's endowments were a great and sacred trust, held upon the condition that in each parish there should be a clergyman rendering gratuitous services to the people. If a clergyman refused such services he was liable to serious ecclesiastical penalties. He was forbidden to charge for them by the canons. No charge could even be made for burial, as by a curious legal fiction burial fees were paid for the disturbance of the soil, which was the rector's freehold, and even these fees could not be recovered. Free ministration was the principle of a Parochial and National Church; and it was the clergyman's duty to press his services even on those who did not desire them. It was strange that those who were anxious for free education in the present day should be anxious to stamp out the only form of free religion which existed in this country. There was another theory which might be called the congregational or commercial one, according to which religion was a luxury which could only be had for the paying. According to the congregational theory, persons of similar religious views might join together and form a religious society or club, which would hire the services of its minister, who, without disrespect, might be described as its spiritual servant. The appointment and dismissal of the minister on that theory rested entirely with the congregation. He would not enter into the comparative merits of the national and congregational theories. He was once himself the minister of a proprietary chapel in which he sold sermons at so much each Sunday, and in that capacity he spent some happy and, he trusted, not unuseful years. But the congregational theory had one great defect. It could not evangelize the masses; it could not reach the poor. When a neighbourhood became poorer the pew-rented chapel had to seek another locality. A Free Church was the natural result of the great principle of a National Church — free religion for those who could not afford to provide it for themselves, and free religion to be pressed upon those who did not desire it. Therefore, he maintained that the principle of the National Church was that the Church should be free, and as the Church of England claimed and desired to be national her churches should be free to all. If that were so, how was it that all parish churches had not been free to the parishioners? He thought he was correct in saying that until the Reformation no such thing as a fixed and permanent pew was ever known in a parish church. But after the Reformation permanent property in pews was introduced into the Church. It was a remarkable coincidence that the appropriation of pews by patent came into the Church just about the date of the Reformation, which was the date of the great impoverishment of the Church. The most successful liberator on a large scale in English history, who devoted Church property largely to secular uses, and who swept away many of the endowments of the Church—he meant Henry VIII.—was the Sovereign under whom permanent property in pews was invented. It came in the shape of a faculty from the Bishop's Court or by prescription implying and presuming a faculty. With all deference to the noble Lord who opposed the Bill, he must say that he had never been able to see the use of a faculty pew. The pew was frequently attached by faculty to a house, but the house was not in the habit of going to church. The tenant of the house might go to church or he might not. He might be a Churchman, a Dissenter, or an infidel; or he might be a bachelor or married and have a large family. But in any case he had the use of a pew with seats for perhaps eight or nine persons, and he occupied so many square feet of the parish church which belonged to all the parishioners. But whether the tenant required few or many sittings he represented the house, which was the sacred thing in English law. As soon as a person succeeded in appropriating a pew he put in a hassock and a prayer book, and after that it was sacred for ever to him. These were idols of British pewdom, the symbols and forms by which seisin and livery of a part of the parish church were taken for ever. And then a man dared anyone to come into his pew, to sit on his cushion, to kneel on his hassock, for was it not all his property? Very early in his clerical life he was curate in a parish church where there were large old-fashioned pews, owned by different persons. After service one Sunday the holder of one of these pews came to him in a state of great irritation and rage because of the intrusion of a single stranger into his pew, which was a large one, with seats for eight or nine persons, of which he was the sole occupant. "Sir," he said, "I would not dare to disturb Divine service to pull him out of my pew, but I took the slight liberty of sitting upon his hat." The appropriation of pews had made them so much a kind of property that they were bought and sold, and even included in marriage settlements. The most important alterations and renovations in churches had been stopped by the faculty pew-owners, some of whom he knew possessed as many as 11 pews in a single church. One of these owners was positively resident as far as 50 miles from the church, and was in receipt of a comfortable sum from the pew. A clergyman told him that when he first went to his living he found 180 sittings in the parish church appropriated by the family of his predecessor, who claimed legal rights in them. The important matter was that so much of the area of a parish church was appropriated by individuals, whereas a parish church was for the accommodation of all the parishioners. A parish church might be used by different classes of persons in the parish at different times; but for that purpose the pew-owner must give up possession, and that he would not do —he would not allow anyone to sit on his cushion, to kneel on his hassock, or to read in his book. A clergyman in his diocese recently held a very successful church mission to which people thronged in large numbers; but owing to the resistance of the pew-owners, the church could not be freely used for evening services. There was a deep significance in this, for it was significant of the alienation of the poor from their parish church. The poor man could not afford to take out a faculty, nor could he afford to rent a pew by the year in his parish church. The poor man was thus practically excluded from his parish church; for it was one of the most honourable traits of our English poor that they were not noisy and self-asserting. There was a kind of shy pride about them which did them honour, and which he should be sorry to see changed. The poor man in this country did not elbow nor cringe; but if he found no place left for him but some narrow benches down the middle of the church, or some other uncomfortable seat or corner, he accepted the position even although he would only catch but a sentence or two of an eloquent sermon on the text—"To the poor the Gospel is preached." But he did not like it, and the effect was that the poor were silently and quietly alienated from their parish church. They did not make much disturbance and they did not write to the papers; and the reason was that they soon lost the desire for the religion which was so persistently denied them. So the poor man turned his back upon his parish church, and when his clergymen invite him to stand up in defence of his parish church, the only answer he gave was that it was not his. The poor man said—"My parish church! It is not mine, it is yours, it is the churchwardens', it is the manufacturers', it is the well-to-do men's church." The expression was very often heard—"The parish church is for gentlefolks, not for the likes of us." How was a clergyman to fulfil the mission of his Divine Master to go into the highways and the bye-ways and bid the people to the feast, "for all things are now ready," when he knew that two things were not ready —one was a place, and another was a welcome? In our great cities when the poor took their weary walk on Sunday through the long lines of closed shops, they found only two kinds of places open to them—places of worship and public-houses; and he grieved to think that in too many cases they got a warmer, a freer welcome at the latter than the former. He asked whether the poor were to be admitted freely to their parish churches? He held that no churchwarden had any right to appropriate a seat and keep it permanently for any particular person so as to exclude the poor parishioners. It was all very well to say that the churchwardens were acting on behalf of the parishioners. The word parishioners, like the word "people," was a noun of multitude. "The people" did not always mean the whole people, or even the majority of the people. They often consisted of a noisy minority who pushed themselves to the front. So in this instance the parishioners did not mean the whole of the parishioners, but merely parishioners who enjoyed seats in the church by virtue of their property in pews. The churchwardens were elected not by the parish as a whole, but by the ratepayers only, and they had no right to appropriate to the rich what belonged to all. Supposing that it were the case of the village green instead of the village church, would the majority of the parishioners have a right to cut the green up, and to appropriate the plots to form gardens for the rich? Depend upon it that in such a case the parishioners would be noisy and outspoken enough; and the reason that they were not noisy and outspoken in the matter of the appropriation of seats in their village church was because they had been schooled into indifference and silence in the matter. It was objected that if the pew rents in old parish churches were touched, the income, already small enough, of the clergyman would be diminished. He should be the last person in the world to do anything which would diminish the income of the clergy; but his reply to that argument was that, in the first place, the pew rents often contributed to the income, not of the clergyman, but to that of the rich pew-owner. There were often some 200 or 300 seats in a parish church that were let to those who said that they were good Churchmen enough, but that they would not give a single 1*d.* towards the support of the clergyman unless he gave them in perpetuity in return a portion of the property which belonged to other people. In his opinion, such individuals might well be asked to pay £1 a-year towards the support of their clergymen without seeking to appropriate to themselves what was, in fact, the property of others, and to which they had not the slightest legal or moral right. Having demolished that objection, he was confronted with the cushion and hassock argument. He knew of nothing that created such bitterness, and revealed so much of the worst passions and infirmities in our nature, as the contests for seats in church, unless it were, perhaps, those for seats in Parliament, when certainly human nature reached its lowest level of degradation. But what did the cushion and hassock argument amount to? It was not a very formidable difficulty. They disposed of it almost every day of their lives in that locomotive age. When they travelled in a railway carriage they pressed the cushion that had been pressed a few moments before by somebody else, and would be occupied after they left by another person; and he did not think the fact that the cushion had been pressed by some working man before, say, an Earl or a Bishop, in the least interfered with its purity, or its sanctity, or its fitness, and he could not see why it should do so in the Church. He did not think that the hassock of the rich man would be very much hurt if, when he went on the Sunday to kneel on it, it retained the print of the poor man's knee. In their Lordships' House each individual Peer did not retain his own peculiar cushion; they used all the cushions in common; and they were even content to sit upon cushions that had shortly before been occupied by noble Lords opposite. Then, as regarded the Bible and hymn-book question, it did appear to him to be within the resources of modern civilization to provide a small box, furnished with a lock and key, beneath the seat, in which the rich man could lock up his books. The fact was that he was almost ashamed to argue so ludicrous a point as that before their Lordships on the small question of cushion and hassock; and there was something grotesque in the idea of the garrison of pewdom sallying out to the rescue of pews with the cry of "hassocks to the rescue." He would now pass to the question of the right of the churchwarden to assign seats in the parish church to particular parishioners, and upon this matter he confessed that he was not in harmony with the more advanced Church reformers. He had no desire to deprive the churchwarden of the right he legally possessed to assign seats to the parishioners. He held that that was necessary, not in the interests of the rich, but in the interests of the poor. Rank and wealth could very well take care of themselves; but if they left the Church entirely unappropriated, the result would be that wealth and rank, and more especially local wealth and rank, would appropriate pews to themselves, and the poor would practically be confined to remote corners as before. He thought that the parishioners had their rights in the parish church; and it was all very well to say that if they wanted seats the parishioners should come early, because in that case the non-parishioners might come earlier still. He did not, therefore, propose to deprive the churchwarden of the power which he now had to assign seats to the parishioners; and, therefore, he suggested that the churchwardens should be allowed to assign seats temporarily from time to time, but not to permanently appropriate any particular seats to any particular persons. Upon this point the measure would exactly give effect to the recommendations of the Committee of their Lordships' House, who expressed their earnest hope that some plan might be devised by which, in every church in the land, the rich and the poor might meet together on an equality, and that all permanent appropriation of pews might be abolished. If their Lordships, therefore, thought that this measure was intended to initiate a free scramble for seats they would be mistaken. It was intended to place the churchwarden in the church in somewhat the same position as that occupied by a policeman at a crowded point in the streets, so that he could prevent a scramble for place in which the strongest might win, and might assign them from time to time among the parishioners in such a way as to keep them free for all. The sooner all parish churches were made free to the extent he had mentioned the better it would be. If churchwardens had the power to say—"A, you sit here; and B, you sit there," after a brawl, he ventured to think it was better that they should have it before the brawl commenced. But with that limitation only he would put an end to all right in a pew which hindered the restoration of churches, terribly limited the area of churches, and which excluded and alienated the poor from the parish churches. He had a few words more to say upon the subject of the new district churches. Practically speaking, modern church extension began in the year 1818, by an Act of 58 *Geo.* III., which was remarkable, among other reasons, for this—that it was almost the only occasion on which the State really endowed the Church. It was an Act devised to carry out what was commonly known as the Million Grant, which was a national grant of £1,000,000 for the building of new churches. It laid down the principle that some portion of the sittings of every church created under it should be for free sittings. That was perfectly just and right. It should be remembered that when they created a new district parish they cut off a portion of the area of the old parish and constituted it a new parish, and they cut off the parishioners of the new district from all their rights in the old parish. They lost their right to a free sitting there; and was it not reasonable and just that when they did that, without the parishioners having even a voice in the matter, they should give them some right to a free sitting in the new parish, otherwise they would be excluded from all such rights whatever. He maintained, then, that that Act of George III. laid down a perfectly sound and just principle when it said that some portion of the sittings in every new district church should be free. That principle was adhered to in all the innumerable Church Building Acts that had since been passed. He dared not attempt to take their Lordships through the history of these Acts. He dared not say how many of these Acts there were, and the attempt to master them was calculated to reduce the unfortunate student to the verge of lunacy. He was told that the only person in England who ever understood the Church Building Acts was now deceased, and he could well conceive that the man had been hurried to a premature grave by his efforts to understand those legal conundrums. He himself had studied them so far as to be able to assure their Lordships that there was not one of those Acts which did not affirm the principle that some portion more or less of the sittings of the new district churches should be allowed to be free. By the first of those Acts, however, only one-fifth of the sittings were bound to be free, and those free sittings might be in any out-of-the-way part of the church, and must be ticketed and labelled as free seats, and no one could sit in them without being thus a ticketed and labelled pauper. Afterwards an Act, known as the New Parishes Act, was introduced by the late lamented Duke of Marlborough and passed in 1856 through Parliament which showed a great advance in the true principles of church extension. It enabled pew rents to be imposed if no endowment was provided from any other source; but it said first that one-half of the sittings should be free, and next that the free sittings should be equally advantageously placed with the rented and reserved sittings. That was a reasonable compromise, and he was very thankful to say that the Commissioners had very lately passed a resolution that in all future sanctioning of scales of pew rents they would require that only half of the seats should be pew rented, and that the other half should be free and equally advantageously placed with those that were rented and reserved. If that law had been observed since 1856 there would have been little occasion to trouble their Lorships as he was doing that evening; but it had not been observed. Many churches had been built since that Act was passed in total and complete defiance and disregard of its provisions, and without any limit being assigned to pew renting. Was it, therefore, a very revolutionary thing to ask in regard to those parish churches that the law which the Legislature had enacted should simply be carried out? If Parliament had been wrong in passing that Act, and had not been sufficiently conservative of the rights of the wealthy, let them go back on their steps and say that only one-fifth of the sittings should be free, and that the free sittings should be ticketed and labelled. But if they were not to go back—and he did not think they would dream of doing so—then it was only reasonable and just that those churches which had been created by the Legislature should be regulated according to the direction of the law. On the other hand, he frankly admitted that many incumbents had been appointed to district churches in which pew rents were illegally taken in perfect good faith; and, believing that they were perfectly legal and secure, they complained that his Bill would deprive them of those pew rents. In the first place, his Bill would deprive no one of anything to which they were legally entitled; but he did not want to take advantage of any lapse or mistake on the part of any incumbent or churchwarden, or to promote any confiscation of clerical incomes. Therefore he thought it was only reasonable that those who had, in perfect good faith, accepted that position, should have a remedy, and be entitled to go to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and obtain such a scale of pew rents as might and ought to have been obtained at the time when the church was built. The Bill would, therefore, practically be, in the main, prospective and not retrospective in its action, and would not, as had been alleged, reduce any of the clergy to beggary. They were told that it was very desirable that respectability, rank, and wealth should have a place in the parish churches; he did not deny that. He held that respectability, rank, and wealth had spiritual interests to be looked after as much as the poor had; but then he thought that respectability, rank, and wealth should not have possession of the parish church to the exclusion of the poor. Then it was said that the spiritual wants of the poor should be provided for by the building of cheap churches and chapels in poor localities, which people said were suitable churches for the poor. Now, he hated the very words—"Churches suitable for the poor." It was in the very poorest neighbourhood that one should desire to have the most beautiful church they could build. When they looked at the dull monotony of their daily life, with so little that was beautiful in it, surely it was desirable that the one place in the parish to which they might have free resort and access—the house of their common Father—should be a place that would bring some of the beauty and grace, and something of the sense of human brotherhood, into the weary and saddened lives of the poor. He held that it was not well, even in the interests of the rich, to have cheap churches for the poor. It was not a wise, not a safe thing that wealth and rank and respectability should have one place of worship on Sunday, and that the poor should have another. One of the sorest and saddest evils of 19th century life was the ever-widening chasm which separated class from class and rank from rank; and those who cared for the State trembled to see the ever-widening gulf in the forum, into which they might yet see more than one of their most precious things cast before it was closed. He did not say that that separation of classes was only caused by the separation on Sundays of which he was speaking; but he said that it was enhanced and increased by it. They could not over-estimate the healing and uniting influence of a common sanctuary for rich and poor, in which they would feel, in the highest sense of it, their religious equality, and that there was at least one place on this side of the grave where rich and poor might meet together. Therefore, that was not a small matter; for though his measure might be a moderate one in itself, he asked that those divisions between rich and poor on Sundays might not be made too wide and too deep. Wealth and respectability had been too much in the habit of putting the poor aside on

Sundays. They did not see those who were not regular church-goers — who were not in the state of respectable and orderly citizens, but who had souls to be saved—in the parish churches on Sunday with the wealthy, the respectable, and the well-to-do. Where did they see those outcasts from our churches? They were to be seen in our squares and streets on the Monday; they were seen in Trafalgar Square and St. James's Street a few weeks ago, and the respectability which shrank from and shuddered at the presence of poverty on the Sunday might be brought into unpleasant contact with it on the week day. Those things, no doubt, were the result of many causes, and they would do well to study them. It was certainly a grievous loss to the country when the healing and uniting influences of religion were taken away from a large section of the people on one day of the week, and when the community was broken up into classes, one far apart from the other. He was asking for this reform in no extravagant spirit. He was ready to meet all reasonable objections and alarms. He desired to see all the abominations of the square pews and the rent charges swept out of their old parish churches, and the provision of the Legislature with regard to new district churches fairly carried out and complied with. He entreated their Lordships not to reject this Bill on the Motion of the noble Lord opposite. He had no doubt there were legal defects in the Bill, and he should hope that the noble Lord who opposed the measure would lend his great ability to the amending of it in Committee. But their Lordships should not show themselves to be less regardful of the interests of the poor than the other House of Parliament, which had read this Bill a second time. He asked the assistance of their Lordships in the endeavours of the clergy to make the Church of England what she was becoming more and more, and what she in theory desired to be in fact—the Church of the people and the Church of the poor. The right rev. Prelate moved the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bishop of Peterborough.*)

LORD GRIMTHORPE, in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that if it was necessary for him to apologize for intervening in an ecclesiastical dispute there were two reasons why he did so. The first was he believed he was the only layman in their Lordships' House who held an ecclesiastical office except the Dean of Arches, who was not present. The second reason was that in that character he had been written to by no small number of clergy asking him to interfere as he was now doing, because they looked on the Bill with great alarm. The right rev. Prelate said that the alarm was unreasonable; but he held that it was not at all unreasonable. Another reason which justified his interference was to be found in the fact that there were only three Prelates at present on the Episcopal Bench. It certainly was unlucky that this measure should have been brought forward in a week when most of the Bishops were necessarily absent for their ordinations. He was unaware of the general opinion of the Bishops with regard to the Bill; but he was acquainted with the opinions of some of them, and they were as strongly opposed to the measure as the clergymen who had written to him. Another reason why he thought it right to interpose was because he did not think that any Ecclesiastical Judge, however small, ought to sit still when a Bill was being pressed through their Lordships' House containing a wrong declaration of the law. The Preamble was wrong in laying it down as the law that "every parish church was for the free use in common of all parishioners." He knew that the Free and Open Church Association had long been making this declaration as to the present state of the law; but they had been wrong all the time. They had never ventured to litigate the question in order to establish that proposition. If they had honestly believed their own statement of the law they would have endeavoured to assert it in a Court of Law. The fact was that this paragraph of the Preamble was a quotation of part of a sentence in a judgment by a celebrated Ecclesiastical Judge, omitting the other part—"but the distribution of the seats is in the churchwardens, subject to the control of the Ordinary,"—which obviously altered the meaning entirely. The word "free" was never used in that sense in any Ecclesiastical Act, but merely as opposed to "rented." On this one point, which was the foundation of the Bill, the statement in the Preamble was clearly wrong; and, according to the practice in Committees, if a Preamble was not proved there was an end of the Bill. So it ought to be in this case. The second paragraph of the Preamble was equally wrong. It said that "the rights of the parishioners according to law," which he had shown were not their legal rights, had—

> "For many years been infringed in many parishes and places by the appropriation of seats and pews to certain of the parishioners to the exclusion of others, and especially of the poorer classes."

As the rights had not existed in the form in which they were stated in the first paragraph, they could not have been infringed in the form alleged in the second paragraph. These two paragraphs constituting the Preamble and giving the reason for the introduction of the Bill were both wrong in their declarations as to the law and the breach of the law; and that was a simple matter of fact or of law which no one having any legal knowledge on the subject would for a moment dispute. With a Preamble so utterly wrong there ought to be an end of the Bill. The first operative clause—the 3rd—declared that the law for the future was to be that which it was wrongly asserted to be in the Preamble; it said that every parish church was declared to be for the free use in common of all parishioners; but if the Preamble were altered this operative clause would not accord with it when it was altered. The object of the clause was to re-assert a law which did not exist. The law was that the parish church should be free for such use as the churchwardens, under the control of the Bishop and his Chancellor, chose to decide upon. It was further provided that a faculty should not be granted or confirmed to appropriate a seat or pew; but existing titles by faculty or prescription were saved. No faculty had been granted for many years.

The Bishop of PETERBOROUGH: Oh, yes; last year.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, perhaps that occurred in the diocese of Peterborough, when the Chancellor was not a lawyer. Speaking for himself, if anybody asked him for a faculty he would refuse to grant it, except for very special reasons, as for an exchange for the benefit of the parish, the only case in which he had ever been asked to grant one. He had never known a disputed faculty title maintained; but titles by prescription were more serious things. They had often arisen by private persons building a part of a church themselves; and, in some cases, they had repaired it from time immemorial. A pew could be attached by faculty to a house—that was, to the persons occupying it, and provided they did occupy the pew; or it might be assigned to a man and his family, but only so long as they lived in the parish. The 5th and the 7th clauses, by saving all existing rights, and those conferred by special Acts, would leave all the high pews of which such complaint had been made as obstructing restorations, which practically they hardly could do, as every restored church indicated. Such a Bill ought to come before the House with more authority than that of even the eminent Bishop who introduced it; but it was really the Bill of the Free and Open Church Association; it was altogether wrong; and, for the object which was ostensibly aimed at, it would be a mistake to pass it. He would not follow the right rev. Prelate in his sentimental language about the poor, or into the great cushion and hassock question, which, in fact, he had given up by admitting that he was in favour of churchwardens assigning seats, only not "permanently," as he now proposed to alter the Bill. But he had some suspicion of Ecclesiastical Bills, as it had been his business to see to their administration. The blunders in those Bills were beyond conception. Judges often remarked upon the blunders in Acts of Parliament; but there were more blunders in Ecclesiastical Acts than in any others. The Public Worship Regulation Act was a striking case in point; the Dilapidations Act was another. At first clergymen were delighted with it; but he had warned many of them that they would find it anything but a boon. It had, in fact, turned out to be an Act for the benefit of surveyors and architects, and of nobody else. Questions of dilapidations were much more rapidly and cheaply settled by the friendly meeting of two surveyors representing the two parties than by the machinery of that Act. He was not disposed, to use the language of the right rev. Prelate, to turn the church inside out in 13,000 out of 15,000 parishes in the country. He therefore moved that the Bill be read that day six months.

Amendment *moved,* to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

EARL NELSON said, that the noble and learned Lord who had just spoken had not proved that the statement of the existing law in the Bill was not correct. The noble and learned Lord asked what was the good of passing the Bill when it preserved all existing faculties and prescriptive rights? The object was to prevent those rights from arising in the future. The noble and learned Lord said that no new rights of the kind were created; but immediately went on to say that he had himself given fresh rights of the same nature. The noble and learned Lord had also denied that pews were attached to certain houses; but he remembered in visiting the church where Charlotte Brontë was buried that brass plates were put up in the pews stating that they were attached to such and such a farm. He believed that it was the law of the land that the body of the church should be the property of the people in common. For ages the church had continued without the pew system, a proof of what was the Common Law, and they now wanted an enactment to put an end to exclusive rights in the House of God. Everyone would admit that, certainly in parish churches which were endowed, they had no right to seat the rich to the exclusion of the poor. The Bill would do something towards providing a remedy, by making the church more open, and they might have more clergymen and a repetition of services for men, for women, and for boys. He agreed with the right rev. Prelate that where, in ignorance of the law, pew rents were paid, time should be given for the introduction of the new state of things, and the pew rents should not be too suddenly abolished. Then it was said—"If you have free and open churches, what would you do to keep the churches in the hands of the parishioners?" There was, no doubt, some difficulty in watering places, and in London and other large towns. There was no doubt that in those cases the parochial system had to a large extent broken down. But free churches did not prevent parishioners from attending, and the pew system certainly did not preserve the parochial character of churches. It was perfectly impossible to support the system of pew rents without making the Church sectarian. Nonconformists were seeing the evil, and were saying that it was perfectly impossible to call themselves a Christian Church unless they were doing missionary work. As a National Church the Church of England would have no position whatever if it ceased to be a missionary Church; and he defied any Church to do missionary work if it were hampered by pew rents. Whenever a mission was made in one of our large towns it was found impossible to reach the masses of the people unless all the churches were, for the time being, free and open. The testimony of working men showed that the system of pew rents in the Church, although a portion of the church was kept for the people, had done more than anything else to alienate the people from the Church of their fathers. From the very first the Church of England had moved very much with the movements of the nation, and he believed it was so moving now. The Church of the Reformation was essentially a middle-class Church, and it was from the middle class that this system of pewdom took its rise. He rejoiced in the extension of the franchise, and had always accepted it from the time when it was proposed by their great Leader. He was certain it was in God's good providence that the Church of England should be again what she called herself in very truth, the Church of the People; but if she were to become so the system of pewdom must be swept away. Although the present Bill did not go very far, yet if their Lordships, by assenting to the second reading, approved the principle of the measure, they would show the people that they in that House and the Church of this nation really wished to see in the House of God all class distinctions removed, and the churches opened for private and public prayer and praise throughout the length and breadth of the land.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl GRANVILLE): The longer we live in this world the more convinced we must be that it is better to hear both sides before coming to a decision. I listened with great attention to the right rev. Prelate who introduced this Bill in a speech of great Parliamentary power. The right rev. Prelate stated what the law was, and explained the objects of the Bill and the machinery by which he hoped to effect his object. When he sat down I was firmly convinced of the desirability of giving a second reading to the Bill. But then got up the noble and learned Lord, who dealt step by step with the whole machinery, and he appeared to me to entirely destroy the assumption that the law was rightly defined in the speech and in the Bill of the right rev. Prelate; and the noble and learned Lord further showed that, however desirable, or not the object might be, the Bill would entirely fail to effect it. I reserved myself for the argument of the noble Earl who has just addressed the House, and who has much knowledge of the subject. I expected that he would give some answer to the noble and learned Lord as to the Bill itself. Not a bit of it. So far from doing this, he went into an interesting description of the whole question, as to which your Lordships are agreed, of the great evil of the pew-rent system, and the greater evils which follow therefrom in excluding the poor from their proper place of worship. So far from replying to the criticisms, the noble Earl expressed regret that the Bill did not go far enough. Unless there is some authoritative answer to the arguments of the noble and learned Lord, I think the right rev. Prelate must feel that, without abandoning the purpose which he has in view, it will be better to withdraw the present Bill, and re-introduce one which will not be open to the cricitisms which have been made.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he regretted to hear the remarks of the noble Earl (Earl Granville). He should be forgiven by the right rev. Prelate and by his noble and learned Friend for saying that in his opinion things were very much overstated in both their speeches. His impression of the actual state of things in the parish churches was not such as had been stated by the right rev. Prelate. He thought that the Church was the Church of the people already, and that they did not want any Act of Parliament to make it so. He did not observe any such exclusion of the poor from their parish churches as the enemies of the Church, taking up and echoing the language of the right rev. Prelate, might possibly suppose. Still, he agreed with the right rev. Prelate that some evils existed, and he wished it were possible to sweep away many of the rights which had been referred to. But, taking the thing at its worst, he did not think it was a correct statement of the actual state of the case in the Church of England to say that the poor were driven from our parish churches. From whatever source the statement came he must express his regret to hear it and his inability to adopt it.

THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH said, he did not intend to refer to all parish churches.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he was thankful that he had not the rhetorical power of the right rev. Prelate, who spoke so eloquently that he produced impressions which he did not mean to convey. Those who had heard him might go away under the impression that he was describing a general state of things.

THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH: Certainly not.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he was glad now to learn that the right rev. Prelate did not mean that statement to be a description of the general state of things. The present Bill did not go very far; but he thought that, when it had received such Amendments as the right rev. Prelate had expressed his readiness to make, its moral and legal effects would be good as far as it went. During the last 50 years this movement against the pew system had been going on, and in that period he believed that scarcely a church had been restored, scarcely a church built; but they had made more and more inroads upon that system. An immense deal had been done in that way; and one of his reasons, if no other, for supporting the Bill was that it would put a stamp upon the principle that, as far as they could, they ought to prevent anything for the future going on which should tend by any possibility to exclude the poor from their just rights in our churches. The right rev. Prelate had spoken of an ever-widening and increasing chasm between the Church and the poor. He denied the fact, and asserted, on the contrary, that it was ever diminishing, and likely still more to diminish; and there was nothing of more importance to the welfare of the country than that it should diminish. Nothing stirred up in his mind a greater feeling of indignation than when prominent persons went about the country using language which would seem to be intended, or, at all events, had a tendency to create or increase that alienation. He believed it to be entirely contrary to the fact; he believed that there never was a time when classes superior in rank, position, and wealth were more desirous of being upon those terms on which they ought to be with those who, in respect of the accidents and worldly advantages of life, though not as fellow-men or fellow-Christians, were beneath them. Among the benefits which would result from the late extension of the franchise, one of the greatest might be that it would give an additional stimulus to that union, co-operation, and friendly feeling of class towards class which ought to exist, and the destruction of which would be productive of so much harm to our country. With regard to the Preamble of the Bill, he could not agree with the noble and learned Lord that it misrepresented the law, or that there was any real difference as to the law between the noble and learned Lord and the right rev. Prelate. Both had stated the law in the words of the same authority, Sir John Nicholl; and there was no inconsistency between the existence of a right to the free use of the parish church by all parishioners in common, and a regulative power in the churchwardens as to the way in which that right was to be enjoyed. It was impossible for all the parishioners to sit at the same time in the same seat; and any contention for seats in the church would be disorderly. As to the statement that the rights of parishioners had been sometimes in practice infringed, he did not think it was without foundation. The practice of assigning pews for money payments, which could not legally be required, was certainly an abuse; and the extent to which, in some churches, the difference between the principle of temporary assignment of seats, and that of the permanent appropriation of pews and other large spaces of church room, had been lost sight of, was an abuse also. This was an exclusion of the common right of the parishioners, rather than a reasonable provision for the manner of enjoying that right; and it was, no doubt, the only real foundation of many of those claims to pews by prescription, which the noble and learned Lord had admitted to create difficulties, of which the solution by a British jury was not always satisfactory. It was one of the objects of this Bill to check those abuses, and so far as that was its object he was in favour of it. Upon the whole, he thought the reasons in favour of a second reading of the Bill preponderated.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell) said, that he agreed with a great deal that had fallen from his noble and learned Friend. He was not, however, so well able to dissociate the recitals of the Bill and its declaratory parts from the arguments of those who had been the means of introducing it. The Bill declared that all parishioners had a free right to their parish churches, but that for many years their rights had been infringed. That would seem to declare that the churchwardens were wrong in making any appropriation of sittings; and, though he believed it was not the object of the right rev. Prelate to enact that, yet it was the object of those who advocated the Bill. They had sent him a long legal argument with the view of persuading him that for the last few centuries churchwardens had been acting illegally when, with or without claim, they assigned a pew to a particular individual. He trusted that that would not be the view of the law to which their Lordships were prepared to give their moral sanction and great support. If they were to pass the Bill in its present form, considering the views of those who advocated it, they would be giving their moral weight to a statement they disapproved. Although he sympathized thoroughly with what the right rev. Prelate had said about the poor having as much right to the Church as the rich, yet he could not help doubting whether the advocates of the Free and Open Church system were proposing what would make the poor love the Church better or come to it more. He was strongly impressed with the idea that the more that system was adopted the more it would tend to keep the poor out of the parish churches. He very much doubted whether in many parish churches in towns it would not be better for the churchwardens to assign free seats to the poor of the parish who desired a seat in the church than to leave all the seats to be occupied by the rich who came from other parishes to any church where the preacher was popular. It was not his opinion that the poor were driven from the Church by the churchwardens assigning the seats; and he had great objection, unless something good was to be attained, to declaring that people had been acting illegally. The law always sought to find a legal origin for what it found going on for many years without the interference of the Courts. If it were necessary to alter the law, instead of declaring that churchwardens had been acting illegally, it would be better to enact that in future no churchwarden should assign any seat in a church. As a rule, it was the declaratory part of an Act which he objected to, as he did not think it ever did much good; but in the present case it would be especially mischievous, as it would be contended that it carried out the view of the Free and Open Church advocates. For his own part, he was perfectly prepared to assist in carrying a measure which would put an end to the permanent legal right of any individual to a particular part of a church; because he regarded such a right as altogether obsolete in the present day. On the other hand, he had no desire that there should be an unseemly scramble for seats in a church; and therefore he should be willing that the churchwardens should be at liberty to assign seats from time to time to the different parishioners. In view of the objections that had been raised to some parts of this measure, he thought that it would be better, on the whole, to introduce an amended Bill; but, at the same time, if the right rev. Prelate was willing that the Preamble should be altogether withdrawn, and that several of the clauses should be amended in Committee, he had no objection to the Bill being read a second time upon that understanding. He could assure the right rev. Prelate that he made these observations from no want of sympathy with the object he had in view, there being no great difference between them; but because he was afraid that if the House were to pass this measure in its present form both he and the right rev. Prelate would be committed to that which they did not mean.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, that he felt much sympathy with the objects of the Bill, because his own experience had convinced him that there were wrongs existing which the promoters of this measure sought to put an end to. With the permission of the House he would state the facts of an extreme case, bearing on this question, with which he was familiar. A short time ago a large parish church was restored, and during the progress of the restoration a large body of the labourers living in the parish were rejoicing in the prospect of having a free parish church when the alterations were completed. All the ratepayers, however, of the parish were small farmers; and after a short time the clergyman went to his Bishop and informed him that the churchwardens, with the approbation of the small farmers, had assigned almost the whole of the seats to the farmers themselves, and that he could not prevail upon them to allow the poor to have even seats which were vacant after the service had commenced. The Bishop remonstrated against this proceeding without success, and the consequence was that the poor could no more worship in that church than they could before its restoration. What existed in that parish in a very disgraceful form prevailed, in a lesser degree, in many other places. That these wrongs existed in a large number of cases was proved by the reception this Bill had met with throughout the country. He had, however, an objection to the measure in its present form which would prevent him from voting with his whole heart even for its second reading, and one which had not yet been clearly mentioned. There were in our large towns a great number of churches which had been built without endowments, and which were mainly supported out of the pew rents. The money received for pew rents went, not only to pay the clergyman, but to repair the fabric, to meet the expenses of additional ministers, and the maintenance of the beautiful services which were very dear to those who frequented those churches. The Bill as it stood, therefore, while intended to do away with wrongs which no doubt existed, would inflict other wrongs upon, and quite enfeeble, many very useful churches. He therefore suggested that the measure should be read a second time, with the object of its being referred to a Select Committee, so that full information on the subject might be obtained.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, that the course which had been suggested by the most rev. Prelate would be the most convenient for them all. He quite agreed with the noble and learned Earl (the Earl of Selborne) that in most of their parish churches the evils that had been complained of did not exist; and he believed that the assignment of seats by churchwardens among the poor and the rich would be better than a scramble for them. He objected to persons who came late into church, and who found other persons in their places, turning them out; that was a disgraceful proceeding, and the churchwardens should have power to prevent it.

THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH said, that he fully acquiesced in the suggestion that had been made that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee.

On Question, That ("now") stand part of the Motion? *resolved in the affirmative.*

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL.

(*The Lord Denman.*)

(NO. 10.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD DENMAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that, as he proposed before, he asked their Lordships to give a second reading to this Bill, postponing discussion till the Motion for going into Committee, which he would not hasten forward. In 1884, on July 10, when a similar Bill was printed, the late Earl Cairns wrote to him not to press it, as he himself was in favour of the principle, and, he (Lord Denman) supposed, wished to bring it forward himself; so he brought in a Bill with a beginning and ending, but with the enacting line left out. It was postponed, with two other important Bills. No one had opposed the principle of the Bill, and a Bill from "another place" might come up before it.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

On Question? *Resolved* in the *negative.*

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 16*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee —Resolution* [March 15] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£544,772, Consolidated Fund.

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Drill Grounds* [143].

Second Reading — Rivers Purification [101], *put off.*

Select Committee — Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment* [60], *nominated.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY BILL

(*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I rise for the purpose of moving the Instruction which stands upon the Paper in my name.

SIR CHARLES FORSTER (Walsall): The Motion of the hon. Member will come in more properly after the Bill has been read a second time.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I rise for the purpose of moving—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill, to insert a Clause providing that the Company shall, at the expiration of their present agreements with the contractors for, or tenants of, the bookstalls upon the premises of the Company, put such bookstalls up to public competition among the newsvendors and others being bonâ fide residents in the borough, or, if outside a borough, in the county in which such stalls are situate, and that the Company shall be bound to enter into no agreement for the letting of any bookstall for any period longer than three years."

The object of the Motion I have placed on the Paper is to put an end to the present virtual monopoly of railway bookstalls, which acts not only in restraint of trade, but also establishes a practical and irresponsible censorship of the Press. Hon. Members have probably received, like myself, a paper which purports to come from the Brighton Railway Company, as also one from the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company, with regard to the terms of my Motion; but it is perfectly evident, from internal evidence, that the paper in question emanates, not from these Companies, but from the monopolists, against whose privilege I ask the House to record its opinion. It is complained in one of the papers that the subject-matter of the Motion has nothing to do with anything contained in the Bill. But the monopolists themselves, in their representation, admit that the Bill is an Omnibus Bill, and the objects at which it aims are of a miscellaneous character. Under those circumstances, I know no Bill which I could better have pitched upon for my Motion. At the same time, I am free to confess that it is not because the Bill relates to the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company that I have placed the Motion on the Paper; but, as I conceive it affects one Company as much as another, I have taken the first Bill which presented an opportunity for bringing it forward. Now, Sir, the monopoly which I complain of is one of a very gigantic character. It throws into the hands of one single Company such an advantage in matters of trade, that individual vendors and proprietors have no chance at all of competing against them; and, therefore, I trust that I shall obtain the support not only of the Free Traders who sit on the other side of the House, but also of the Fair Traders who sit upon this side. To give the House an idea of the extent of this monopoly, I crave permission to state a few figures, in order to show the amount of advantage this particular Company of monopolists are allowed to enjoy. I am informed that hundreds of newspapers have been practically ruined, because they are unable to submit to the exactions to which the monopolists have attempted to subject them. In order to illustrate the nature of the monopoly, I will take, say, 65,000 copies as the issue of any daily penny paper. They are issued by the proprietors in quires of 26 copies apiece, which represents 2,500 quires of 26 each. To the trade they are sold at 1*s.* 6*d.* per quire, which comes to £187 10*s.* net. They bring in retail £250 net; not counting the extra two in each quire; but, allowing for them, the total profit on the one single penny paper is £83 6*s.* 8*d.* There are 26 days in the average month, and the profit per month is £2,126 on each penny paper, which represents a total of £29,645 per annum. The monopolists, though they do not themselves allow any discount when they are paid bills, which they are able to collect from their debtors themselves, always deduct 5 per cent from the newspapers when they pay their own bills. Now, as there are besides *The Times* and *The Morning Advertiser*, and the evening papers, five penny papers in London, out of the penny papers alone this particular firm makes a profit of no less than £148,225 a-year. If you take the weekly papers at 6*d.*, Messrs. W. H. Smith and Company order, say, 100 quires of 26 copies at 8*s.* a quire; that comes to £40; and allowing, say, 40 for returns, the amount due from the monopolists to the newspaper proprietors is £24 each week. They pay only once a month; deducting returns, the total sum paid per month should be £134; but they deduct there, again, 5 per cent. But besides this deduction from the payment for the newspapers, they charge for the placards, which appear in the stations, at the rate of 2*s.* per month, so that out of every payment of £98 16*s.* comes first of all a deduction of £10, which brings it down to £88 16*s.*, and the proprietors of the newspapers are obliged to advertise in at least 100 stations at £2 2*s.* per advertisement, for which I take off £25 more, which reduces the amount received by the newspaper proprietors to the moderate sum of £63 16*s.* Well, Sir, as a matter of fact the Railway Company, whose business under the law is to provide for transport only, do indirectly go beyond their legal powers by thus engaging—by means of commission — in the sale of newspapers. They are paid, not by rent, but by a commission, which is, at any rate in some cases, 10 per cent on the takings or profits of the London bookstalls, and 5 per cent of those in the country. I expect that, if this fact were brought under the notice of the Board of Trade and of the Railway Commissioners, they might have something to say to this particular aspect of it. Besides infringing the law in that particular respect, they also, it seems to me, distinctly infringe the law in respect of letters and parcels; because, with regard to the monopolists, they have a system under which there is a different charge made from that which is made to individual tradesmen. With all the Railway Companies the monopolists have special arrangements by which parcels are carried. Large and small parcels, and even single papers in wrappers, are all weighed together, and the bulk weight charged at one rate for any distance. Of course, by this arrangement, the actual charge for any particular parcel is reduced to a minimum. All other persons pay the actual charge upon every particular parcel; but in this case thousands of parcels, papers, and letters, causing the indirect infringement of the Act relating to the Post Office, are carried by many trains without any charge at all, and without going through the Company's parcel office. Anybody will see that that is so, if they will take the trouble to stand upon any railway platform in London, where, by almost every train, it will be seen that parcels are handed in and carried without charge, and in a large number of cases letters also. Well, Sir, we are accustomed to hear year after year speeches of a philanthropic character addressed to benevolent people, who are interested in the newsvendors; and one right hon. Gentleman in this House has, I think, on many occasions presided and taken an active part in those gatherings. One would suppose from the utterances at those gatherings that the monopolists in question were particularly anxious to treat those in their employment kindly and considerately. But that is by no means the case. Nothing is more frequent than for men who have been employed at these railway platform bookstalls to receive a dismissal, after a considerable number of years' service, without anything in the way of *solatium* or compensation. The last case of the kind I have heard of is one which occurred in Dublin only this year, where a worthy man named Kenny, who had been for more than 16 years employed by Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co.'s people at the Broadstone Station and platform as agent for the sale of books, suddenly received his dismissal a few months ago. His case was considered a hard one, and some benevolent and kind-hearted people in Dublin, including Mr. Conolly, got together sufficient means to enable him to start as a newsvendor outside the station. Well, what was the result? The people frequenting the station, considering that the case was a hard one, went to Kenny for their newspapers instead of buying them at the railway bookstall, and Kenny's place was put up near Mr. Conolly's timber yard close to the station, whereupon the monopolists sent him this letter—

> "We have been thinking very seriously over your getting papers from us, and have decided that we cannot continue to supply you. We will let you have your order for next week to give you time to make other arrangements; but after next week we will not supply you with any newspapers."

As a matter of fact, this firm has a monopoly not only on the railways, but also a monopoly of the Dublin wholesale trade; and in consequence of their refusal to supply this poor man Kenny with newspapers he is obliged to go round to the office of each particular newspaper every day in order to collect the papers he requires for his business, and all because independent customers choose to go to him rather than to the railway bookstall. There is one other aspect of this monopoly, which, I think, is perhaps a more important matter from a public point of view; and it is that the monopolists have established a practical censorship of the Press in accordance with which they "Boycott" any newspaper or other publication which does not happen to suit their fancy. Now, the railways themselves are precluded from any preferential treatment of that kind; and I do not see what justification can be advanced for the establishment of such a system with respect to the sale of newspapers or books upon railway premises. With these observations, I beg to move the

Instruction which stands on the Paper in my name.

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill, to insert a Clause providing that the Company shall, at the expiration of their present agreements with the contractors for, or tenants of, the bookstalls upon the premises of the Company, put such bookstalls up to public competition among the newsvendors and others being bonâ fide residents in the borough, or, if outside a borough, in the county in which such stalls are situate, and that the Company shall be bound to enter into no agreement for the letting of any bookstall for any period longer than three years." — (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

MR. MARRIOTT (Brighton): On behalf of the Railway Company I hope that this House will not assent to the Motion. It is very difficult to know why an Instruction should be given to a Railway Company to impose any restraint upon them with regard to the contracts they may deem it desirable to enter into with reference to the bookstalls on their line. If so, why not impose similar restraints upon them in regard to the refreshments and the locomotives they supply? The imposition of such a restraint would render it impossible for the Company to manage their traffic properly; and considering that a Bill has been introduced only the other day, giving great powers to the Railway Companies and enabling them to prevent anything like an abuse of the powers conferred upon Railway Companies, it does seem something like a large interference with the trading powers of a Railway Company to give such an Instruction to a Committee, who will simply have to sit upon an Omnibus Bill. With regard to the hon. Member who has moved this Instruction, he has not adduced a single reason why an exception should be made in this case. The fact is that the Brighton Company have a regular practice of putting their stalls up for competition. It is true that there are not many competitors; I believe there are only two—Messrs. Smith and Messrs. Willing—but that is because nobody without a large amount of capital and thorough business capacity would be capable of working such an undertaking to the benefit of the public at large. The essence of the Motion is this—that if it be carried it will inflict intolerable discomfort on all who live near a railway, and the public will be the chief sufferers. As far as I understand, the Instruction is to provide that the whole of the bookstalls of a railway are not to be contracted for by one person, but that they shall be allowed to fall into different hands; so that the people of Brighton would go to one contractor, the people of Hayward's Heath to another, the people of Croydon to a third, while the people of London would still have to go to Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. The result of that would be that nobody would be induced to take up the smaller stations. Under the present system, Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. take the good with the bad; and anybody who knows anything about the business knows that there are many stations in regard to which the contractors lose by supplying libraries of books and newspapers. Therefore, as I have already stated, the public will be the great sufferers if this Instruction is passed; and many hundreds of people will miss their morning paper at breakfast, will lose a lending library in their own neighbourhood, and will be placed in a position of the greatest discomfort, if the House assents to the Motion the hon. Gentleman has proposed—I do not know in whose interest, but it is certainly not in the interest of the public. We know very well how the public gain by letting private enterprize have full play. I quite admit that Railway Companies are under statutory powers and Governmental control, and that they will be under more control when the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade is passed; but this Instruction involves an unheard-of interference with the rights of private trade. I will not trouble the House more, because I think it preposterous to suppose that such a Resolution as this will be approved of by the House; and I ask the House, in the interests of the public, and in no way in the interests either of the Railway Company or of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co., to reject this Motion. I do not know how Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. conduct their business; but I do know that they pay the Railway Company best, and I have every reason to believe that they conduct their business to the general satisfaction of the public. As to the censorship of the

Press exercised by Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co., I do not know what the hon. Gentleman means. So far as my experience goes, all classes of newspapers and books, whatever opinions they contain, are to be found on the bookstalls. [*Cries of* "No!"] I have certainly seen the most Radical newspapers and the most Radical leaflets of every description; and I will simply ask the House now, on behalf of the public, not to interfere with the rights which this Railway Company ought to possess.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): My hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) spoke of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. as monopolists; but they are in no sort of way monopolists. No doubt they tender for the whole system of stations on a railway; but I presume that if anybody else sent in a tender, and offered a larger amount of money, that person would get the contract. My hon. Friend objects that a tender should necessarily be submitted for all the stations upon a railway, and he says that tenders should be permitted to be sent in from local persons for all the local stations. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who has just addressed the House spoke from a railway point of view. Now, I speak from a newspaper proprietor's point of view, and I say that the present system is far better for the newspaper proprietors, and necessarily for the public, than the system suggested by my hon. Friend. My hon. Friend is probably not aware of the vast number of newspapers which have to be sent down from London to the country. These newspapers are delivered to Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. at their offices in bulk, and Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. deliver them to the chief stations in London in bulk; they are then placed in vans, and while in transition they are sorted and got ready for distribution. If the Instruction of my hon. Friend were forced on the Railway Companies, the result would be that the newspapers could not reach the country as early as they do at present; and, therefore, the public would really be the losers. My hon. Friend said that Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. make a great deal of money; but he has taken the gross receipts instead of the net. Now, I do not know what Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. make; but when my hon. Friend points out what money this Company make out of the newspaper proprietors, all I have to say is that the newspaper proprietors in no way complain. In point of fact, they know perfectly well that it would cost them a great deal more under what is called the system of "returns" to send the different newspapers to the various local stations. Moreover, the newspaper proprietors are perfectly certain, with regard to Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co., that they will get their money at the end of the week, or of the month, or whatever may be the time fixed; whereas, if they were to deal with all these excellent, local, and worthy persons, it is possible they might find that, although the newspapers were sold, they did not get the money. My hon. Friend says that Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. exercise a censorship over the Press. Now, I really do not think that that is the case. I do not think that any hon. Member can cite any particular newspaper or book which Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. have "Boycotted." No doubt, however, there are newspapers which they do not put on their stalls; but it is for the simple reason that there is no demand for them. The clerk at a particular station is told to send for anything that is asked for; and if he does not send for a particular book or paper, there is a proof that the particular article, whether a book or a newspaper, is not required. I may say further that, as I believe every clerk receives a percentage on his sale, he would naturally, with perfect indifference to politics, look to his own interests, and ask Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. to send everything which he thought he was likely to sell. My hon. Friend has quoted the case of a man named Kenny at Dublin; but I do not quite understand the contention of my hon. Friend; because, if Mr. Kenny has established a shop for the sale of newspapers, Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. cannot hinder him from getting those newspapers. He has simply to send direct to the newspaper offices, and to show that he is a respectable and responsible man, when he will get all the newspapers he requires. In all parts of the country there are newsvendors now, and they are supplied on just the same principle as Messrs. W. H. Smith and

Co. I really do not think that my hon. Friend will benefit the newspaper proprietors, and he certainly will not benefit the readers of newspapers, if the Instruction he has moved is passed. I therefore hope he will withdraw it.

Major DICKSON (Dover): The Bill of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company is not at this moment the subject of discussion; but in the statement made by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) he referred to that Company; and as the allegations he has brought forward are not accurate, so far as that Company are concerned, I should like to say one or two words on the subject. When I first saw this Instruction, I really thought that the hon. Member was indulging in a sort of Hibernian joke at the expense of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith). I have been for some years in the House of Commons, and I have heard a great many strange Motions submitted to the consideration of this House; but I do not think that I ever heard a more monstrous, and, I may say, a more ridiculous, proposition submitted for our consideration than the Motion now before us. I would like to ask the House what either the hon. Gentleman or Parliament can have to do with the railway bookstalls? We have the right of letting them to whoever we think proper. We are not bound by statute to supply bookstalls at all. If we were bound by statute to do so, and failed in our duty, then the hon. Gentleman would have some semblance of justification for making this Motion. If the Motion were carried, what is there to prevent another hon. Gentleman from Ireland coming forward and saying—"You shall only sell Irish whisky at your refreshment rooms." The hon. Gentleman has made two statements which are absolutely false. In the first place, he stated that the Circular giving reasons for opposing his Motion which has been issued by the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company was not issued by that Company at all, but was prepared by Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. Now, I may inform the hon. Gentleman that the Paper he referred to was drawn up by Messrs. Martin and Leslie, the Parliamentary Agents, in accordance with the instructions they received from the Railway Company, and that Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. had nothing whatever to do with it. [Mr. Arthur O'Connor: I referred to the Brighton Company.] I am not speaking of the Brighton Company, but of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company, and it will be in the recollection of the House that the hon. Gentleman mentioned that Company, as well as the Brighton Company; therefore, I am perfectly in Order in what I am stating. The hon. Member also said that we received a compensation on the sale of newspapers as well as from the rent of bookstalls. That is also perfectly untrue. We are paid a fixed rent by Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co., and when the contract expires we let our bookstalls to the most respectable firm we can find, on the best terms we can obtain.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I rise to Order. The hon. and gallant Member states that I have said what is perfectly untrue. I do not take any notice of the adjective; but, as a matter of fact, I did not say anything of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company.

Major DICKSON: I am merely submitting to the House that the statement of the hon. Member, so far as the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company are concerned, is not correct, and I may add that the Company have reserved to themselves the power of putting a veto upon the sale of any particular publications at any of their railway stations; and they intend to retain it, because they do not think that Railway Directors should allow their stations to become mediums for the publication of literature of a questionable character.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin): I will not detain the House for more than a few minutes; but it is necessary that I should reply to the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just sat down (Major Dickson). After the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), it certainly does not appear to me that the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) has established his proposition that the bookstall proprietors have an injurious commercial monopoly in the sale of the newspapers. It is perfectly clear, however, from the concluding sentences of the hon. and gallant Member for Dover (Major Dickson), who represents the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Company, that Railway Directors exercise, or claim to exercise, a kind of censorship over the publications sold at the bookstalls on their lines. The hon. and gallant Gentleman says that they never allow their bookstalls to be a medium for the sale of improper publications. It may be quite right that they should not be the medium for the sale of improper publications; but it may become a very serious question for the House to consider whether Railway Directors ought to be the tribunal to decide upon such matters. There might be widely different opinions as to whether a particular publication was improper, or immoral, or not; and, personally, I am altogether against an unlicensed power of revision, whether it is exercised by a Company or individuals, and whether it be in respect of sale or purchase. I object to a trader having the power to say that he will not sell a particular thing, or will not trade with a particular person. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members laugh; but perhaps they will go with me as far as this—that a trader, engaged in the sale of a particular article, is not to be the unlimited judge as to whether he will sell that article to persons who are obnoxious to him. If he did so, I believe the law might be called in, or it might be strengthened, so that he might be summoned to show that he had a reasonable cause for refusing. If the principle put forward by the hon. and gallant Member for Dover were adopted, newspapers and books might be prohibited which a large number of persons might consider to be beneficial.

MAJOR DICKSON: I never said anything of the sort. My remarks applied to treasonable, seditious, and indecent publications.

MR. COURTNEY: No doubt that is so; but the hon. and gallant Member is to exercise his opinion as to what he thinks seditious; and what the hon. and gallant Member might deem to be seditious might not be so regarded by another; and what he thinks immoral other persons might deem moral. I think, if the managers of the railway stalls are judicious, they would not drive this matter so far as to compel the law to be altered. I confess, for my own part, that I do not see why the law in respect to the sale of publications should not be somewhat altered if the case requires it. I would not allow a book, or a newspaper, or a man to be "Boycotted" at the discretion of any individual, or of any Railway Company. In fact, where a person has the privilege of supplying the public with a particular class of goods, and he refuses to supply particular persons with those goods, or refuses to supply particular goods which form a branch of his trade, he might be made liable to be summoned in order to show that he has reasonable grounds for refusing to make a supply. There must be some kind of tribunal besides Railway Directors and lessees to say what are and what are not to be sold at a bookstall. That proposition may appear to be revolutionary; but it is based upon a principle which underlies our law. The particular Motion, however, of the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) appears to me to be wholly inapplicable to the existing state of things, and it would not effect his purpose. The supply may be very bad; but what guarantee has he got that local traders would not have the same tender consciences in this matter as a Company? This Instruction would afford no safeguard against similar claims being made by these people in detail, as are now made by Messrs. W. H. Smith and Co. On that ground, and on that ground alone, I object to the Instruction; but I cannot help thinking that it is a case which in future may grow to large dimensions, and may, at some future time, warrant the interference of Parliament, in order to defend the public against a discretion which, although exercised in a perfectly honest manner, may be prejudicial to the public interests.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): The sentiments put forward by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Ways and Means seem to some of us on this side of the House so monstrous that I feel called upon to say a word in reply. It amounts to this—that if Messrs. Graves, or Colnaghi, or any other print-seller are to be allowed to carry on their business, they must be required to sell any print which, forsooth, the hon. Gentleman happens to think is not indecent. That is what his statement amounts to.

Mr. COURTNEY: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman allow me to explain. All I ventured to suggest was that there ought to be some tribunal before whom you can cite the individual who refuses to sell particular publications; but that you ought not to give an unlimited and unconditional power of censorship either to any Board of Railway Directors or to any individual.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL: It comes to this—that the hon. Gentleman or somebody else is to be the tribunal to decide. Why on earth, if persons are to be allowed to carry on a trade, should they not have the privilege of carrying it on in the way they think right? I trust that it will always be in the power of the Directors of Railway Companies to say who shall carry on a trade on their platforms, and what shall or shall not be sold upon their bookstalls. No doubt the case is different in regard to public-houses; they are allowed to be open for the purpose of entertaining the whole of the public, and so long as a man conducts himself decently he should be able to insist upon being served. But that is the only instance in which such compulsion is justifiable, and there is no analogy between the case of hotel-keepers and bookstalls. It cannot be denied that the persons responsible to the Directors of a Railway Company are in a position to form a proper estimate as to what books and periodicals ought to be sold at their stations. Surely, then, they should have a right to say whether filth like *The Pall Mall Gazette* should be allowed to be sold. They should have complete liberty in the matter, and a right to decide what shall not be sold on their premises. I presume the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade is about to tell us that he himself would be a sufficient judge in such matters, and that the question ought to be left to the Board of Trade; but allow me to say on behalf of those who travel, not by the Brighton Railway particularly, but by railways generally, that we prefer that the Railway Directors should have the power of saying what should and what should not be sold, rather than that the decision should rest with the Board of Trade, or any other tribunal of that kind.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside): My hon. and learned Friend who has just sat down has made a speech for me which I certainly should not have made for myself. The Board of Trade have no desire whatever to perform the duty he desires to throw upon them, and my only object in rising is to invite the House not to widen the area of this discussion. In my opinion, we have gone a little beyond the subject of the Instruction moved by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). Now, what is the question before us? The hon. Member for East Donegal asks the House to put a clause in an omnibus Railway Bill, restricting the right of contract on the part of Railway Companies with the persons with whom they may contract for the sale of newspapers and books. Now, if the House once undertakes this kind of intermeddling, I do not see where it would stop. There is really much more reason to interfere with regard to refreshments. A penny newspaper will always be sold for a penny; but refreshments are not always equally good or equally cheap. Moreover, the public are exceedingly well served under the present system. I have myself seen instances where the demand for a certain newspaper has been considerable on account of the peculiarity of some of its contents; but hon. Members may rely upon it that that is a matter which will cure itself. The public are quite able to take care of themselves; and, on the whole, I would ask the House not to waste its time in discussing the insertion of an Instruction of this nature, which I certainly think my hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal has not acted wisely in endeavouring to introduce. I hope that he will now withdraw his Motion, and allow the House to go on with its ordinary Business.

Mr. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth): I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Mundella) ought not to be surprised if the discussion has travelled out of the strict line of the Question put down on the Paper, and I have only to thank the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) for having afforded the House an opportunity of discussing the matter. In rising to address the House for the first time, I wish to take this opportunity of saying, as a Railway Director, that a more monstrous proposition than that submitted by the hon.

Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, I never heard put forward. I maintain, on the part of those charged with the conduct of the railways of this Kingdom, that they have every right to look after the character of the publications sold at their stations, and that they would be guilty of a gross dereliction of their duty if they did not exercise some sort of supervision over what is sold. I think it must be seen by the House that it would be an unwarrantable interference with the ordinary conduct of trade, if this Instruction were adopted, and, therefore, I hope that the House will refuse to sanction it.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Practically, the object I had in view has been attained; and I therefore ask the House to allow me to withdraw the Motion. [*Cries of* "No!"] I wish to add, as *The Pall Mall Gazette* has been alluded to, that that newspaper never for one moment entered into my thoughts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Motion be withdrawn? [*Cries of* "No!"]

Question again proposed.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to point out to hon. Members who object to go to a division that probably the Motion of my hon. Friend may be carried if they insist upon dividing. At all events, I wish to say a few words in order to point out that if it is not carried, it may be possible for some Members who do not sympathize with the exact form of the Motion, but who do sympathize with the object my hon. Friend has in view, to amend the Instruction in such a way as to secure general support for it. Speaking as an Irish Nationalist Member, I have no personal complaint to make against the right hon. Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith) and his monopoly. I cannot say that it has been used against us to any serious extent; but, at the same time, it is a monopoly, and is used as a means of carrying on a censorship of the Press. No man in his senses, who knows anything about England, can maintain what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade has stated—that a penny newspaper is always sold for a penny at the bookstalls. I altogether deny that. There is a newspaper which, like *The Pall Mall Gazette*, is a newspaper enormously read by the working classes of this country. I cannot say that I admire the newspaper to which I refer—namely, *Reynolds's Newspaper;* but it is very much admired by a large number of the working classes. [Mr. Labouchere: That newspaper is sold on a Sunday.] Yes; but it may be bought also on a Monday. No doubt, it may contain articles which are considered by some persons to be strongly objectionable; but the working man has quite as much right to buy his newspaper as the rich man. From the statement made by the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees, it would appear likely that this question may be raised again; and if it is not raised now in a shape which fairly recommends itself to a majority of the House, it may be put in shape presently which I dare say would meet with much greater support. We must recollect that a statement has already been made by a Railway Director that the Directors of Railway Companies do exercise a censorship over the publications sold at their stations, and that they intend to continue that censorship. [Major Dickson: Only in regard to their own property.] Upon their own property, of course; but they have already had a monopoly given to them by the State, under restrictions that it shall be used for the public benefit, and in accordance with the public opinion of the country. Nevertheless, the hon. Member makes this monstrous proposition—that the Directors of the English Railways ought to be permitted to exercise a censorship of the Press all over England. That is exactly what his proposition amounts to; and he adds that he knows of no Body throughout the country which is better fitted to exercise that censorship. [Major Dickson: No; I said nothing of the kind.] That proposition has very much widened the issue before the House; and although, personally, I have no grievance against the right hon. Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith) and his monopoly, I must admit that the working classes may have a grievance which requires to be carefully considered by this House.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): I should like to say one word before the debate closes, and it is this—that if we accept this proposition we may be asked to accept a number of other similar ones. Many persons object to the unwholesome food which the travelling public are supplied with at the railway stations quite as much as to the unwholesome literature. I am quite able to confirm that view, because, in my opinion, much of the food provided at the railway stations is perfectly uneatable. Does the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) propose to lay down rules for the regulation of the rooms at railway stations now used for refreshment purposes? I only make this remark in order to point out that the proposition of the hon. Member, if accepted, would open up a large area of questions. We may not like a particular decision of any particular Railway Board of Directors; but, nevertheless, I would rather have the varying decisions of Railway Boards, than the establishment of a public censorship; and the observations of the hon. Gentleman certainly amount to this—that a public censor should be established to say whether any newspaper is good moral reading or not. Now, I would rather leave the determination of that question to the good sense and good judgment of the reading public. Let them decide that question by the ordinary system, and the ordinary system is that a trader will supply any particular goods if he finds there is a demand for them, his object being to obtain a profit by the sale. Therefore, I think the simplest course is to leave each particular trader to look after his own business, and to manage it in his own way, so long as he does no harm to the public, rather than establish the system of interference which the passing of this Instruction would involve.

SIR HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth): This debate appears to have proceeded mainly on the assumptions partly put forward by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that Messrs. W. H. Smith & Co. possess a monopoly in regard to the bookstalls of the Railway Companies, and that the Railway Companies themselves exercise a censorship over the Press. Now I maintain, in the first place, that there is really no monopoly in the case of the firm of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith); and, in the second place, that there is practically no censorship of the Press exercised by Railway Directors. I object to both of these assumptions on the ground that they are untrue. The same course is taken with regard to these contracts as is taken in regard to the supply of refreshments referred to by the last speaker, the hon. Member for St. Pancras. In the latter case, the Railway Companies have been in the habit of letting out the refreshment rooms to contractors, just in the same way as they let the bookstalls; but of late several of the Railway Companies have taken the supply of refreshments into their own hands; and it is generally admitted as the result of experience that they have conducted the business of supplying refreshments with great success. So far as the Railway Companies are concerned, they have found it to their advantage, as well as to that of the public, to adopt this course; and so far as I am acquainted with the matter, as a Railway Director, no censorship whatever is exercised by Railway Directors over the Press.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I think, Sir, considering the course of the debate, and the request made to my hon. Friend the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, that he should withdraw his Motion, my hon. Friend had a right to expect that in proposing to withdraw it he would have met with different treatment from that which he has received at the hands of certain Gentlemen who have refused to allow the Motion to be withdrawn. I do not think that it has been considered that, if hon. Members persist in taking a division, it may be necessary for those who agree with the hon. Member for East Donegal to enter into the merits of this system with greater fulness. I, therefore, think that perhaps the most sensible and most convenient course would be to let the discussion stop here; and, with the view of procuring that result, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second the Motion?

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) seconded the Motion.

Motion made and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr Sexton,*)—put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

QUESTIONS.

—o—

MEDICAL ACT, 1858.

Dr. FOSTER (Chester) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If the Government propose to introduce this Session of Parliament a Bill to amend the Medical Act of 1858; and, in case of the answer being in the affirmative, whether such Bill will propose to give the medical profession direct representation on the General Council of Medical Education and Registration?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir Lyon Playfair) (Leeds, S.): A Bill is being drafted, and I hope will shortly be introduced, to amend the Medical Act of 1858. It will contain provisions to give direct representation to the Medical Profession on the General Medical Council.

THE INCOME TAX (EXEMPTIONS).

Mr. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can inform the House what number of claims for abatement of Income Tax, under Schedule B, have been made during the current year; in how many cases tenants have established their claim to exemption; and, what has been the total amount of exemptions or abatement under this Schedule for the past three years?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): The total number of properties assessed under Schedule B in 1883-4 was 1,600,000. In respect of 1,200,000 of these either exemption or abatement was granted in consequence of the incomes produced by them being less than £150 or than £400 per annum. I cannot give the total number of exemption claims. The total amount of the exemptions during the last three years has been—in 1882-3, £31,000,000; in 1883-4, £32,050,000; and in 1884-5, £32,692,000.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE REV. MATTHEW ARMOUR.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is true that the Justiciary Appeal Court has unanimously quashed the sentence of imprisonment recently passed in the Orkney Sheriff Court on the Reverend Matthew Armour for his conduct at an election meeting; whether it is true, as reported, that Lord Young, in passing judgment, referred to the prosecution of Mr. Armour as follows:—

> "If I were to express the opinion which I have of this prosecution, I am afraid I should have to use somewhat strong language. I never saw a more nimious prosecution;"

and, whether he can state the amount of expense incurred in the prosecution referred to?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) (Clackmannan, &c.): It is true that the High Court of Justiciary has unanimously quashed the sentence in question, and the newspaper report of Lord Young's opinion—the accuracy of which I have no reason to doubt—bears that his Lordship expressed himself in the terms quoted in the Question. I understand that there were no separate expenses of material amount incurred in the prosecution, the Procurator Fiscal being a salaried official, and the witnesses who were examined having been already in Kirkwall in connection with the trial of the Sanday rioters, the cost of detaining the witnesses, and probably some small Court fees, would apparently be the only separate expenses.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

Dr. R. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Secretary for Scotland, If he is assured as to whether the reports in *The Scotsman* and other newspapers are true — namely, that the Queen's writ does not run in parts of the Highlands and Islands; if so, has such a state of matters come to pass through neglect of the ordinary duties of Government; and, will he urge upon Her Majesty's Government, with the view of providing a remedy for such a state of matters, to institute an inquiry into the circumstances which have led to such a condition of affairs?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Trevelyan) (Hawick, &c.): The state of things is undoubtedly serious in the Isle of Skye, and a spirit of lawlessness prevails there the dealing with which is engaging the attention of the Government.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND)—SMALL-POX AT WOODSIDE.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement in *The Aberdeen Free Press* :—

> "A somewhat serious outbreak of small-pox has occurred at Woodside. In the course of a week three women have been attacked with the disease, and are now in the Woodside Epidemic Hospital. The patients were employed in the rag department of Woodside Works, and it is believed that the outbreak is attributable to the infection contained in a particular bale of rags. . . . . . It is about two years since there was an outbreak of small-pox at Woodside ;"

whether two more cases have occurred since ; and, what steps he proposes to take to protect the people of Woodside from the dangers of infection from imported rags ?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): Three cases of small-pox have been reported to the Board of Supervision as having occurred at Woodside. The Messrs. Pirie, who employ 2,000 workpeople, report to the Chief Inspector of Factories that they have had three cases in their works. These patients have been working on various qualities of rags drawn from different sources. A previous attack of small-pox in April, 1885, is not shown to have originated in Messrs. Pirie's works. The medical officer of the Board of Supervision reports that the suspected rags came from England and Scotland, and not from the Continent. I have recently approved of an Order issued by the Board of Supervision prohibiting the importation of rags from Spain for some months, and have received various recommendations as to the necessity of further legislation, which will have my careful consideration.

HARBOURS (SCOTLAND)—THE HARBOUR AT GIRVAN.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the condition of the harbour of Girvan, in Ayrshire, and to the complaints of fishermen that heavy dues are exacted from them under the Provisional Order granted for the construction of the harbour ; the original condition being that a depth of four feet would be maintained at low water, whereas the depth at low water does not now exceed two feet, that portions of the quay have fallen in, and that the harbour is in an unsafe condition ; and, if he would take immediate steps to inquire into the case, and have the defects complained of remedied ?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): I have referred the complaint to which the hon. Member alludes to the Harbour Commissioners of Girvan for their observations, and I can express no opinion upon it until I get their Report. I must, therefore, ask the hon. Member to repeat his Question in a few days.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) — IMPRISONMENT OF ROBERT HOWE ASHTON.

MR. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) asked Mr. Attorney General, If he is aware that there is a prisoner in Strangeways Gaol at Manchester, named Robert Howe Ashton, not convicted of a criminal offence, but who is confined at the instance of the Inland Revenue Board, under a sentence of imprisonment for life, unless he can pay seven hundred pounds for penalties incurred as an Income Tax Collector; and, if, considering that the prisoner has no means or prospect of paying the amount, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to keep him in confinement for the whole term of his natural life, or when he will be released ?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.), in reply, said, that he was informed by the Board of Inland Revenue that Robert Howe Ashton was confined in Strangeways Gaol in default of payment of penalties incurred by him in respect of serious charges of fraud both against the Board and against private individuals. But for the terms of an Act applicable to him as an Inland Revenue Collector, Ashton would have been proceeded against in a Criminal Court. A Memorial from Ashton praying for his release was now before the Board. The Board offered to furnish the hon. Member with all shorthand writer's notes of the trial and a copy of the correspondence.

THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE—BRITISH LEGATION AT CHINA.

MR. OCTAVIUS MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in the selection of a new Minister to China, a knowledge of the far East will be considered one of the principal qualifications necessary?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): Sir John Walsham was appointed in November last by Lord Salisbury to be Her Majesty's Minister and Envoy at Pekin. He has had long and varied diplomatic experience, but has not hitherto been employed in China.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE SHERIFF CLERK OF CROMARTY.

DR. R. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether John Taylor, Sheriff Clerk of Cromarty and bank agent there, is also factor and legal adviser for John Shaw M'Kenzie, esquire, of Newhall (a gentleman now over ninety years of age); whether the said John Taylor, in his capacity of Sheriff Clerk and servant of the Crown, is now or has lately been issuing and recording the warrants of ejection, and for the sale of the effects of the tenants of the said estate of Newhall; and, if so, whether Mr. Taylor can legally hold these offices together; and, whether he will ask him to resign the office of Sheriff Clerk of Cromarty?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) (Clackmannan, &c.): I am informed that Mr. Taylor is factor for and private legal adviser of Mr. M'Kenzie, of Newhall. It would, no doubt, be his duty as Sheriff Clerk to perform the Ministerial act of issuing and recording such warrants as are described. The emoluments of the office of Sheriff Clerk of Cromarty are £78 a-year, and it would, of course, be impossible to require that an officer with so small a salary should be debarred from taking factory or general business. I assume, however, that he does not practice in the Court of which he is Clerk; but I shall inquire as to this.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE PROCURATOR FISCAL FOR ROSS AND CROMARTY.

DR. R. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, in the re-arrangement of the office of Procurator Fiscal for Ross and Cromarty, he will see to it that the gentleman appointed be restricted entirely to his duties of Fiscal, and that the maximum salary for the post be £500 a-year?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) (Clackmannan, &c.): The salary of the Procurator Fiscal is only £50 a-year, and if it remains at that amount it would, of course, be impossible to get anyone to accept the office who would agree to confine himself exclusively to its duties. The Sheriff of the county has been carefully considering whether the Fiscalship of Tain could not be amalgamated with one of the others in the county; but he does not consider that this could be done without causing material inconvenience to the public.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE STATE OF KERRY.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to Mr. Baron Dowse's address to the Grand Jury of the county of Kerry, in which he states—

> "That this county is in a much worse state than it has been in for years; that there are no less than three hundred offences specially reported to the constabulary since the Assizes of 1885; that these offences are of a very serious nature, consisting of two cases of murder, eighteen cases of letters threatening to murder, thirty-nine cases of cattle, horse, and sheep stealing, eleven cases of arson and other wilful burnings, eighteen cases of killing and maiming cattle, fifty-two cases of seizing arms and levying contributions for money and goods, seventy-four cases of printing, writing, posting, sending threatening letters and notices, and twenty-four cases of intimidation, besides other offences minor in point of importance but serious in nature;"

and, whether the Irish Executive have any reason to doubt the correctness of Mr. Baron Dowse's statement?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of this quotation from Mr. Baron Dowse's charge, which must, of course, be taken as an expression of the views of the Judge himself on the information laid before him. There was, no doubt, an increase between July and January of crime in Kerry, and the county is in parts very demoralized. But by the latest reports which have reached me I am glad to say there are indications of an improvement in the more disturbed districts; and while the Returns for the past four months show a considerable growth of agrarian outrages over the same months of last year and the year before, I find that the number is only 10 more than in the same period of 1883; and, going back to the more disturbed years of 1882 and 1881, the number in the former year doubled and in the latter year quadrupled that of the present year in the same period. The numbers are—64 in four months of 1885-6; 54 in four months of 1882-3; 131 in four months of 1881-2; and 266 in four months of 1880-1. Therefore, I confess I do not quite understand the significance of Baron Dowse's remarks.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any reason to doubt the accuracy of the charges in 15 of the 20 other Irish counties, with regard to which the Judges stated that the state of the calendars was of a satisfactory character.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. MITCHELL HENRY (Glasgow, Blackfriars) asked whether it was true or not that 300 serious offences had been reported by the Constabulary in the county of Kerry, as stated by Baron Dowse?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Yes, Sir; I accept those figures; but I must remind the hon. Gentleman that those 300 crimes were not all agrarian outrages. They cover all the general crimes that came before the Judges of Assize.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: They were specially reported offences.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is not a fact that a number of evictions exactly equivalent to the number of outrages have occurred in Kerry at the instance of one single landlord?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE BALLINASLOE POLICE AND FREE GAS.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it be true that the Town Commissioners of Ballinasloe do not charge the constabulary of that town for the gas which is consumed in their barracks; whether a large number of the Commissioners are licensed publicans, and is it a fact that a former member of that body, William Ivors, had his licence taken from him some short time after he had opposed the giving of gas free of charge to the police; and, whether the Town Commissioners have a right to exempt certain persons from paying in such cases; and, if not, was the public auditor (Captain O'Harra) acting within the Law when he passed the accounts of the Ballinasloe Town Board without taking notice of this practice?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that the facts are as stated with regard to the question of gas. A large number of the Town Commissioners are licensed publicans. William Ivors, when a member, moved a resolution charging the police for gas; but the resolution fell through for want of a seconder. He ceased to be a Commissioner shortly afterwards, and 12 months after that he lost his licence in consequence of intemperance, which led to a shocking piece of misconduct on his part. I am in communication with the Local Government Board in reference to the queries in the last paragraph of the Question, and I am not at this moment in a position to give more definite information; but I may observe that any person who may be aggrieved by an allowance or disallowance made by the auditor may appeal to the Board, and that no appeal has yet been made in this case.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL CONVENTION.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether by the peculiar wording of the Favoured Nation Clause in the Transvaal Convention of February 1884, the Colony of Natal is excluded from the benefit of that Clause, although the most interested of Her Majesty's dominions; whether such peculiar wording and such exclusion was by oversight, or by deliberation; and, if the latter, for what reasons; whether the import of tobacco and other produce from the Transvaal into Natal, free of the Duty imposed on all other importers, is a consequence of the above named fact; whether a loss to the revenue of Natal has been thereby occasioned, and is still continuing; whether he has been informed that a further consequence is that the tobacco industry of Natal has been seriously damaged; whether he will take any steps to get the Convention amended, and the consequences averted; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have received from the Transvaal Republic, Copy of any Treaty or engagement with any other State or Nation or Native Tribe, requiring approval of Her Majesty under Article 4 of the Convention?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): The Colony of Natal is not excluded from the benefit of the Most Favoured Nation Clause (13) of the London Convention of 1884. Most-favoured-nation treatment is secured to Natal in common with all other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions by the earlier portion of the first half of that clause. The free importation of tobacco and other goods from the South African Republic into Natal does not result from the wording of Clause 13 of that Convention. It results from the Government and Legislature of Natal, with whom the matter rests, not thinking it expedient to establish Custom Houses on the inland Border. If goods otherwise subject to duty are imported into Natal free of duty there is, undoubtedly, a loss of Revenue to the Colony; but whether there is a loss of profit is another thing. The Natal inland Borders extend for over 600 miles; the cost of the service would be heavy, and the collection would be small. Reports have recently been received from the late Governor and the Chambers of Commerce on the depression of trade in Natal; but no mention is made in these Reports of injury to the tobacco industry from the importation of Transvaal tobacco. According to the latest Returns, the number of tobacco manufacturers in the Colony is only two. Her Majesty's Government have no intention of negotiating for an amendment of the 13th clause of the Convention, which appears to be properly framed, and which has no bearing on the present question, as it neither enjoins nor forbids the levying by the Natal Government of any duties on the Transvaal Border which the Natal Legislature may authorize. Her Majesty's Government have received copies of, and have assented to, Treaties between Germany and the South African Republic, and Portugal and the South African Republic. An old Treaty concluded between Belgium and the South African Republic in 1876 has been put in force since the conclusion of the London Convention, with the consent of Her Majesty's Government. A Treaty between the South African Republic and the French Republic is under the consideration of the French Legislature, and Her Majesty's Government have received a copy of the text. A Treaty has been concluded with Switzerland, but the text has not yet been received. Negotiations for a Treaty have been going on with Holland; but Her Majesty's Government are not officially informed of the result.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE ZHOB VALLEY EXPEDITION.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT (Rochester) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is intended to grant a medal to the officers and men, about three thousand in all, who were engaged in the Zhob Valley Expedition, seeing that they were officially informed that the said Expedition would be reckoned as "War Service," equally with the other Expeditions undertaken in other parts of the Frontiers of Afghanistan, for which medals were awarded?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said, it was stated in the House on the 4th of May, 1885, by the then Under Secretary of State for India, that the Government of India had expressed to the Commander-in-Chief their approbation of the manner in which the Zhob Valley operations were conducted, and that the Secretary of State in Council concurred; but that the circumstances of the case did not appear to warrant any special distinction, such as the grant of a medal. The Secretary of State now remained of that opinion, and no recommendation had been received from the Government of India.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY — CONSTABLE'S "HAY WAIN."

MR. RUSTON (Lincoln) asked the honourable Member for North West Staffordshire, Whether it is a fact that the picture by John Constable, R.A., called the "Hay Wain," recently exhibited at Burlington House, has been presented by its owner to the Nation?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I am glad to be able to inform the hon. Member that Mr. Henry Vaughan has presented this picture to the nation, and that it has been hung in the National Gallery this morning.

ENFIELD SMALL ARMS FACTORY—"STANDING OUT" EMPLOYES.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE (Middlesex, Enfield) asked the Secretary of State for War, How many men are "standing out" in all departments of the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield; and, how long he anticipates it will be before they are again taken on to work full time?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Sterling, &c.): One hundred and seventy-nine men ordinarily employed on piece-work at Enfield are standing out because their particular work is too advanced, as explained last Thursday, but 120 of them will again be at work next week.

POST OFFICE—RURAL POSTAL DELIVERIES.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the present system of delivering letters and papers in rural districts, with the view of granting a more extended delivery to labourers' cottages and others, who at the present time frequently have to pay one penny for each letter or paper on delivery?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The hon. Baronet's Question is very similar to one which was answered on the 1st instant, and in reply I may repeat what I then stated—namely, that the Post Office is constantly engaged in extending the official delivery of letters in the rural districts irrespective of distance, and in no case is the accommodation withheld where it is shown to be warranted by the correspondence. If the hon. Baronet will inform me of the locality to which he specially refers the Postmaster General will cause inquiries to be made, with the view, if possible, of extending the postal delivery.

NAVY—DEVONPORT DOCKYARD.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he can now relieve the anxiety prevailing in Devonport by stating what course has been determined upon in reference to the 350 men in the Dockyard who have been served with notices of discharge; whether he is aware that these notices take effect this week, and that, if carried out, the distress already existing there will be greatly increased; and, whether it is a fact that all hands at present in the Dockyards cannot be usefully employed?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): I can only refer my hon. Friend to my answer of yesterday. The Admiralty are fully entitled to discharge these men on the 20th instant, in accordance with their agreement on entry; but in view of the present depression in the labour market efforts will be made to find work for as many men as can be economically and usefully employed, and the Controller of the Navy is in communication with Devonport with a view to effect this object.

MR. PULESTON asked whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that the notices expired this week?

MR. R. W. DUFF: I am perfectly aware of that.

INLAND REVENUE—ASSESSMENT OF THE INCOME TAX.

MR. AGG-GARDNER (Cheltenham) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the practice of the Department to encourage an increase of assessments by giving to the district supervisors of Income Tax a per-centage on the amount by which they are raised?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): Of course, Sir, the assessors are paid by a percentage on the amount raised; but they are specially cautioned against raising assessments unless for good cause. The surveyors are paid by salary only.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—STATE OF KERRY.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the charge of Baron Dowse to the Grand Jury of Kerry; and, in view of the enormous increase of crime in that county evidenced by the number of cases of crime reported as having risen from 166 at the summer assizes of 1885 to 300 at the present assizes, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to apply for additional powers to deal with this alarming growth of crime in that and also in other parts of the Country?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): My right hon. Friend has already answered a Question in reference to the statement of the learned Judge, Baron Dowse. Of course, I have not merely to consider the condition of Kerry, but the condition of Ireland at large, and we do not think that the condition of Ireland at large would warrant legislation such as that at which the hon. Member glances at the present juncture. I might also remind the hon. Member, if he has not already learned, that the month of February Return—the most recent Return—is a decidedly favourable one as compared with the previous months.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether it is a fact, as stated in this Question, that there is "an alarming growth of crime in that and also in order parts of the country;" and, whether, as a matter of fact, there has been a growth of crime in any county in Ireland except Kerry?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Certainly the improvement in the month of February was a very favourable improvement compared with the preceding months.

IRELAND—"THE HOUSE LEAGUE."

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been drawn to a new form of conspiracy developing in Ireland called "The House League," which was exercising arbitrary powers as between landlord and tenant, in towns to the serious detriment of property in those towns, in which said league had obtained a foothold; and, whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take steps with regard to the branches of this league established at Listowel, Tralee, and elsewhere?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian), in reply, said, that the House League was being carefully watched by Her Majesty's Government; but he did not understand that it was at present creating great or general alarm, or that any case had arisen to make it desirable to take any special measures.

COAL MINES BILL.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what was the course Her Majesty's Government proposed to pursue with regard to the Coal Mines Bill which stood on the Paper for to-day?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): I have to apologize for not being in the House last night when the discussion took place in regard to the Bill; but I was absent through indisposition. In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I may perhaps inform the House precisely how we stand as to this Bill. We agreed to its being read a second time on the understanding which I stated, that it should be placed in the same position as the Bill of the hon. Member for Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) on the same subject, which had been read a second time a few minutes before. To this, it is true, the right hon. Gentleman opposite would not agree, and set down the Committee, in spite of my protest, for an earlier day. The Committee stage was reached on Wednesday, the 10th, after a quarter to 6, and the right hon. Gentleman sucseeded in moving the Speaker out of the Chair. I objected immediately afterwards, and Progress was reported, yesterday being named by the right hon. Gentleman for the continuance of the debate in Committee. Shortly afterwards I saw the right hon. Gentleman on another subject, and he explained to me why, in his opinion, legislation was urgent. But I said in reply that I could make no change in the date when I thought that the Committee should be resumed—that is to say, the date for the Committee on the Bill of the hon. Member for Donegal—until I had read and considered the Report of the Mines Commission, which I daily expected to receive. I said that after reading and considering that Report I might have to make a statement to the House and to communicate with the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member for Donegal about their Bills. I received yesterday the Report; but I have not yet had time to study it completely, and at this moment I am not able to advise the House as to these two Bills. I have also received important suggestions from the Miners' Conference. My impression is that I shall be able to introduce a Bill immediately founded on the Report, and that it will cover the whole ground and render any other Bill unnecessary. Under these circumstances, I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will postpone the Committee on the Bill for a few days.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS intimated that he would postpone the Committee stage for 10 days.

MOTIONS.

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CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS, 1866-1869.

RESOLUTION.

MR. STANSFELD (Halifax), in rising to call attention to the subject, and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866-1869, ought to be repealed," said, he did so with a confident hope that his Motion would be successful. The Acts were passed without discussion, in silence, and he might say by stealth. ["No, no!"] If there was any doubt on the matter he would prove it. The present Prime Minister, on the 7th of May, 1883, used these words—

> "Most unfortunately, though from the best of motives—from the desire to prevent public discussion on a subject not fit for proper discussion—these Acts were passed almost without the knowledge of anyone. He was a Member of the Government at the time they were passed; but he did not know how they passed, or by whom they were carried through the House." —(3 *Hansard*, [279] 65.)

And, again, in reply to an hon. Member, the right hon. Gentleman observed—

> "I said that these Acts were passed in general obscurity, and that they were never brought before the Cabinet of which I was a Member."

Those statements were conclusive of the circumstances and conditions under which this legislation took place. It was his (Mr. Stansfeld's) conviction, shared by a great part of the country, that had it not been for that silence and the rapid way in which the Acts were smuggled through Parliament, they never would have been enacted, so strong would have been the public indignation at their provisions. Since then 17 weary years had passed, in which many hundreds of persons, both men and women, had spent their time, some their lives, and some had broken their hearts, in the endeavour to get these Acts repealed; and he thought, after that lapse of time, the moment had arrived when he was entitled to claim from that new Parliament a decisive and final verdict. Further delay would be inconceivable and impossible. The subject had been exhausted by a succession of inquiries, and had been judged by the late Parliament, and by the country at large. In 1870, they had a Royal Commission which reported on the whole question. Next, they had a Committee of that House in 1879, which sat in two Parliaments. He laboured on that Committee, and he never went through a heavier or more repulsive piece of work; but it was work undertaken from a sense of duty. The Commission presented two Reports—the Report of the majority and the Report of the minority, the latter being his. The Reports were antagonistic in every paragraph. He appealed to the late House of Commons, and on the 20th of April, 1883, he succeeded in carrying, by a majority of 70, a Resolution by which the House disapproved of these Acts upon moral grounds. In consequence of that Resolution, which was accepted by the Government of the day under the present Prime Minister, the system of compulsory examination had practically ceased to be in operation in this country. That suspension of the operation of the Acts was, however, only regarded as a temporary expedient, and the late Government of his right hon. Friend felt and acknowledged the obligation to do something more. They introduced first one, and then another Bill, each absolutely repealing the Acts, but also containing clauses to which a great many who had devoted the greatest amount of time to the subject felt very strong and conscientious objections. Partly because of those objections to those clauses, but mainly from the pressure of Public Business, the Bills were not pressed through the House. But, at the close of the last Session, a discussion took place, and the view was expressed, both from the Treasury and the Front Opposition Benches, that the question was ripe for some solution; but it was thought fitting that it should be left to the new Parliament; and now he brought it before the new Parliament, and asked for some definite legislation on the subject. He objected to these Acts in a threefold manner—upon moral, constitutional, and hygienic grounds. For many years past he had undertaken in that House, and elsewhere, the painful burden of bringing forward the statistical argument to prove that which he believed was the hygienic failure of the Acts. On that occasion he would not go into the statistical question how far the Acts had or had not fulfilled the objects for which they were passed, for he believed that on the two former grounds public opinion was overwhelmingly on his side. Neither did he intend to enter upon the hygienic argument, for he did not think the House would stoop to consider that part of the question, because hon. Members had come to their own conclusion upon the matter on different and higher grounds. He thought that the public were of opinion that if the Military and Naval Authorities of this country were desirous, as they ought to be, of diminishing the amount and severity of disease in the Army and Navy, it behoved them to find other means for this purpose than those which had been adopted under these Acts. Means must be found which would not sin against the principle of liberty and law, and which would not have any of the objections which most of them had found against the policy and principle of legislation on the subject. There were only two principles between which Parliament must take its choice—the principle of freedom, and the principle of the Acts, which was that of compulsion. Parliament must choose between those two principles, for there was no half-way house. It was a false doctrine to suppose that the principle of compulsion in this matter could be accepted without producing some effect upon this particular vice. That effect would be to stimulate and increase its amount. He knew something of the progress of opinion with regard to this subject in the Services. A sense of discipline kept officers and men silent; but he was certain that there had been a growth of opinion in favour of the principle which he advocated—the principle of freedom, instead of that of compulsion. He asked the House to determine in favour of the principle of liberty, and, above and beyond all, to do so because the principle of compulsion in its action upon the public mind and upon the minds of those who were most concerned in the matter tended to give a sanction, and therefore a stimulus, to that vice which was the cause of disease which all were desirous of diminishing. He thought that the House would arrive at a conclusion upon this matter upon constitutional and moral and religious grounds. In the campaign against these Acts he had never sought to obtain a mere tactical advantage, for the objects which he and his Friends had in view were far higher than the mere repeal of the Acts. That object was to rouse the public mind to the degradation and the crime which resulted from the growth of this particular vice. That crime had been successfully dealt with by the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which was the outcome of their 17 years' agitation. It was they who tracked the Belgian traffic, which led to the appointment of the Lords' Committee; and nobody could say that the Criminal Law Amendment Act was not acting effectually in exposing, as well as repressing, crime. More than that, they wished to raise the moral tone of the country; and in that they had succeeded. Associations for promoting social purity had sprung up all over the country, and in all the churches of the land men's minds had been awakened on the subject. That was in consequence of their agitation, and part of its justification. He had a firm conviction that when the House had repealed the Contagious Diseases Acts, when they had turned their minds to the better and true belief that vice was capable of diminution, and that law and government ought to be on the side of virtue, and not on the side of vice, they would all be conscious of a great relief, and of a sustaining and well-grounded hope; and he believed that a general raising of the moral health of the community and of a spirit of true manliness would abide with them, and be their justification and reward. He begged to move the Motion which stood in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866-1869, ought to be repealed."—(*Mr. Stansfeld.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.) said, he was sure that the House would agree with him in recognizing the clearness with which his right hon. Friend had, as was usual with him, put before the House the case for this Motion, and the temperate tone with which he had dealt with the subject. Fortunately, it was not necessary for the House to re-argue the point upon which the late House of Commons pronounced its judgment on April 20, 1883. He said this was fortunate, not only on account of the inherent unpleasantness of the subject, but because it was a subject which, so far as it depended upon medical details and hygienic theory, the House of Commons as an Assembly was little fitted to discuss. At that time, three years ago, the House was in full possession of the facts. A strong Select Committee had sat for several years, and had collected a great mass of evidence. The arguments for and against the practice of compulsory examination were urged with an unusual degree of zeal and fervour, because it was a peculiarity of this subject that, to the astonishment of plain people like himself, it seemed to supply both to the upholders and to the assailants of these Acts a sort of new religion. At any rate, the House had the benefit of a full exposition of all the facts and arguments on either side, and it pronounced a decided judment upon them. He believed that the great majority of those who contributed to that decision were not actuated by any high-pitched theory in the matter; but they asked themselves this question—Granted that some benefit has been proved to the health of our soldiers and sailors, and to the condition of the towns to which the Acts apply, is the advantage so gained worth the cost? And when he spoke of cost, he did not mean the expenditure in money, but the grievous hurt to the sentiment and instinct and conscience of a great part of the nation. Thereupon the practice of compulsory examination was abandoned; and he ventured to say that it was impossible that any Government or any House of Commons should revive it. And his right hon. Friend now asked why they should retain on the Statute Book provisions which were in disuse, and which were disused, not because it was temporarily inexpedient to put them in operation, but because a majority of the House of Commons, and, probably, in his (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's) opinion, a still larger majority in the country, condemned and repudiated them. So far as the Government was concerned, it was a matter of course that they should support the Motion of his right hon. Friend, because, in 1883, shortly after the decision of the House to which he had referred, the former Liberal Government brought in a Bill providing for the absolute repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, so that this was no new opinion of theirs. That Bill was not proceeded with, having met with strong opposition, owing to a new proposal it contained, that although there should be no compulsory examination, yet if a person voluntarily entered one of the hospitals, there should be power of detention until thoroughly cured. It was not the intention of the present Government now to renew a proposal to that effect. It would be regarded, on the one hand, with great jealously, on the ground that the powers given might be abused; and, on the other hand, there was no very high estimate formed of the effect on the health of the Army and Navy of such a system, if standing by itself. But then it would be asked of the Government—and the question would be addressed with personl directness to himself, who had an immediate responsbility to that House for the efficiency of the Army—"Are you content to leave things as they are? Are you so satisfied with the information supplied to you that you will take no steps to secure the health, both moral and physical, of our soldiers?" His answer was "No," he was not. He was not content to see them left exposed to the evils which now surrounded them; but he feared that they would remain so exposed until these Acts were repealed. The figures supplied to him undoubtedly showed, as they might expect, that there had been a considerable increase of disease following the suspension of compulsory police action in the protected districts. He found that the admission to hospitals, which averaged 49·6 per 1,000 during the years 1873-82, rose to 110·0 in 1883, and had been 138·0 in 1884, and (estimated) 142·6 in 1885. Similarly the proportion of men constantly sick was 3·87 from 1873 to 1882; 8·66 in 1883; 12·41 in 1884; and 11·79 in 1885. The House would thus observe that there was a great leap up in 1883, but that since then the rate of increase had not been sustained. And it was a singular fact that, in stations not under the Acts, the progress of disease appeared to have followed, though not in the same degree, the same course. In those stations, the ratios per 1,000 had been for the 10 years before 1883, for 1883, for 1884, and for 1885, of admissions, 121·0, 188·8, 160·0, and 184·4; and of constantly sick, 8·97, 15·81, 14·01, and 13·75 respectively. He thought it right to state these figures to the House; but, knowing the keenness of the controversy, he left it to hon. Members to draw their own deductions from them. The main fact before them was this—that the country had pronounced against State interference in this matter. Some hon. Members might not like or approve of that decision; but they must deal with it as a fact. Another fact was, that one of the effects of any intervention of the State always was that it strangled local and individual effort; and they might be sure that so long as the direct action of the State was merely suspended, and the chance remained of its being again put in motion, the localities would fail fully to undertake this duty. It was to the localities that he looked for a remedy for this great evil; and he was sure that their public spirit and capacity of looking after their own affairs were quite equal to the task; and, to put it plainly, it was only according to one's knowledge of human nature that they should see them maintain a passive attitude so long as it was possible that the work might be done by the exertions and paid out of the pocket of the State. It might be said that it was unfair to place this duty upon the inhabitants of the garrison towns, because the Government created in them an abnormal condition of society by bringing to them a great number of young men, and, therefore, the Government were responsible for the results. But would the garrison towns be pleased if the garrisons were removed? Did not they derive their importance and a great part of their commercial prosperity from the great naval and military establishments; and was it too much for the Government to say that they must take the rough with the smooth, and as they had the benefits so they must deal with the evils arising from the presence of large bodies of soldiers and sailors among them? There were two separate branches of this question. There was, first of all, the question of order and decency in the streets and houses of a town. Since 1883, in such towns as Portsmouth and Plymouth, the state of things in this respect had been deplorable. But this had been not owing to the suspension of the Acts, but owing to the withdrawal of the Metropolitan Police engaged under the Acts. They had done ordinary police work; and why should Portsmouth, or Devonport, or Dover have their streets kept in decent order at the expense of the general taxpayer, when the large towns of the North of England and Scotland had completely fulfilled this duty for themselves, and at the expense of their own ratepayers? If these Southern towns lacked powers under the law as it at present stood to deal with this great evil, Parliament would no doubt be willing to help them. In the second place, there was the humanitarian side of the question. It would be most lamentable if the local hospitals which had been maintained under these Acts, and in which, whatever evils might be associated with them, thousands of poor women had had some alleviation, were to be closed. He felt sure that the localities would be ready to support these humane institutions, and they might have some assistance continued to them from public funds under reasonable conditions. So long, however, as the Acts remained, neither would women resort to the hospitals, dreading as they did the consequences, nor would the municipalities and local communities be ready to exert themselves in the maintenance of decent order or in the support of hospitals. Hence it was that, in the interests of decency and health and humanity, as well as of political consistency, seeing what had been done in 1883, he should support the Motion.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton), in rising to move, as an Amendment, to add to the Motion the words—

> "Due provision at the same time being made for the continued maintenance of hospital accommodation, with adequate treatment of women voluntarily seeking admission and medical care,"

said, he hesitated to accept the doctrine that an improved state of morality had resulted from the operations of the organization of which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stansfeld) had spoken; but he fully recognized and acknowledged the earnestness and consistency with which the repeal of the Acts had been advocated by the right hon. Gentleman; and he hoped he would accept the Amendment, which would bring the controversy on this very painful subject to an end. He doubted, however, if hon. Members had considered the far-reaching consequences of that repeal to generations yet unborn. It must be borne in mind that the Acts were passed to meet terrible evils that could not be allowed to exist in a civilized country without a legislative attempt at remedy. The present Lord Aberdare, when Home Secretary as Mr. Bruce, received a Memorial in favour of the Acts, signed by 2,500 physicians and surgeons, including the chief practitioners of the day, many ministers of religion, matrons of hospitals, and many other persons of experience had borne testimony to the beneficial working of the Acts; but he agreed that there was a feeling in the country that these benefits had been obtained at too high a moral cost, that there had been an appearance of making vice easy for men, and he was not surprised at the support the right hon. Gentleman had received. But, if the Acts were removed, should we fold our arms and do nothing for those unfortunate women in garrison towns, reduced to their wretched state, to some extent, by the action of the State itself? With the compulsory clauses eliminated, there were other provisions under which women could be admitted and retained in hospitals until they were cured; and there were military and naval hospitals for the purpose supported by £16,488 voted in the Estimates. The State provided for the relief of diseases such as small-pox and cholera; and these poor women had a special claim, in that they fell victims to the consequences of the State keeping together large bodies of men in a state of enforced celibacy at a time of life when their animal passions were strongest, and they were least able to resist temptation. Voluntary local effort would not meet the case. If the work was to be done at all, it should be well done; and he maintained there was as much reason for keeping women in the hospital against their will until they were cured, as for the similar treatment of patients afflicted with any infectious disease; and he exhorted the Government to have the courage of their opinions. He put his Amendment on the Paper, recognizing the prejudice against the Acts, because the country had a responsibility of which it could not divest itself by talking of the gain to a town from having a garrison. No shallow pretence would excuse the State shirking its duty and shutting the hospital doors against the poor, suffering women who came for help, leaving them to die like dogs in the street. He believed that even in this country, when the real facts of the case were put before them, they would recognize their responsibility, and refuse to sanction such repulsive and inhuman conduct. He believed also that the women of this country would recognize their responsibility to provide for the relief of their poor fallen sisters by some means more certain and continuous than voluntary effort. In that belief he moved his Amendment to the Motion, and he trusted that the Secretary of State for War and the Mover of the original Motion would accede to that very reasonable proposition. If the right hon. Gentleman would consent to accept the addition, he and many others, he was sure, would support the Motion as thus amended.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle), in rising to second the Motion, said, that he desired to speak to the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for the Honiton Division of Devonshire (Sir John Kennaway). They could not, he thought, rid themselves of the responsibility that would still remain upon them when these Acts were repealed. We should still be left then with these unfortunate creatures not only in the streets of our garrison towns, but of other towns as well. It was desirable, then, as a matter of humanity, that something should be done to relieve their sufferings; but it must, however, be recollected that this question did not merely affect these unfortunate women, but that we had to deal with a disease which spread itself to unborn and innocent generations. Therefore, it was our duty to do what we could to put a stop to the progress of disease. Assuming that we adopted the voluntary system in the treatment of these women as to the vice from which it arose, there was, perhaps, no better way of checking it than the one which had been indicated by his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War. The officers of the Army had of late been doing a great deal with respect to the soldiers in regard to providing them with more amusement and more occupation for their time; and, probably, we must look to these means, and to the recruiting of a better class of men, and to keeping the soldiers out of the haunts of vice to a greater extent than had hitherto been the case. Then he believed the treatment they received, and the influence brought to bear upon these women in the hospital to which they resorted voluntarily, would have a good effect in inducing many of these poor creatures to lead better lives. The State, he could not conceal from himself, had a great responsibility in this matter from the fact of its creating an unnatural state of things by bringing together a large number of young men in garrison towns and keeping them there in a state of celibacy. He would, however, leave the matter of the future control of those hospitals for future discussion. It was sufficient for his present purpose to say that a great deal of good could be done in the voluntary hospitals contemplated by the Amendment. Then poor women would come voluntarily into these hospitals, where they would not only be medically treated, but they would be placed under kind supervision, and would, it was to be hoped, be led by the influences there exerted upon them to lead better lives; and they might even, in many cases, be restored to their friends. Those who had looked into the state of our garrison towns knew that the state of the streets would be very different from what they were if the authorities did their duty. Unfortunately, they did not. He concluded, however, that the Municipal Authorities of those towns were bound to act for the improvement of the state of the streets. With regard to the establishment of hospitals for voluntary resort, he would not limit them to garrison towns. He thought that in every town hospital accommodation should be provided by Boards of Guardians or other authorities for the reception of these ununfortunate women. Those hospitals ought to be kept up, and, if placed under the charge of a godly matron, might do much moral as well as physical good. But he looked to an improvement in the moral tone of the Army and Navy to effect that change for the better which was so earnestly to be desired. He would conclude by seconding the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words "due provision at the same time being made for the continued maintenance of hospital accommodation with adequate treatment of women voluntarily seeking admission and medical care."—(*Sir John Kennaway.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. PULESTON (Devonport) said, he did not propose to occupy much of their time in what would virtually be thrashing a dead horse; but he could not consistently allow the present opportunity to pass without touching upon one or two points in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Stansfeld). The right hon. Gentleman said that the Prime Minister had said that these Acts were passed *sub silentio* 17 years ago; but at that time Mr. Gladstone was himself Chancellor of the Exchequer, and would, as such, have to pass the Estimates for carrying them out. Since then they had had many opportunities of discussing the Contagious Diseases Acts, the merits or demerits of which were well threshed out in the Committee to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred. That Committee sat three years, and resulted in a majority and a minority Report, the former signed by 10 and the latter by 6 Members. The right hon. Gentleman preferred the latter Report; but he (Mr. Puleston) did not see why it should be entitled to greater authority than the Report of the majority. In that Committee, and subsequently in that House, these Acts were manfully supported by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the present Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) and the present Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Acland), and he was glad to see both those Gentlemen in their places that night. He could only describe the figures given by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War as startling. The publication of such figures rendered it unncessary for him to quote the statistics showing the condition of Devonport during the last three years as compared with the condition of the town during the three years immediately preceding the action of the

House in 1883. The Acts ought not to be allowed to lapse, because their tendency was in the direction of suppressing juvenile vice, and because they contributed to the preservation of order and decency. The Select Committee that had inquired into the subject had reported that the objects of the Acts were good, and that they had, according to the tenour of Memorials from Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Devonport, been the means of relieving great suffering, and had afforded many young girls, who were just falling into crime, the opportunity of returning to a proper life. Statistics had shown the great damage that the withdrawal of the operation of the Acts had brought about; but their opponents had said that their statistics were cooked and unreliable. He (Mr. Puleston) wished to give those who differed from him on the subject credit for conscientious motives; but they declined to extend the same tolerance to those who differed from them. They claimed for themselves a monopoly of good intention. He admitted that public opinion, as represented in that House, was now opposed to the Acts; but the public little knew how effective they had been in promoting morality. Before the Acts were passed they had endeavoured in Plymouth and Devonport to improve the moral aspect of the towns. Some persons said it was their duty to do so; and he could say that the people in his district had done all that they could to discharge their duty in this respect. But they failed, because local effort, as proved by former experience, unassisted by the strong arm of the Government, could not cope with the evil. If the wishes of the inhabitants of the garrison towns were to be completely disregarded—if even the modest Amendment of the hon. Member for the Honiton Division of Devonshire was to be refused—a chaotic state of things would ensue, fraught with much absolute cruelty. He had lately received a letter from the Town Clerk of Devonport, who wrote—

> "None of the supporters of the Acts in this town have altered their opinion as regards their beneficial operation; on the contrary, their opinion has been confirmed in every particular."

He (Mr. Puleston) was alarmed at the prospect before them, if they were to rest seriously upon the statement made by the Secretary of State for War; for the worst form of the disease had increased not only in cases, but in virulence. He believed that was the experience of not only the Plymouth and Devonport people, but that of the inhabitants of Portsmouth as well. He hoped still that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would induce the Government to join him in accepting the Amendment before the House. It would, in some degree, compensate for the repeal of the existing Acts.

SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) said, as the Representative of a garrison town, he also hoped that the House would accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Honiton Division of Devonshire, although he knew that the entire repeal of the Acts was favoured by the House and the country. He (Sir William Crossman) could himself speak from a personal knowledge of Portsmouth, for many years before the Acts were thought of, and he could only say that before the Acts were passed the streets of Portsmouth and Portsea were a disgrace to any civilized land. While the Acts were in full operation those streets were respectable again; but since the Acts had been suspended they were as bad as ever. This was not due, as had been stated, to the action of the Metropolitan Police, but largely to the operation of these Acts. It was not now the time to go into hygienic matters connected with these Acts, and therefore he would only say this—that if the years 1880-2, when the Acts were in full operation, were compared with the years 1883-4, when they were suspended, it would be found that disease had increased by at least 50 per cent. He did hope and trust that some indulgence would still be afforded to the hospitals in the garrison towns in the shape of a sum of money, and that the House would accept the Amendment. He was surprised that the Government should be consenting parties to the repeal of the Acts, and he must oppose the Resolution.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) said, he assumed that the Government were prepared to accept the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Sir John Kennaway). [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] Well, he had assumed it, because it entirely tallied with the speech of the Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Gentleman had clearly, and in the most distinct manner, informed the House that it would be, in his opinion, a most lamentable thing if the hospitals were closed. What he (Lord George Hamilton) wanted the Government to undertake was that these hospitals should not be closed; and he had hoped that the Amendment of his hon. Friend would meet with unanimous approval. Until the Local Authorities had been approached, with a view to maintaining and supporting these hospitals, it clearly was the duty of the Government to be responsible for their maintenance, although he did not understand that any such promise was given by Parliament; and he thought he could show that it was the bounden duty of the right hon. Gentleman and all who thought with him to support the Amendment. Probably not half the Members of the present House were present at the debate in 1883, when the compulsory powers under the Acts were suspended. The Acts contained two powers—namely, compulsory examination, and a provision for the maintenance of hospitals. On the occasion of the debate of 1883, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) pointed out that he did not propose to interfere with the maintenance of hospitals. That statement, of course, had a great influence in the House, and enabled the right hon. Gentleman to carry his proposal to suspend the compulsory powers of examination under the Acts. The then Secretary of State for War made use of words to the same effect; and therefore these two right hon. Members had pledged themselves, as far as he could see, to support the proposal contained in the Amendment of his hon. Friend. As to the hygienic effect of the suspension of the Acts, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld), in his speech, always assumed that these Acts had not tended to prevent disease. Many persons accepted that statement, and it was on the strength of that statement that the compulsory powers were suspended. But what was the real result? When he (Lord George Hamilton) was at the Admiralty, he was supplied with information which showed that there had been a great increase in disease of the most virulent kind. His experience during the six months had convinced him that the suspension of these Acts had been a great evil. Under these circumstances, he trusted the House would insist upon having security that the work now being done by the hospitals would be continued.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, the provision in the Acts was one which, in the first place, did nothing to insure the treatment of these diseases in hospitals supported by the public. It was a permissive power that the Secretary of State might provide, and then it was specified what should follow if he did provide. The contention of his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War was that the matter was best dealt with by the discretion of the Government and the House; that the provision in the Acts, as it now stood, did not carry with it any operative effect; that the Amendment proposed, for the first time by Act, to establish this principle in a manner fettering the freedom of the House; and that they should rather continue as they had done, without change, the subventions which had been hitherto granted, than to hamper themselves by introducing into an Act of Parliament provisions of a positive character in a matter which, in their opinion, it was better to leave open. Their proposal practically was that they should resist the Amendment, because they thought the footing on which the matter now stood was a wiser and a better one.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) said, he was sure it was not the intention or the wish of his hon. Friend (Sir John Kennaway) to establish any new principle into this matter. All he desired was that provision should be made for the maintenance of those existing hospitals which were now paid for out of money provided by Parliament. His hon. Friend did not understand from the Secretary of State that any such pledge was given. They understood him to point out that, in his opinion, and in that of the Government, this work should be undertaken by the Local Authorities. What reason had Her Majesty's Government for thinking that any of the Local Authorities would undertake it? If they would not do so, were Her Majesty's Government prepared to bring in a Bill to compel them? If it was to be understood from the speech of the Prime Minister that Her

Majesty's Government would maintain the hospitals if Local Authorities did not undertake to do so, his hon. Friend would be satisfied; but if they could obtain no such pledge, he hoped his hon. Friend would take the sense of the House.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN regretted that anything he had said had given rise to misunderstanding. The view of the Government entirely accorded as to the general principle they sought to lay down with his hon. Friend opposite. They were of opinion that every reasonable and proper assistance should be given towards the maintenance of these hospitals, and he believed that the whole House was of that opinion. He must, however, say that he thought that the duty primarily fell on the Local Authorities, and that the requirements of the case would be entirely satisfied if they reverted to the practice which prevailed before the Acts were introduced, and if a subsidy were voted by the House and handed over to the Local Authorities under certain reasonable conditions. The main principle was that the hospitals should be maintained by the localities, and the Government would assist them; but as long as these Acts remained on the Statute Book the Local Authorities would not accept the responsibility of maintaining them. He did not wish that the freedom of the House should be weighted; that any provisions of the sort proposed should be laid down in an Act of Parliament; or that a Resolution should be passed pledging the House of Commons. But, as he had said, they were willing to express an opinion that a subsidy of some sort should be given, and that the whole of the burden should not be thrown on the localities.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) said, that the Amendment did not require the Government to impose a charge upon the House by Act of Parliament. What it said was that it was the duty of the Government, which had maintained those hospitals in the past, to make adequate provision for them as regarded the future. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that as soon as these Statutes were removed from the Statute Book it would not be incumbent on him, or on the First Lord of the Admiralty, to make any provision for these hospitals. There would be no engagement on his part; and if the House did not accept the Amendment it would be open to him to say that he was not bound. In all probability the hospitals would not be maintained by the Local Authorities, who would say that it was the duty of the Government to maintain them.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said, he wished to make a practical suggestion, and that was that the Government should assure the House that until the Army Estimates of next year were introduced they would continue the maintenance of those hospitals. [“No!” *and cries of* “Divide!”] The hon. Members who called so loudly for a division had no knowledge of previous debates, and very few of them had any practical experience of these hospitals; but, considering the serious nature of the issues involved in the question, he appealed to the Government to allow the hospitals to be continued.

Mr. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said, there was one view of this question which did not seem to have been considered; and it was that in the event of the Acts being repealed, and on the Government consenting to adopt the Motion, it must be expected that there would be applications from many parts of the country where large numbers of soldiers were gathered together, and where there were hospitals supported entirely by voluntary contributions, for donations. In Newcastle, which adjoined the division of the county of Durham which he had the honour to represent, there were something like 2,000 soldiers; but there had been no contribution from the Government towards the support of the hospital there. If the House adopted the Motion, and the Acts were repealed, he begged to give Notice that he should make an application to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the hospitals in Newcastle.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 131; Noes 245: Majority 114.—(Div. List, No. 35.)

Main Question put.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866-1869, ought to be repealed.

GROUND RENTS.—RESOLUTION.

MR. SAUNDERS (Hull, East), in rising to move—

> "That no system of taxation can be equitable unless a direct assessment be imposed on the owners of Ground Rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations, or other improvements, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes,"

said: Mr. Speaker, since I gave Notice of this Motion it has come to my knowledge that a large number of hon. Members are interested in the subject, and I sincerely wish that it had devolved upon some hon. Member of more experience and ability than I possess to bring it under the attention of the House. Relying, however, upon the kind indulgence of hon. Members, I will do my best to make my observations as clear and as concise as possible. I think it will be admitted that the time is opportune for the discussion of this subject. Local Government is a subject which is about to be considered—with regard to the Metropolis the Coal Duties are about to expire, and it will be necessary to determine whether they should be renewed, or some less oppressive mode of taxation be introduced. With regard to the National Exchequer, we are informed that the Expenditure having been very large it will be necessary to devise some means for supplementing the present taxation. A Royal Commission, which has recently made a Report upon the Housing of the Poor, says—

> "Your Majesty's Commissioners are of opinion that until some reform is introduced which shall secure contribution to local expenditure from other sources of income received by residents in the locality, in addition to the present rateable property, no great progress can be made in local improvements."

There cannot be a doubt that the present mode of assessment for local improvement leads, in a large degree, to a paralysis of industry. That has been referred to in the extract from the Report of the Royal Commissioners which I have read; and I may illustrate the fact more precisely by a reference to the case of Dublin. In that city, as in many other places, a large scheme of drainage is necessary in order to preserve the health of the locality. At present a large amount of disease and death results from the absence of that system of drainage. It is estimated that £400,000 would be required to put the system into good order. The expenditure of such a sum of money would add to the value of property in Dublin to a much greater extent than the amount of the expenditure. Abundance of capital awaits employment; numbers of labourers are desirous of work; and why, therefore, should a difficulty arise in carrying out so desirable an object? The difficulty comes in this way—that one class of people would have to pay the cost, while another class of people would benefit by the expenditure. The ground landlords of the City of Dublin will not be called upon to make any contributions to the improvement; and, therefore, the cost of doing it falls upon the working classes and the tradesmen, who have merely a temporary interest in the houses they occupy, and the whole advantage comes to those who contribute nothing to the rates. In one instance, a landlord in Dublin receives from land something like £20,000 per annum, in the shape of ground rents, and yet he will not be called upon to contribute a single farthing to the expense of this main drainage, if it is decided to carry it out. I have been surprised, in the investigation I have made, to find to what an immense extent the cost of houses in London has been increased by the enormous sums which are paid for ground rents. Ground rent generally begins, as we know, in the suburbs, by the builder desiring to erect houses upon a field, which the landlord graciously permits him to occupy, if he consents to pay something like five, or, perhaps, 10 times the amount of the previous rent; in such cases I believe it will be found that, on the average, the ground rent is about 15 per cent of the total house rent. As we approach the centre of London the proportion increases with very great rapidity; and I find within the City itself the ground rents are, in some cases, three or four times as much as the house rent. In one instance which has lately come under my notice, a ground rent paid for a small plot of land, within a stone's throw of the Royal Exchange, is £1,300 per annum. The total expenditure which could be made on that plot of land with advantage did not exceed £7,500. The position, therefore, is this—that the expenditure of £7,500 is charged with a ground rent of

£1,300 a-year; in addition, the rates amount to £450; thus there is an artificial burden of £1,750 per annum. I think it would be difficult to find a corresponding instance of such an enormous burden being placed upon industry; and it is no wonder that the Royal Commissioners inform us that improvements cannot be carried on unless this system be altered. A lease which will fall in in the course of a few days in the West End will, I am told, increase the income of the present landlord from £40 per annum to £8,000 per annum. The evil, therefore, is practically increasing, because the ground rents are coming into fewer and fewer hands as the leases fall in; and consequently the arrangement becomes more and more burdensome, and more and more disturbing of that condition of society which we should like to see prevail. It increases the depression of the poor and adds to the wealth of the rich. I will not trouble the House with any details, and unfortunately there are no statistics — official statistics — available which will enable me to state the amounts of ground rents throughout the Metropolis as compared with the total rents. The rating of the Metropolis amounts to £32,000,000 per annum, and I have taken some pains to ascertain what proportion of ground rent is paid in various localities. The result of the investigation convinces me that something like one-half of this £32,000,000 represents ground rent—£16,000,000 per annum represent, I believe, the value of ground rents in the Metropolitan area. That amounts to £16 per annum per family as a burden of taxation for the benefit of a small number of landowners. I know it may be said that the working classes pay but a small proportion of this taxation. But such is not a correct representation of the case. The fact is that the working classes bear an undue proportion of this burden. We must not measure it by what is taken from the working classes. We must measure it by what the working classes are prevented from obtaining; the enormously repressive influence upon industry which this system entails subjects the working classes to a severe competition, which altogether prevents them from realizing those earnings and those wages which they might obtain if industry were not so burdened and restricted. It is, as I said, what they are deprived of we have to consider more than what they have actually to pay. Now, Sir, various measures are proposed for lessening these evils, which have long since been recognized. We have a Leasehold Enfranchisement Bill and also a Town Holdings Bill, both excellent measures in their way, and both necessary, I believe, for the due adjustment of the difficulties we are considering. But unless these measures are accompanied by a readjustment of taxation the evils of which we complain cannot be removed. Even if you make the occupier of the house the freeholder of the ground rent the difficulty still remains, because the burden of the cost of the land under the present system goes with it. I think these points are always better illustrated by reference to facts, and I would mention what has happened in a case in East Hull, where the opening of the Hull and Barnsley Railway and Dock has added very much to the value of the land, and made it necessary to build working-class dwellings in the neighbourhood of the dock. This land, which a short time ago was worth only £100 per acre, has now been sold for building purposes at the rate of £3,000 per acre; and, of course, the builder has to add that cost to the rent which he extracts and must obtain from the working classes. The working man, therefore, pays that amount; and it is almost as burdensome in the shape of the freehold as in the shape of ground rent, although by having a freehold he may be able to prevent some future evil. We have recently had brought before us the case where the construction of a harbour has increased the value of rent from £10 per acre to £1,000 per acre, and it seems reasonable that these values, which are so rapidly increased by the exercise of industry on the part of others, should be made to contribute to taxation. Fortunately I am not dependent on any opinion I might express or any argument which I might use, for this case has been dealt with most ably by a Royal Commission, who have expressed their views as follows. They say—

> "Land available for building in the neighbourhood of our populous centres, though its capital value is very great, is probably producing only a small yearly return until it is let for building. The owners of this land are rated, not in relation to the real value, but to the

actual annual income. They can thus afford to keep their land out of the market, and to part with only small quantities, so as to raise the price beyond the natural monopoly price which the land would command by its advantages of position. Meantime, the general expenditure of the town on improvements is increasing the value of their property. If this land were rated at, say, 4 per cent on its selling value, the owners would have a more direct incentive to part with it to those who are desirous of building, and a twofold advantage would result to the community. First, all the valuable property would contribute to the rates, and thus the burden on the occupier would be diminished by the increase in the rateable property. Secondly, the owners of the building land would be forced to offer their land for sale, and thus their competition with one another would bring down the price of building land, and so diminish the tax in the shape of ground rent, or price paid for land, which is now levied on urban enterprize by the adjacent landowners; a tax, be it remembered, which is no recompense for any industry or expenditure on their part, but is the natural result of the industry and activity of the townspeople themselves. Your Majesty's Commissioners would recommend that these matters should be included in legislation when the law of rating comes to be dealt with by Parliament."

It is a very common contention in reference to ground rents that a bargain has been made between the landowner and the builder by which the builder on taking the land is to pay all the rates; and it is said that the landowner lets his land cheaper than he would otherwise do in consequence of that condition. Exactly the reverse is the fact, as the Commissioners clearly point out. Being altogether relieved from the burden of taxation on the enormous values which arise from the exercise of the industry of other people, the landowners are enabled to demand the extreme prices they obtain. If a man were called upon to contribute to the local taxation as the value of the property rose—and I would say also to Imperial taxation—instead of getting a higher price he would be content to obtain a much lower price. It is because the landowners can hold their land without taxation under the present unjust conditions that they are enabled to impose on the community these tremendous burdens in the shape of ground rents. Now, it may be very fairly asked, What is the proposal that underlies my Motion? If I correctly understand the disposition of this House, they are not very much inclined to be influenced by abstract principles; and legislation is governed, and, perhaps, properly governed, rather by average opinion than by abstract ideas. At the same time, it is a fair question what principle underlies my Motion, and it is clearly and distinctly this—that the value of property imparted by the community should be taxed in preference to taxing the value created by the industry of individuals. I am quite aware that in reference to land extravagant propositions are made, and, no doubt, extravagant propositions will continue to be made; but I think no proposition could be so extravagant as that we should allow things to remain as they are. I know perfectly well that in making the proposed change difficulties and hardships will arise. It sometimes happens that it is easier for the moment to continue upon a wrong course than it is to correct it. When the Irishman fell down the ladder, he said it was not the fall that had hurt him, but the stop which he got; and so it frequently happens that a continuance in a wrong course is much easier for a time than to put a stop to the evils it brings about. There must be occasional instances of injustice; but does no injustice arise from the present system? Is there no hardship to the working man? No hardship to the tradesman? Only this morning I had a case brought under my notice, in which a gentleman, being obliged to extend his business premises, and to add very much to the building, was called upon to pay, on the expiration of his lease, instead of £350 per annum, a rent of £950 per annum; and it is not always within the option of a man as to whether he makes additions to his building or not. Necessity often compels him either to relinquish his business or to make additions for which he has no legal claim on his landlord, and in that way landlords obtain enormous sums, altogether beyond those which we discover in any Returns. Then, again, they are continually receiving fines for renewal of leases; and it is not an uncommon thing for a landlord to take over a large sum on account of repairs, and then to leave the repairs to be done by the incoming tenant; so that, as a matter of fact, the landlords actually receive a very much larger amount than appears in any shape or form upon the record. I should like to mention an instance in reference to these improving values to which the Royal Commissioners have referred. The point is one of very great importance in connection with this question. Within four miles of this building, at Herne Hill Station, there is an estate of 100 acres, which, I find, has improved in value during the last 25 years at least £75,000. It is worth now twice as much as it was then, because a railway has been opened alongside of it, and the neighbourhood has been developed. The owner has done nothing whatever, nor has he any intention of doing anything. He excludes everybody from these lawns, or fields, and even the rate-collector is not allowed to enter his gates unless he has a written order. I have passed that field nearly every day during the last 12 years, and I have never seen a single soul upon it. The pale children peer through the railings when the grass is green, and gaze wistfully upon it; no tiny hands ever gathered buttercups from those fields; the cowslips which grow there perish where they grow. Under what circumstances is that man allowed to make a desert in the midst of the Metropolis? Why, Sir, he has a profit of £3,000 a-year in doing so. That property has increased in value, as I have said, at the rate of £3,000 a-year. I applied to the rate-collector to find out what contribution he makes towards the rates, and I find that the proprietor pays £76 per annum out of his £3,000 profit towards the rates. Now, why is he allowed to make that profit? Why is he allowed to exclude the whole world, and to do so on terms entirely different from those imposed upon other people? Supposing that ground were occupied by labourers' cottages or tradesmen's houses, the tiny gardens and small courts they would occupy would be charged upon the rates £2,500 a-year instead of £76. Why should that difference arise? In politics patience is not a virtue, and I hold that we have no right to submit to this state of things, nor is it likely that as the public become more enlightened and intelligent—as education is extended—it will be submitted to with that degree of patience with which it has been borne hitherto. The Prime Minister has spoken of this patience as ignorant patience, and it is a correct description of it. With enlightenment that patience will no longer continue. We have therefore to discover some method by which we can correct these evils, and we find very great difficulty in all the suggestions which are arranged or intended for their cure—the cure of these evils of poverty and want which stare us in the face on every hand. Let us see if something cannot be done to prevent them. I believe that if that £16,000,000 which is now taken from the industrious classes and given to the idle classes were properly subjected to taxation we should find a recovery of industry and an improvement in the condition of the people far beyond our most sanguine expectations. My proposition is simply this—that we should make a separate valuation and assessment of land and buildings. The two things exist, and the value of each arises under totally different circumstances. The value of the land arises from the enterprize of the community, by the industry of the community and the progress of the population. The value of the house arises from the labour which may be exercised upon it, by adding brick to brick and plank to plank; and it is my opinion that we should tax chiefly that value which arises independently of the industry of the owner. Instead of that we tax exclusively the value which the builder imparts, and to the creation of which the owner, who gets the ground rent, usually contributes nothing whatever. I know it is asserted that that value bears rates and taxes; but the owner does not pay rates or taxes, with the exception of the Income Tax. If an illustration were wanted, it would be found in the fact that if a house is destroyed—if a house is burnt down—the rates and taxes cease, and yet the ground rent goes on. The ground landlord gets his payment under all circumstances, and yet the taxation depends entirely on the building. That is a state of things which I think ought to be altered. The remedy I propose is one which cannot be called a violent remedy, and it would remain with practical politicians to consider how it should be introduced. It would be unreasonable for me to weary the House with suggestions in the shape of details. We must first of all recognize the necessity of applying the principle. The introduction of this principle would, I believe, very speedily bring about that amelioration in the condition of the people which we all so much desire. I am quite sure it is not necessary for me to appeal to the feelings of the House by narrating the sufferings of the working classes in the Metropolis and elsewhere, because we are all more or less acquainted with those sufferings, and have all of us a sincere desire to remove them. We are desirous, if possible, to discover some method by which they may be removed without the dislocation and disturbance of society. I believe the method which I have suggested may be as gentle as the sunrise and as beneficent in its results. I beg to move the Resolution of which I have given Notice.

MR. MOULTON (Clapham), in rising to second the Motion, said, it was much more far-reaching in its object than anything contemplated by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes. The principle he wished to press upon the House was one that went to the root of the incidence of local taxation, and must, he thought, commend itself to the sense of fairness and love of justice of all who considered the condition of our town population. He traced the growth of the evil to the tendency of population to leave the country districts and become congested in the towns. No one could study the statistics on the subject without coming to the conclusion that the rise in value caused by the congestion of population was many times as great as the increased expenses necessitated by that population. In other words, the owners of the land in towns reaped advantages far greater than any expenses to which they were put in order to render tolerable the life of the community in those towns. The conclusion followed that that rise of value which was solely due to the presence of the population on such land should bear a fair share and a large share of the necessary expenses of the community in respect of their towns. He submitted that the present state of our large towns was only paralleled by the condition of a farm in Ireland under the worst possible tenure, where the landlord refused to do one single atom of the improvements, where the tenant had to do them all, and had no fixity of tenure. What they proposed was a very simple and, he thought, practicable remedy. They maintained that the value of any property in a town was due to two sources—it was due partly to increased local value given to the land on which the houses were built, and partly to the value of the houses. He contended that it was fair that a percentage of the increased value given to the land by the population itself should be taken by the locality in order to pay the expenses of the community necessary to make the town habitable and comfortable. The enormous streets made through London at the cost of many millions that had been paid for by the loans that still pressed upon the City; the cost of artizans' dwellings rendered necessary by the very fact that the rents were so high that the artizans could not purchase the land to build their houses upon—aye, and even such expenses as lighting and water supply, and others which tended to make it possible to live in the town—he maintained that all those might fairly be taken out of the increased value given to the land by the presence of the town itself. It was necessary that there should be some simple method of collecting these taxes, and the system of separate assessment of land and houses afforded the means. The rate on the land would be paid by the occupier and deducted by him from his rent. There were several objections which would probably be put forward as to this proposal. In the first place, it might be objected that it was not justice. He maintained that not only was it perfectly just, but that it was the only just method of dealing with the question. Then there was the question of existing contracts. It was true that the proposal involved an interference with freedom of contract. Up to this time it had not been illegal to make a covenant that all rates and taxes should be paid by the occupier, except with regard to the landlord's property tax for Imperial taxation. He maintained that it was necessary to apply the same principle to these land taxes as was adopted in the case of this last-named tax. It was of no use passing an Act of Parliament which could be rendered futile by a clause in a deed, and the power of compelling a landlord to pay the taxation should be made absolutely inalienable. Although such a covenant between the landlord and the tenant in the future would be invalid, they could not render it invalid in the past; but there was no reason why any land in the future should be settled on any other principle; the only difference would be that in any tenancy settled after the passing of the Act the tenant would be able to deduct the tax from his rent. In that way the landlord would be made to pay the tax out of the rent which he would receive for the land. He was aware that even this proposition had been disputed, and it had been said that even supposing that the principle were enforced the landlord would recoup himself by overcharging the tenant, and that, therefore, the thing would come to the same as at present. That was not so; there might be a re-adjustment of the present rents; but if the landlord were thus to be made to pay directly, it was impossible that any increase of taxation could be got out of the pockets of his tenants. Another objection was upon the opposite line—namely, that the present state of things worked very well, and that the landlord ultimately paid the taxation. He had thought over this point very carefully, and it seemed to him to derive its origin from that happy sort of confidence that many people had that things shaped themselves all right in this world, and that ultimately the person who ought to pay did pay. But that was only a pleasant delusion. They should consider the case of the great ground landlords of London, who, during all the time that such vast improvements had been made in London, had been receiving undiminished the ground rents for which they had stipulated in the beginning. It might be said that these improvements were of benefit to the occupiers of houses themselves; but when their leases fell in they would not in any way be recouped for the expenditure. The money which was being paid for the permanent improvement of London had come out of the pockets of the present occupiers, and in no way out of the pockets of the present ground landlords. The argument was sometimes brought forward that, on the whole, under the present incidence of local taxation, the rich paid their share and the poor paid theirs, inasmuch as the amount of a man's rent afforded a rough but practical criterion of his wealth. There was no more cruel fallacy than this with regard to tradesmen. The position of a shop was part of a tradesman's trade-plant; it was necessary for him to have his shop in a place which customers would be likely to frequent; and it was, therefore, grossly unfair to take the rent of his shop as a measure of his wealth. But this present system of taxation also had the effect of stopping expenditure of a useful nature. This had been shown in the late School Board election. No money was better spent than that spent upon education; but one could not help feeling a deep sympathy with those who had said that London was crushed with rates, and that however good education was they were unable to pay the rate required for it, because they, as occupiers, were bearing on their shoulders the whole weight of taxation. The present system, again, tended to leave the land of towns in the hands of selfish non-resident landowners, who had nothing to do with the locality and no immediate interest in its improvement, and who only looked forward to a future when they would get swollen rent-rolls for which they had done nothing. Surely land in the towns ought to be held by people in real touch with the wants of the community. He was quite willing to give those ground landlords full representation in the expenditure of the rates; and he thought that as soon as they had got out of their present unwholesome frame of mind and their habit of thinking that others were to work and expend for their benefit they would be quite willing to make their fair contributions and thus assist in improving their properties. There was a strong feeling in the country that the present system was most unjust. It had lately been shown, from the Returns of Imperial Taxation, that the Irish people were unduly taxed; but that was not because they were Irish, but because they were poor, and poor in England were also overtaxed in precisely the same way. But this inequality was a matter only to be proved by the careful study of statistics. It was otherwise in the case of ground rents. Working men might find it difficult to understand the exact effects of direct as compared with indirect taxation; but they could see that millions were annually going out of London untaxed, and that those who were reaping the greatest benefits from the improvements in London were just those who paid nothing towards them.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That no system of taxation can be equitable unless a direct assessment be imposed on the owners of Ground Rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations, or other improvements, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes."—(*Mr. Saunders.*)

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he could not discover from the speeches of the hon. Members for Hull (Mr. Saunders) and for Clapham (Mr. Moulton) the real meaning of what they actually wanted—whether they complained of the enormous value of land in the great towns as a grievance, or of the system of apportionment of taxation between owners and occupiers, or whether they desired to relieve the occupier altogether at the expense of the owner. He (Mr. Addison) thought they could not mean the last of these, because the revenue to be derived under the changes they proposed were to be enormously increased. There was only one way in which the revenue from local taxation could be increased, and that was by the taxation of vacant land which was kept in hand by the owner in order to increase its value; and in that he thought they might all agree. The Motion, however, dealt with the land and the houses combined, and he maintained that every penny received as ground rent paid its full share of local taxation, and it came to a mere matter of convenience of collection or apportionment. But there would be an enormous difficulty in assessing these values. To attempt to apportion all the values between the different owners would be to work out as difficult a sum as could possibly be found. It was the same thing as to collection. One of the greatest advantages in taxation was that the rates should be collected easily and simply. Then there was some extraordinary grievance of the working man referred to. It was really irritating to hon. Members on his side of the House, who were really the friends of the working man, to listen to the assumption of hon. Members opposite that they were doing any good to the working man by this wild, unjust, and impracticable scheme. Not only had the working man been brought into this question, but the hon. Members who proposed and seconded this Resolution actually appealed to hon. Members from Ireland, that in some mysterious way this question of the apportionment of ground rents affected them. The remarks of the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders) with regard to apportionment of taxation were merely an oratorical device to support a proposition which was practically unsound. He was quite sure that if in any mysterious way hon. Members from Ireland were affected they were very well able to take care of themselves; but not one of them had yet brought forward a Motion for the taxation of ground rents in the City of Dublin and its suburbs. The fact was that the entire Motion seemed based upon a misconception—namely, that the full taxes were not paid upon the product of the land which was covered with houses. He thought they were fairly and properly arranged under the present system.

MR. M'CULLOCH (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said, the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Addison) spoke as if the subject resolved itself into a question of the incidence of taxation. They had heard a good deal about the incidence of taxation from the landlords on the other side, whose champion the hon. and learned Member had made himself. What hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House wanted was an exchange, not from industry to land, but from land to industry. There he differed very materially from the hon. and learned Gentleman, and he was bound to say the intelligent working men of Scotland knew well the incidence of taxation; they knew that as long as the owner of feu-duties escaped taxation their industries within the cities would necessarily be more heavily taxed. He was surprised to hear economists say that the law of supply and demand could thoroughly rule rent and taxation of land, because, first of all, they had a narrow and fixed area in the land, and while a further monopoly had been created by handing it over to a few, they found the remaining population every day expanding, and feeling every day more and more the pressure of that land monopoly. They need not tell him that it did not affect the people of London or the people of Glasgow. He could give them the instance of one hon. Member who sat on the other side of the House who drew £50,000 a-year in feu-duties from the City of Glasgow, and who did not contribute one penny to the rates. Did they mean to say the working men of Glasgow did not know enough of political economy to decide that the less this feu-owner paid the more they had to pay? Was not that a proposition which the simplest workman could understand? He asked what was the true feature for taxation? It was not the works of man's hands, nor the necessaries, nor even the luxuries of life; but land itself was, to his mind, a far more feasible feature for taxation, because it was not due to man's efforts, but to the Creator's. He believed it was urged that this was a matter of free contract, and he admitted that the over-lord and the owner or occupier who bought might make a contract; but they could not anticipate the taxation which the Legislature could impose upon any class or description of property. Consequently any such contract must of necessity be one that would not hold, because it did not take into consideration the legislation which imposed all taxation, and thus that freedom of contract could at any time be attacked. He could give one instance when it was so dealt with by that House. That was when the school rate came into operation in Scotland. Many holders of land were in the middle of their leases, and they asked how this tax could affect them. The Legislature said—"We tax you or your holding, independent of any contract you may have had in the past." Hon. Members asked why people congregated in the towns? They come to towns to take advantage of the division of labour, the co-operation of capital, and the application of the invention and discovery with which the 19th century teemed. And what was their reward? They were more heavily taxed. Their little bits of land on which their houses stood were burdened by taxation, until the population became congested in the centre of the towns. Those who held land outside took advantage of the pressure within, and held on by the land outside, because it would become more valuable. Thus the pressure was intensified; thus they required a Royal Commission to inquire into the housing of the poor. In his opinion there was not the slightest logical objection to the taxation of these grounds rents, and he could assure hon. Members that the working men had their eye upon this as one of the sources whereby not only Imperial but the local Exchequer could be relieved. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Addison), who last spoke, stated that the true friends of the working men were on the Conservative side of the House; but he would ask, if that were so, how was it that the 12 Members who had been returned to represent the interests of labour sat on the Ministerial side, and why was he (Mr. M'Culloch) himself there representing an industrial division of Glasgow? It was because he knew something of the Land Question, how it pressed on the working men, and because he was not afraid to attack these feu-duties and other injustices under which the industrial classes of the City of Glasgow were at the present moment borne down. In this, as in many other aspects of the Land Question, they had to begin, and they could begin, at no better place than the ground rents; and when they had thoroughly studied the Land Question, and brought their wisdom to bear upon taxation, then he believed, and not till then, would industry and labour have their true reward.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, that he supported the Motion, not on the ground that the Local Authority lost anything, but because the rates were most unjustly divided between the owners and occupiers. It had been suggested that the ground landlord and the occupier were able to make an arrangement among themselves. What was meant, he supposed, was that the exemption of the ground rent from rates was taken into account in fixing the ground rent. But the net result of the evidence taken by the Committee of 1870 was that the rates actually existing when the lease began were taken into account in fixing the ground rent, but that there was no margin left for any increase of rent. The great hardship of the case, and that which had occasioned the present outcry in a large degree, was the enormous increase of rates which had taken place within a comparatively recent period. But here it was important to distinguish between rates which passed under the denomination of "non-remunerative"—that was, rates which went towards relieving the poor and supporting the police—and rates of a remunerative character, such as drainage rates and general improvement rates. It was only in this remunerative expenditure that the ground landlord was directly interested. If they compared the year 1841 with the year 1868 they had this result—that in 1841 the rate in the pound was 2*s.* 7*d.*, and in 1868 it was 2*s.* 6¼*d.*, showing a difference in favour of 1868. That meant that, with regard to the relief of the poor and other expenditure of a non-remunerative kind, the burden on the ratepayers was practically the same in 1868 as it was in 1841. But if they took into account the remunerative expenditure, and compared the two years he had mentioned, it would be found that there was a difference as against 1868 of 9*d.*, which meant that the ratepayer in 1868 paid 9*d.* more in the pound for local taxation than the ratepayer in 1841. The point to which he wished to draw attention was that this difference of 9*d.* in the pound was mainly devoted to remunerative expenditure, which was to be met by the increasing value in property. That remunerative expenditure had gone on increasing since the year 1868 even to a larger extent than it did between 1841 and 1868. Having regard to the arrangements made between a ground landlord and his lessee, the latter bound himself to pay all taxation. But the rate for remunerative purposes was not really a tax at all. If, therefore, the remunerative rate was not in equity, whatever it might be in law, in the nature of a tax, then it did not fall within the covenant by which the lessee bound himself to pay all taxes. The principle that the ground landlord should pay at least a portion of the improvement rate had been admitted by our laws as being just; but the law did not, unfortunately, prevent him from contracting himself out of his liability in this respect. He contended that a fair share of the local taxation should be borne by the ground landlord. Under the existing arrangements a considerable portion of the burden fell upon the shoulders of the working classes. He should like to illustrate this by referring to the state of things in his own constituency. In Bethnal Green there were enormous blocks of model dwellings, reaching almost as high as Babel in the futile effort to escape from the rapacity of the ground landlord. Sir Sydney Waterlow had taken 819 cases of tenants who lived in these model dwellings, and had found that their average earnings were 28*s.* 8*d.* per week. The average rent of these tenants, he found, amounted to 5*s.* 8½*d.* per week, of which no less a sum than 8¾*d.* was local taxation. He wanted to impress upon the conscience of the House that there were thousands of his constituents, bread-winners, earning wages in many cases not more than 20*s.* per week, who were contributing 2½ per cent of their entire livelihood to local taxation. He submitted that there was no section of the community better able to bear the shifting of taxation than owners of ground rents such as the territorial magnates of London, who, in the language of Mr. Mill, had grown rich in their sleep. He quite agreed that it was not desirable that ground rents should accumulate in a few hands; and he wished to direct the attention of the House to the fact that the great Insurance Companies had of late years been buying up London ground rents at a very rapid rate, one to the great extent of £1,100,000. These Corporations had neither a soul to be saved nor a body to be kicked, and it was very undesirable that ground rents should accumulate in their possession, and that they should become the owners of the land we live in. He did not think it was consistent with public policy that owners of land should be able to contract themselves out of liability for local taxation for a period of 99 years or any other period, while they continued to draw an annual revenue in the shape of ground rents. He should vote for the Motion, because he believed it would strike a blow at the leasehold system of building. It seemed to him that, by exempting ground rents from direct taxation, the law did as much as it could to encourage the system of building leases, which he believed to be a most mischievous system. He urged all those who wished to secure the enfranchisement of leaseholds to support the Motion.

MR. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) said, that he believed it would be well that some expression of opinion should be given upon this Motion from the Irish side of the House. In Ireland they felt even more keenly than did the hon. Member (Mr. Saunders) and his Friends the grievance which existed in regard to this matter. In introducing the Motion, the hon. Member (Mr. Saunders) had referred to the necessity which existed in Dublin for an extended system of main drainage. The difficulty which stood in the way of its being carried out was the very large sum necessary, which, it was stated, would be

£400,000. Now, he (Mr. P. McDonald) was of opinion that the sum necessary would be nearer £500,000. It was also stated that though this main drainage was necessary, the Dublin Corporation were not in a position to carry it out, as it was only the so-called ratepayers—in other words, the occupiers—who were liable to pay the rates, while the landlords would have got off scot free. As a member of the Dublin Corporation, he might be permitted to explain to the House that this was only one of the difficulties. The area of taxation was limited to within the narrow ring of the canal which surrounded Dublin; and the outer districts, which would be still more benefited by the extended system of main drainage than even Dublin, would not have to pay one penny contribution to this much desired work. On the outside of Dublin, and immediately adjoining it, was a very large and important urban district called Rathmines. Those who resided there, although participating in all the benefits of Dublin, paid nothing whatever towards the rates of the city, and would pay nothing whatever towards the drainage of the city. There was another district, also, adjoining to which he wished to draw attention—the Pembroke Township. The hon. Gentleman had alluded to the justice of the ground landlords paying their share towards any improvement that might be made within their district or upon the estates they held. Now, he was personally aware that in that township very large drainage works had been directed to be carried out; but who would have to pay for them? Not the lord of the soil—the Earl of Pembroke—but actually the very persons who were building houses and residences on the land. He considered—and he was sure that many hon. Members opposite (the Radical Members) would agree with him—that this was a state of things which should be altered. This could not be denied, more especially when it was considered that the lord of the soil took all the advantages of the improvements at his disposal by enforcing exorbitant terms upon those building upon his property. The agent of the lord of the soil, Mr. Vernon, who was also one of the Land Commissioners, was Chairman of the Pembroke Local Township Board. In that capacity, as Chairman, he had a powerful voice in directing the improvements to the township, all of which, as a matter of course, resulted in increased value being given to the land, increased rents being charged, and Mr. Vernon, of course, obtaining a largely increased amount from the percentage accorded him by the Earl of Pembroke for collecting the rents on the estate. He would like to tell the House how the predecessors of the Earl of Pembroke obtained this property, which brought in to the Earl of Pembroke £30,000 per annum, and for which he only paid the Corporation of Dublin £10 a-year. It was obtained under a lease granted by the old rotten Corporation, now, he was happy to say, replaced by a Corporation which was not purchasable. The lord of the soil invited the lessors, the members of the old Corporation, to go and dine with him. A draft of the lease was then read to them, and immediately after the reading dinner was announced, and all other business was stayed for the time being. After dinner, when of course it was not expected that the diners would be in a very clear state of mind for the transaction of business, another and a different lease was submitted to them, which they signed in ignorance of its real character. He did not state these facts simply on hearsay, as any hon. Member would find the whole matter embodied in the official Report submitted to the Corporation by their late law adviser, Mr. Morgan. This was the manner in which the citizens of Dublin had been defrauded of their property by the substitution of a spurious lease. There was another suburban district near Dublin known as Kingstown. He had been a member of the Kingstown Township Local Board. He might say that while a member of this Board he had done his best to oppose the consideration of certain main drainage works, but unsuccessfully. They might ask why he obstructed these works? The reason was that he saw the improvement would benefit the owners of property; but it would have to be paid for by those who built upon the lands. This he considered exceedingly unjust. If the owners of ground rents or lords of the soil had their property improved by the construction of such works, why should they not pay a certain due proportion in the shape of rates for the improvement of their estates? There was no reason why the entire amount of the taxes should be borne by the leaseholders and occupiers. He, therefore, quite agreed with the Mover of this Motion that the lords of the soil should be, in justice and equity, obliged by law to contribute a certain portion of the rates. Lord De Vesci and Lord Longford held property in Kingstown, where a large number of buildings had been erected on comparatively short leases. These leases were now expiring, and within 10 or 15 years they would fall in to the landlords, and all that had been expended would be confiscated. He denied the right of these ground landlords to rob the people in this way. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member who moved the Motion (Mr. Saunders) that such a thing had no justice or equity in it, and should be reversed by law. He believed that in London the same interest was felt in this question as was taken in it in Dublin. Great ground landlords, like the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Norfolk, and others, were doing in London what Lord De Vesci and Lord Longford were doing in Kingstown. The law, therefore, in his opinion, should be changed, and the lords of the soil compelled to contribute a certain proportion to the local expenditure, and take their share in the payment of municipal rates.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) said, he was of opinion that the Resolution was closely bound up with the question which he had taken up in place of his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst). It was also connected with the whole question of town dwellings; and he considered that it ought to be referred to the Committee which was to investigate the terms of occupation and the compensation for improvements in town holdings. His hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders) had only asked for a juster distribution of fiscal burdens, and he had not shrunk from attacking the whole system, which was fraught with grave danger to the moral and material condition of the great urban populations of this country. In most of our industrial centres the system of leasing houses was mere legalized spoliation. It was known in no other country. From inquiries which had been made he was led to think that Sir John Walsham's opinion was open to doubt, and that even in France the system had no existence. In this country, at the expiration of a lease, the whole of the improvements and every penny spent by the tenant in adding to the comfort and the convenience of his holding went necessarily into the pockets of the ground landlords. Again, in London, it was the practice to mulct the tenant of the goodwill of his business. He knew of a tradesman in Bond Street who sunk the whole of his capital in a prosperous business which it was impossible for him to remove to another place, and the landlord, on the renewal of the lease, obliged him to rebuild, fined him £1,000, and doubled his rent. In effect, the landlord said—"I will blackmail you to the extent of your goodwill." In Regent Street a tradesman of older standing was lucky enough to own the house adjoining his place of business, and consequently he was able to resist successfully the attempt of his landlord to share his trade profits. Neither the landlord nor the ground landlord paid a single penny for the improvement of the neighbourhood in which their property lay. It was said that the lessee willingly took upon himself all the burdens which might in time be imposed; but hon. Members who used that argument forgot that of late years the rates had sprung "by leaps and bounds" beyond all possibility of forecast. The main drainage rate, the School Board rate, and the Fire Brigade rate had all been imposed without it being possible for the tenant in many cases to have foreseen, on entering into his contract, that he would have to meet those demands; and it should be borne in mind that the whole incidence of the rates had been on the occupier only. The evidence given before the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor pointed to the iniquities committed by the jerry builder and the middle-man; but he thought it was to be regretted that the vials of the wrath of the Commissioners should have been poured on those classes alone. They were only the outcome of a bad system. The men who ultimately benefited by the extortion of the middle-man, and who put into his pocket all the money spent by the ratepayer, was the ground landlord. He regretted that the Resolution of the hon. Member for Hull was not confined to the fact that ground rents were altogether exempted from local taxation. He thought that the two matters mentioned in his hon. Friend's Resolution were more or less distinct from each other. The London Vestries, which were not, as a rule, very go-ahead Bodies, had been forced to face the actual facts of things. In St. Pancras they had an instance of a borough which was entirely mapped out into great estates, and on one or two of those estates the rights of the landlord were exercised harshly and cruelly. One man was in possession of property in that parish, the annual rateable value of which amounted to £200,000. A century ago St. Pancras was a mere tract of fields, and hon. Members could realize the enormous difference when these fields were covered by 25,000 houses, and remembered that the whole of the improvements in the roads, drainage, and public works had been effected by the labour and the money of the occupying inhabitants. Yet the whole of this unearned increment was shortly to go into the pockets of the ground landlords, who probably went into the borough but once in their lives. The question would also be found to be a burning one in most of the great provincial towns. It was said that they wished to violate freedom of contract. He was willing to admit that, literally and formally, these people took upon themselves the obligation. By the terms of an ordinary covenant a tenant agreed to pay all charges existing or hereafter to be imposed, except landlords' Property Tax. He should like to know whether freedom of contract was anything better than a phrase when the whole land of a place was in the hands of one man? The would-be occupier had often no option, because the conditions of his life compelled him to live in one place; and, therefore, he had to take land on the terms which the ground landlord chose to exact. Leaseholders were grateful to the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) for his speech which he made on the second reading of a Bill in 1884, when the noble Lord declaimed against the bloated estates of the Whig Dukes, and said that the concentration of land in a few hands was a great cause of Communism and discontent. It was said that ground rents had become a frequent form of investment. Matters of taxation were settled by the balance of convenience; but it was impossible not to see that the balance of convenience had been all through on the side of the owner of ground rents. Those who said that tenants would in the end pay all rates forgot that the great increase of local rates had occurred within the last 30 years, and that no remissions of rents by ground landlords had been recorded. No ground landlord had paid his share of the School Board rates that had come into existence in 1870. It had been said that there ought to be an entire re-assessment; but the ground landlord might be called upon to make a return similar to that required from the tenant under the Valuation Act. There was nothing revolutionary or abnormal in saying that they ought to contribute, in proportion to the interest they had in the soil, towards local charges and local improvements by which their property was benefited. Trade and industry suffered from the present system, and it would continue to suffer so long as they continued to allow men to reap where they had not sown of the fruit of other men's labour. In the hope that the House might come to an unanimous conclusion, he submitted an Amendment that the question of imposing direct assessment upon ground rents be referred to the Select Committee on Town Holdings.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the first word "on," in line 2, in order to insert the words "the question of imposing a direct assessment,"—(*Mr. Lawson,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby) said, that they had had a most interesting debate upon an important subject. He did not think that he ever heard a question of equal difficulty more aptly and satisfactorily discussed. The speeches of the the Mover and the Seconder of the original Resolution were full of knowledge and of argument; and the House had heard with great satisfaction the contribution just made to the debate by one of its youngest Members (Mr. Lawson) in a speech of great ability and knowledge. He was not going to discuss the general subject at any length; but he rose for the purpose of supporting the Amendment, which he knew would not be unacceptable to the Mover and Seconder of the original Resolution. They had established a strong *primâ facie* case for inquiry into the rating of ground rents, as distinct from what they had called house rents. They had contended that those who derived large benefits from great and populous communities should themselves contribute to the cost of promoting the well-being of those communities. No man of common sense or justice could deny that proposition. Some might assert that the ground landlord did contribute to the payments made by the tenants; but if it were true that the landlord did contribute—of which he had a doubt—it would be very much better that everybody should know it, and especially the tenants themselves; and it would be extremely advisable that the rate should be separated, so that they should have a separate rate upon the ground and another upon the house rent, and so the distinct liability might be clearly known. He could not see how people could contend that if a rate was settled upon a long lease of 60, 80, or 99 years, and that after that ground rent was settled, and during a greater part of the period —perhaps during half-a-century of it—the rates were immensely increased, that that increased rate did not fall upon the tenant, and was shared in any degree by the ground owner. Having said that much, however, he did not desire to pronounce a definite opinion upon the general question or the method of dealing with it. In truth, the matter really fell within the province of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain), because it did, and must, form part of any plan which would have to be dealt with in a Bill on the subject of local government. The hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders) did not want to commit himself to any plan of dealing with the question; he was more concerned to lay a foundation of general principle than to undertake the responsibility of recommending any particular scheme. That in itself was an argument in favour of the general question going into Committee. He hoped it would be a strong Committee, on which would be men competent to deal with questions of this character. They would then be able to discuss the whole question, and consider and take evidence upon the various schemes for meeting and dealing with it. Though he had heard that night very vehement and strong condemnation of ground rents, he thought the House should remember that there were some circumstances of convenience attached to the system. In parts of the North of England people did not like ground rents, and would not be satisfied without the freehold, or something like it; but in the South of England people had been willing to accept the responsibility of building houses on long leases. In the House the provision of house accommodation had been favoured by the possibility of builders—he spoke not of jerry builders, but of men who built reasonably good houses—only acquiring land upon terms which would enable them to build houses. There were many builders who would not be able to find the capital to buy land as well as to erect houses; and thus populations were accommodated by the ground-rent plan upon terms which were convenient to the commercial conditions of the builders. Therefore the argument was not entirely one way upon that subject. But all these were matters which he thought might be very fairly considered before a Committee. He could not, and should not, advise the House to arrive at the conclusion that the system of ground rents was one which ought to be absolutely and unconditionally abolished. He hoped that the House would be disposed to adopt the view of the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson), and agree to refer this matter to the Committee already appointed to deal with a cognate subject.

Mr. GREGORY (Sussex, East Grinstead): I cannot help regarding this proposal as an indirect attack upon landed property. If the whole subject of the burdens upon real property were to be gone into, there would be no indisposition to meet the question on this side of the House; and if both personal and landed property are to be subjected to a fair treatment of taxation, I do not think that the landed interest will fare the worst of the two. With reference to the Motion immediately before the House, perhaps the House will allow me to point out what ground rents are and how they arise. They form the subject of an ordinary bargain—one man possesses landed property, and another man desires to build upon it; they enter into an agreement, and the one man parts with the possession and control of his property for the purpose of enabling another man to build upon it, who assumes absolute control and dominion over it, subject to the payment of a rent distributed over a certain number of years; he may be said, indeed, to pay a certain sum of money down, but for his convenience it is discounted into annual payments. Now that is what a ground rent is, and a ground rent is not subject to any contingencies. It is an exacted payment for absolute dominion over property extending over a term of years, on the condition that after the lapse of that number of years the whole of the property is to revert to the landowner. On entering into an agreement, the man who makes it contemplates all the conditions of it, and the man who contracts with the landowner for the building of a house and the payment of a ground rent knows perfectly well the number of years during which he will be required to pay that ground rent, pure and simple, and that he will also be liable to pay the rates and taxes during the period he has possession of the property. The man who builds also provides for similar contingencies if he sub-lets the house, and he contracts equally with the subtenant to reimburse him for the responsibilities he has incurred. This arrangement is a great convenience to a person building, because it saves him from having to pay down at once the full value of the land. The sum to be paid in the way of ground rent is to be paid free of all rates and taxes; and if any tax is to be levied in the future upon the ground rent agreed to be paid, the House may be sure that the landowner will take it into account in fixing the amount of the ground rent, and that eventually such tax will have to be paid by the tenant of the house. Nor is there any injustice in this. If a new drain be laid down, or water supplied, or cheaper gas, it is to the benefit of the immediate occupier of the house much more than to the benefit of the lessee, or of the ground landlord; and every ground landlord, or lessee under him, is perfectly aware that improvements of that kind, although they will benefit his property, will benefit to a much greater extent the occupying tenant. Ground rents are subject to Imperial taxation. They are subject to the Succession Duties, like all other property; and it is merely in respect of local burdens that they are exempt. I stand upon the terms of the Motion of the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders), and I maintain that, according to those terms, it would be a mere shifting of the burden *pro tanto* from the lessee on to the owner of the land. As I have already stated, it is entirely a matter of contract. All the contingencies are taken into consideration; and if the ground landlord had to pay rates and taxes there would be an additional charge in assessing the amount of ground rent. The value of the house is not affected by the ground rent or the rateability of the house, because the rate is on the house as it stands, and is altogether independent of any consideration with regard to ground rent. The rates are levied on the letable value of the house. So far as the owner of the ground rent is concerned, if he understood that he was to pay rates and taxes he would make provision for them in his contract. Something has been said about ground rents being absorbed into a few hands; but, in considering this question, it must not be forgotten that, as a matter of investment, ground rents are equally as valuable as Consols, and that large sums have been invested in the purchase of them at a low rate of interest. They are bought for the reversion which the purchasers are to acquire, and it would be most unfair to place an additional tax upon persons who have been encouraged to buy ground rents under the law as it now stands. Mention has been made, in the course of the debate, of the Prudential Office as a large absorber of ground rents. I do not know whether the hon. Member who mentioned the fact is aware that that is an Office which has been specially established for the benefit of the humbler classes. I believe that the Prudential has the largest number of small policy holders of any Office in the world, and they have invested considerable sums in the purchase of ground rents for the benefit of the working classes. Thousands of working men have become, through this Office, proprietors of ground rents; and to tax them now for the purpose of shifting the burden from the person who is now liable in order to place it on the shoulders of the owner would result in great hardship upon a most deserving class of people. Now, with regard to the present leasing system, I know a good deal, both by tradition and experience, as to how property is managed. Let me take property in my own immediate neighbourhood—I mean the Bedford Estate. I believe there never was an estate laid out with greater benefit to a large city. It has been laid out in large squares with short streets, and a great deal of the ground has been sacrificed for the purpose of securing the health and comfort of those who live there. And what is the result? The Bedford Estate forms one of the lungs of London, greatly to the benefit of the adjoining properties. The result of the building operations upon it has been that the houses now existing upon that estate are nearly as good as when they were originally built; and they have been re-let for a certain number of years, the tenant doing the necessary repairs, which are rather of an ornamental character than for the purposes of the fabric. Hon. Members talk of the abuses of this system of ground rents; but they ought also to remember the advantages which it confers. Other estates—such as the estate of the Duke of Westminster—have been laid out in a similar manner, with large open areas; and I venture to say that a good deal of that property would never have been built upon in the manner that it has if it had not been for the personal assistance given by the late Marquess of Westminster. If this assistance could not have been obtained, the consequence would have been that houses of an inferior description would have been erected, and the land would have been laid out in a manner prejudicial to the health and comfort of those who have to live upon it. I do not think that sufficient reasons have been given to induce the House to assent to the Motion, or even to send the proposal to a Select Committee. The Committee to which it is proposed to refer it has a large enough amount of work upon its hands without being required to consider this question. It is a question relating to a great principle, for it really involves the principle of taxing the unearned increment of property, as it is called; and, therefore, in the strongest terms, I protest against it.

Mr. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): Perhaps the House will allow me to say a few words on this matter from an entirely different point of view from those with which the question has hitherto been approached. I have the honour to be the Chairman of a Municipal Committee which has charge of, perhaps, the largest estate owned by any Corporation in this country, hardly excepting London. The Corporation of Liverpool is the owner of the reversion of nearly one-third of the City of Liverpool. It has some 5,000 leases on that property, and its income in the shape of fines, and income from renewals and rents, amounts to something like £100,000 a-year. Perhaps the House will allow me to state the experience I have have had in reference to the administration of that large estate. That property, where it is leased, is all leased under obligation by the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835 for terms of 75 years. We have no option; we cannot sell the reversion out and out; we are compelled to let it only on leases not exceeding that term of 75 years. The leaseholders are given by the Corporation the option of either paying cash for the extension of, or a full lease of 75 years, or of paying a sufficient sum of money cash down to secure the Corporation, and pay an annual ground rent as a commutation for the balance. If I understand the effect of the Resolution now under discussion aright it is that that commuted fine, which is commuted at something like 4 or 4½ per cent into an annual rent, should be made liable to local taxation. It would be clearly and manifestly unjust to the owner of that ground rent—for it really is a ground rent—to tax him on the annual value for local rates. He has given to the leaseholder the opportunity of paying the fine in cash or of commuting it into a ground rent. The leaseholder has found it more to his interest to keep his capital money in his pocket for building or other trade purposes, and to borrow, so to speak, the money from the Corporation, the owner of the fee simple, and to pay them a rate of interest on it. Where can be the justice of laying local rates on that which is really interest on the fine, any more than in laying local rates on the proceeds or revenues derived from Consols or Railway Stock or anything else of that kind? The advantage to the public in the matter is that if there is any unearned increment in that case, and there has been a large unearned increment through the growth of the town and the increase of its trade, it goes to benefit the ratepayers; whereas, if the Resolution were adopted and leaseholds compulsorily enfranchised, you would take that unearned increment from the ratepayers and hand it over to private individuals. Then we come to the advantages which are derived by the town from this system of leaseholding. Under the system the owners of the property—the Corporation in this case—are able to exercise a control over the character and the class of buildings erected in the town, and, further, they are able to secure that the buildings shall be a credit to the place, and that no tenant on the estate shall do anything to injure or depreciate the property of another tenant. Moreover, there are covenants in the leases by which certain trades are restricted to certain localities, or are prohibited in other localities, and we are thus able to assure to the holders of those leases that they shall remain in the quiet enjoyment of their properties without having a nuisance created next door to them. As to the value of the property, within the last 12 or 18 months, so much is that leasehold property esteemed by those who occupy it that the owner of one of the leasehold lots, having purchased the adjoining freehold, went to the Corporation and asked them to take the freehold off his hands and grant him a 75 years' lease of it. He preferred one leasehold tenement under the Corporation to having one-half freehold and one-half leasehold; and he put on that property buildings which cost him over £60,000. Let me give another instance. The Corporation of Liverpool desired to promote the improvement of the town and the erection of comfortable homes for the working classes. Two years ago they purchased an estate of 55 acres, and gave £150,000 for it. They ran streets through it which were broader than the bye-laws required. They carefully considered the selling terms of the estate. They considered it better first to offer the estate on lease on a fine for a sum of money to be paid down; but those who were experts in the matter of building houses said they would much prefer to buy the property if the Corporation commuted their fines into ground rents, as they could put up a better class of house if they had not to invest so large a proportion of their capital in the cost of the land. They preferred to put it in the house. Now, under the proposal made to-night, that system would be penalized by a local taxation that has not hitherto been imposed. If I had closed my eyes while listening to the tenour of many of the speeches delivered by hon. Gentlemen opposite, I should have imagined myself to have been in the midst of a German Socialistic Debating Society rather than in the House of Commons. I have heard a great deal this evening about persons reaping where they do not sow, and about balances of convenience. I want to know where the line is to be drawn between a man making a profit of the increment of value from shares or speculation in Stocks, and the natural increment of the value of his land? I have ventured to trouble the House with these observations, because I feel that if this matter is relegated to a Committee specially appointed to consider certain questions in regard to another and a different subject, much inconvenience will arise. I certainly think that this is a question which should not be brought to a Committee formed to consider another subject; but if it is to be dealt with at all, it should be dealt with in a different spirit from that in which it has been approached to-night; and I am strongly of opinion that there are larger interests—namely, the general interests of the public—involved in the matter.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): The question is not the leasehold system, but whether a large amount of property in London and other towns which escapes local taxation should bear its fair share of local burdens. The Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders) is that no system of taxation can be equitable unless a direct assessment be imposed on the owners of ground rent. My hon. Friend goes still further, and proposes that the owners of increased values—meaning, I suppose, other interests in property—should also be made amenable to local taxation. Now, Sir, at present local rates are imposed upon annual value, and not upon capital value; and the question is whether capital value should not also be taxed. While there are improvements and public works which benefit the present taxpayers and occupiers, who contribute in respect of annual value, there are also permanent and substantial and long continuing improvements which inure to the benefit of the property itself. The owners of property should, therefore, contribute to local taxation. It has been questioned whether the Committee appointed to deal with compensation for improvements and leasehold enfranchisement, will be able to consider also this question of the re-adjustment of local taxation. I think the Committee should be authorized to do so. There is a strong feeling in London that as long as local burdens are thrown entirely upon annual value and upon the present occupiers, it will be impossible to attempt those great improvements of which the Metropolis stands so much in need. If any authority were required for the proposition that ground rent and other property should be taxed, I would refer hon. Gentlemen opposite to an authority which, I believe, they, at all events, will not question. The noble Marquess who leads the Conservative Party, in his statement upon the Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners for inquiring into the Housing of the Working Classes, said—

> "Taxes from which outlay is drawn should be of a kind which all sorts of property should join in paying. There was no ground for charging such expenditure on the occupiers of land and houses only. Incomes of all kinds, whether they come from Consols or from Foreign Stocks, or debentures, ground rents, or mortgages, ought equally to bear such burdens."

That authority, which, I am sure, hon. Gentlemen will admit the force of, strongly bears out the contention which I am putting before the House—that the ratepayers of London who contribute in respect of annual value, have a right to call on the owners of property to contribute towards those permanent improvements, which are not only for the benefit of the present occupiers, but also of present owners and of future generations of owners of property—the landlords of the future who will inherit property of enormous extent and of enormous value. I cordially support the proposition of the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders), and I concur also in the Amendment of my hon. Colleague the Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson), to refer the matter to the Committee appointed to deal with improvements in towns and the leasehold question. I hope it will be a strong and representative Committee, and that hon. Members who are technically acquainted with the subject will be placed upon it. I trust that we shall obtain from the Committee a full and comprehensive Report, dealing with the whole question of local taxation.

Mr. DWYER GRAY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): I am of opinion that by far the most valuable contribution to this debate has been the speech delivered by the hon. Member for Lancashire (Mr. Forward), who has given us the example of that great town. In that case, the Local Authority has been fortunate enough, according to his account, to secure the ownership of one-third of the City of Liverpool. I do not know, however, whether it amounts to one-third in area or one-third in value — probably one-third in value; but the hon. Member has explained to us what has occurred in Liverpool. There, the Local Authority, representing an entire community, has been able to ensure for the community what is called the unearned increment of increased value of land due to the industry of that great and progressive community. We have been told that the revenue derived from that one-third of the value of Liverpool now represents £100,000 a-year, all of which is devoted to the public purposes of the town. I would ask hon. Members and the House to consider what would be the condition of Liverpool to-day if the Corporation of the town had not, by accident, been landlords to this large extent, and what would be the condition of Liverpool if, instead of owning one-third of the land of Liverpool and getting one-third of the unearned increment due entirely to the industry of the people, they had owned the entire property, and had secured for the community the increased value of the whole of the land. The hon. Member quoted the example of Liverpool as a reason why the House should not entertain the proposition of the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders); but I think the lesson to be derived from it is a totally different one, and the logical conclusion we obtain from the facts so clearly laid before us by the hon. Member for Lancashire (Mr. Forwood) is that we should consider the suggestion in the sense of my hon. Friend the Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders), or in the sense proposed by the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson). There is, to my mind, a certain amount of vagueness in the proposals of the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution. The hon. Member for Hull, with very great clearness, presented before the House the evils of the present system; and although I am extremely conscious of them, and, although as a Member of the Commission on the Housing of the Poor, my attention was drawn to the grievous suffering inflicted on the working classes by the existing system of land tenure in towns, I do not think it at all necessary for me to add anything to the force of what has been stated in that particular direction. But the hon. Member for Hull confines himself to the proposal that ground rents should be subject to taxation; but when the Seconder of the Resolution came to make his speech, he, with the instinct of the learned Profession of which he is a distinguished ornament, qualified the proposition of the hon. Member for Hull by saying that existing contracts must be respected, and it is only when the lease falls out that we must have an amended system of taxation to which ground rents are to be subjected. Now, I venture to say that if you adopt that principle the vote of the House will go for nothing, and it will be a mere nominal change signifying nothing. There may be two houses in the same street, side by side, one of which is held on a lease which is acquired after the amendment of the law contemplated by the Resolution, and the other with 75 years still to run. The occupier of the one would be relieved of his proportion of taxation, which would be transferred by the change to the ground landlord, while the occupier of the other, probably a competitor in trade, would be subject to taxation for 75 years. The hon. Member still further qualified his proposition; and I venture to think that if the proposal contained in the Resolution were carried out, the anticipations of its bringing about any considerable amelioration either in the condition of taxation, or of the working classes, would not be realized by the results. Except so far as existing leases are concerned, I do not believe that the proposed taxation would have any effect whatever. Of course, as far as existing leases are concerned, in the event of new taxes being proposed, the ground landlord, either in part or in whole, would have to pay them, You would relieve the existing occupier from new burdens that were not contemplated when the lease was granted, but when a new lease came to be made the sum which the lessee would be called upon to pay for the land would be made up of two factors—the rent and the taxes. Therefore, if you simply make an alteration in the law requiring the ground landlord to pay a certain amount of taxation, it would have no effect whatsoever except as regards existing leases. The moment those existing leases expired the ground landlord would be able to recoup himself for whatever portion of the taxation had been put upon him, by increasing the rent, because it is only fair to assume that this taxation of ground rents would only be in relief of taxation that would otherwise be paid, and, consequently, the existing evils would not be permanently touched. It was because I had convinced myself, although I am afraid that I failed to convince any other Member of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, that no such piecemeal legislation as that contemplated could be of any permanent effect in removing the evils which all of us acknowledge to exist, that I ventured to suggest a more radical remedy. The remedy I suggested was that every town should be placed in regard to the whole of its lands in the admirable position which Liverpool, by a fortunate accident, occupies with regard to one-third of that town. The arguments of hon. Members who have spoken in favour of the Resolution, if they are worth anything at all, go a great deal further than their conclusion. The kernel of the question is, who is entitled to the unearned increment? Who owns it all? Either the ground landlord owns none of it and has no right to take any part of it, or he holds the whole of it, and you have no right to take it from him. What I say is, that he who has created the unearned increment should own the whole of it, and that any shifting of taxation can be but temporary in its effect, and will give no permanent relief whatever. The hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders) has quoted numerous cases of the enormous increases in the value of land which have been made while the ground landlords were asleep. Some hon. Member has mentioned the Duke of Westminster's estates. I believe that that family came into the possession of those estates owing to a fortunate alliance on the part of an ancestor with some person who had a quantity of land then used for dairy farming. What was then worth a few shillings, or at the most a few pounds, is now worth as many thousands of pounds. But is his Grace the Duke of Westminster entitled to that increase of value? Does it not belong to the community who created it? I think it does; and the only way in which the question can ever be finally settled is by what is called a municipalization of the land—giving to the community represented by the Local Authority of the district the reversion of the property in the locality. Every town would then enjoy the same advantages which Liverpool now enjoys, and it would enjoy, for the benefit of the people, the unearned increment of the land. The Local Authority would then have a facile and effective means, not merely, as in Liverpool, of preventing disagreeable trades being established in undesirable localities, but of securing that the working classes should be housed in reasonable comfort and under conditions which would give them a chance of preserving their health and life. This House is frequently asked to pass laws to enable the Local Authorities to improve the sanitary condition of towns and make provision for the better housing and comfort of the poor. These two facts have been incontestibly proved — that there are hundreds of thousands of the working classes who are housed under circumstances in which decency, propriety, and even any approach to comfort, are practically impossible; and side by side with this fact, is the additional fact that there has been an enormous increase in the value of the land. This increase in value has been exactly in the same ratio as the increase of the misery and helplessness of a large proportion of the working classes. At present the landlords are actuated by no other motive than the capacity of the working classes to pay the rent imposed upon them. There is no doubt that rents do rise, and, therefore, the nominal increase in the earning power of the wage-earning class is completely neutralized by the power of another class to abstract so large a portion from them. I cannot see the reason of this question being exhaustively investigated by a Royal Commission, seeing that no action whatsoever has been taken by Parliament in reference to this portion of the subject, and I fail to see what result the hon. Member anticipates from a second investigation of the same facts. The Order of Reference must be wide to enable the question to be properly considered. It must not be confined only to the incidence of taxation, but must go deeper down into the question, what has been done with the unearned increment? And I think that the best plan, under the circumstances of the case, would be to refer it to an independent Select Committee. If the hon. Member restricts his Reference simply to the question of taxation, it is to be feared that the House will have two or three more voluminous Reports signifying nothing, or very little. I am perfectly ready to support either the original Motion or the Amendment, because, as has been stated by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Pickersgill), I believe we shall not in any way strike a blow at the system; and when we show that the community is entitled to this increase, and the system is shaken a little, people will come more and more to the conclusion that the community are entitled to relief in this matter. It is not so much that I anticipate any great result either from the original proposal or the Amendment that I shall support the general proposition, but because I believe that the ventilation of the subject will do an enormous amount of good. I am certainly surprised that no hon. Member has put the question upon a broader aspect—namely, whether any mere shifting of the burden of taxation can effect the object desired.

MR. A. C. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): I did not intend to intervene in this debate to-night, and I should not have done so if I had not noticed that so very little prominence has been given to the part of the Resolution which I specially favour—that part in which it is urged that a direct assessment be imposed "on the owners of increased values imparted to lands by building operations and other improvements." I believe that if permission were given to the lessee to deduct the local rates from the ground rents paid to the lessor, it would do nothing to reduce the amount of rents. I know this—that when I invested money in leasehold houses, I did so on a distinct understanding and on the distinct contract that those houses should bear all the local burdens. Those who have invested in ground rents have gone into their 4 per cent investments on the distinct bargain that those ground rents should be subject to no local burdens. I hold that there is no call for this House to intervene between us, and to relieve me of burdens upon which I distinctly calculated in paying the price, and putting upon ground landlords a burden which their contract distinctly excluded. A good deal has been said to-night as to the relief which such a proposal would give to the working classes. I deny that it would give them such relief. I know that if I were permitted to deduct the amount of local rates out of the ground rent I pay to the ground landlord it would not have any necessary effect whatever upon the amount of rent which I should exact from my tenants. If you are to have the reduced rents you must affect supply or demand, and the one measure by which you can increase the supply of houses is by the tax which has been proposed upon vacant land. Now, I happen to hold about 30 acres of vacant land in the neighbourhood of London, and upon that vacant land I pay not one farthing of local assessment or of Imperial taxation; and when I sell it at a profit I am told that it is not necessary for me to return it under the Income Tax. Now, I contend that this is an unfair immunity from taxation, and is a distinct premium offered to landowners to keep their land out of the market. I contend that if the State were to tax this land it would give to me and other landowners a great inducement to bring our land early in the market at lower rates than would otherwise be secured. I, for one, should not feel that the country or the Local Authorities were doing me any injustice whatever if they compelled me to say what I held to be the real annual value of the land, and to assess me upon it. I hold that it would be no injustice to me for them to say—"You have put a certain value upon your own land; we take it at your own valuation;" in the event of my assessing it at too low a price. By this means, a large additional amount would be brought into the Local and Imperial Exchequers; and the result would be that the owners of land would be induced to bring their property into the market at an earlier period and at lower rates.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER (Isle of Wight): I do not intend to ask the House to divide on the Amendment of the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) as to whether this matter should be referred to a Select Committee; but I should like the House to understand before they adopt the Amendment what it really is that is proposed to be referred to the Committee. We have had several very interesting and somewhat discursive speeches; but upon a question of so general and far-reaching a nature it would be well that the House should understand what amount of substance there is in the proposition put forward. I will not detain the House longer than I can help, and not longer than a few minutes; but before I sit down I think I shall be able to satisfy the House that the real question which lies at the root of the Motion of the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders) is the question of the incidence of taxation in general, and not of the taxation of ground rents. I must say that this debate has been amusing as well as instructive. Several hon. Members—notably the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson), who made a very interesting speech in which he ran full tilt at the landlords—appear to have spoken chiefly for the purpose of arousing the feelings of the House with regard to landlords. In the course of the debate we have heard such words introduced as "legalized spoliation." I want to bring the House back to the terms of the Motion of the hon. Member for Hull, and to see that we do not, under cover of this Motion, remit to a Committee a much larger subject, and one which is not within the fair scope and purview of that Motion. The Motion consists of two parts—the first having regard to the question of the direct assessment of ground rents. That question has been fully debated by hon. Members on both sides of the House, and I will point out what the outcome of it is. The hon. Member for Hull has suggested some scheme, the details of which he has not unfolded to us, whereby by taxing ground rents in the hands of the receivers of those rents the amount is to flow into the coffers of the Public Authorities. No doubt, that is a most desirable result for the Local Authorities if we could achieve it. No one can deny that ground rents are taxed; it must be admitted that ground rents do contribute to the local taxation; but it is complained that by the terms of the bargain between the landlord and the tenant the burden is borne by the occupier or by the person who pays the rack-rent. Now, I contend that the proposal of the hon. Member for Hull is simply an alteration of the burden by taking it from one person and putting it upon another; and if the House will bear that matter in mind for a moment I will endeavour to criticize the Motion in a friendly spirit. I have, on more than one occasion, had occasion to deal with these matters from a practical point of view. Let me, then, ask the House to consider the case of a man who is about to grant a building lease—say for 80 years—on an estate in London for which he gets £20 a-year in the shape of ground rent. So long as he receives that £20 a-year it is a ground rent. But suppose the ground landlord requires money, and he goes to the tenant and says—"Redeem the ground rent because I should like to have the cash." Supposing in that case the tenant bought the landlord's interest at 30 years' purchase, and the money was then invested in Railway Stock, or Debentures, or in Consols, surely in that case the hon. Member for Hull does not suggest that those investments are property which, under the terms of his Motion, is to bear its burden of local taxation; and yet it is equally a sum of money that has arisen out of the transaction between the landlord and tenant. Let me put another case. Take the case of a ground owner who is able to build a house on land which is worth £10,000. The ground rent would be, at 5 per cent, £500 a-year, and a building worth £10,000 upon it would bring in an annual return of £700; or 7 per cent against 5 per cent on the ground value, the united rents being £1,200. It is not denied that that would be a fair rental, and taking one property with the other, that it should contribute to local burdens, and be rated at the full amount of £1,200. At the present moment the Local Authorities get that full amount, but instead of being in two hands it is in one. It is said that there ought to be some increased assessment upon it in order to cover the ground rent. Now, suppose the owner himself had the land which was worth to him £10,000, and suppose he spent £10,000 to put a house upon it, would he not be fully taxed, if he were called upon to pay rates on a rental of £1,200 a-year? The Local Authority would have no right to charge him any more, and yet, because a man is not fortunate enough to build his own house upon his own property, but builds one on the estate of somebody else, in some way or other this land is to be further taxed, although the occupier is at present paying upon the full rent of £1,200 a-year. In the case of a man living in his own house, and upon his own land, you would put both the land and building together, and the occupier of that house and land, if the overseers did their duty, would be rated to the full amount. On what ground of justice could any difference be made? Why should that property be required to contribute towards local burdens if it happens to be occupied by the owner who gets the benefit of all public improvements, but lets somebody else live in it? I think that many hon. Members have not seen the difficulty, because they have not put the concrete case. There was one matter alluded to by the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Addison) of which hon. Members opposite did not see the point. Not only in Lancashire, but in other places, a man who has knowledge of what land is likely to grow into takes it for building purposes—say at £5 an acre—when it is only just emerging from agricultural land. He keeps it for five or ten years, and then lets it off for, perhaps, £15 an acre; and I know that on many plots of land there are ground rents which vary from £5 up to £100 or £200, which they become worth when the estate has been developed and is covered with buildings. Then on which of these ground rents is this taxation to be imposed? Is it to be upon £5, or £50, or £100, because in each case benefit has been received out of the increased value of the property? The hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders) has, no doubt, very excellent motives in his mind for increasing the income of the Local Authorities; but I am afraid that he has, to a certain extent, been bringing forward a subject for taxation which already is or ought to be fully taxed. I desire on this occasion to draw the attention of the House to the real way in which this question ought to be regarded. A great deal has been said by the Mover and Seconder of the Motion about a man getting the advantage of other people's money; and one proposition formulated by the hon. Member for Hull has been lost sight of in the more recent debate—namely, that the value of the property to be taxed is imparted by the community, and ought to be taxed in preference to the value imparted by the individual. I have not the smallest objection to the proposition in general terms; but let us endeavour to see what it means. I may put a test case which I challenge hon. Members to dispute. I will take the case of a Stockbroker in the City of London who takes a place in the neighbourhood of the Stock Exchange, and lets it out in very small rooms indeed—somewhere near Hercules Passage, or Moorgate Street—and he pays £70, or £100, or even £150 a-year. His sole contribution to local burdens consists of poor rates and general rates, and he pays them either directly, or, more commonly, indirectly, because all rates and taxes are borne by the people who let the house. That man gets the full advantage of residence in one of the urban districts of the Metropolis; but he is able to come up to town and keep his City premises in the neighbourhood of the Stock Exchange, and yet, while his receipts may amount to £5,000 or £6,000 a-year, he does not contribute either to the local burdens there or anywhere else in respect of them. He pays nothing except the Property and Income Taxes; and money made in that way contributes in no way to local burdens. Hon. Members desire to embark in an inquiry as to whether the incidence of local taxation fall in the right direction now; and I agree with the hon. Member for Sussex (Mr. Gregory), whose experience is as great or greater than that of most hon. Members. He told us that if there is to be an inquiry as to whether these burdens are fairly borne by the owners of real property or of personal property, he does not think the owners of real property have much to fear. If it were feasible or practicable, I should welcome any inquiry into the question whether local taxation is fairly borne by the occupiers of land, and whether personal property does not escape to a degree to which it ought not to escape, and whether it should not bear its fair share of the burdens of taxation. The second part of the Motion suggests that there should be a direct assessment on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations or other improvements. That question opens up an entirely different point, and is scarcely a matter to be referred to the suggested Committee. Almost all taxes are based on the value of the occupation, which is considered a way of getting at the income of the occupier. Of late years the tenant is supposed to be rated at the fair annual value of the house. If he occupies that house he is supposed to pay the rates himself; so that, at any rate, he gets value for the payment he makes. If a man continues to occupy land and enjoys it with his residence, leaving it vacant, and not placing upon it anything which would naturally bring it up to a fair rateable value, I think the overseers would not be doing their duty if they did not assess it to the local rates; and although the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Corbett) may have escaped scot-free he certainly was in occupation of the land, and he ought to have paid the rates. If you think fit to pass a law which will establish another basis or another standard of rateable value on which these taxes would have to be assessed, very good; but let it be considered on its merits. But the law, as it now stands, is this—that the occupier of the land is to be rated at the fair value of his occupation. If the hon. Member for Hull means more than this, he is departing altogether from the present system of rating. I do not say that he may not have fair grounds for departing from it; but he is bringing in a system of rating, not by virtue of the value of the occupation, but to some capital value which a man is supposed to have in his pocket, and of which he is not earning the income. Surely that is a somewhat curious question to remit to the investigation of a Select Committee. I have no wish to follow hon. Members in the wholesale attack they have made upon landlords. I dare say there are many others who agree with the language which has been used in the course of the debate; but although some of it might have been expected from the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) in the course of platform speeches, I do not think it advances a discussion of this kind to speak of "legalized spoliation." These leaseholders took their leases with their eyes open; many others are quite willing to take them up; and the persons who have entered into these building speculations, have frequently made, as hon. Members are aware, large fortunes. Indeed, some of the largest fortunes which have ever been made have been made out of these speculations; and it is ridiculous, therefore, to speak of the legal tenure by which property is held in the Metropolis as "legalized spoliation." I would remind hon. Members that there are sitting in this House, on both sides, the descendants of gentlemen in the highest position who have made enormous fortunes by taking up land and speculating with it honestly, and not, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, as "jerry builders." I scarcely think that some of the terms which have been applied to these persons are at all warranted, or can be justified. It has been pointed out by my hon. Friend the Member for Sussex (Mr. Gregory), and other hon. Members, that there is much to be said in favour of ground rents, and for this reason—that a man may only be able to take a small plot of land from the ground landlord, and it is of great advantage to him to know that, by a restricted covenant, people leaving property adjoining that which he holds will not be able to put up a public-house, for instance, or some other building that would be an eyesore. But for the restrictions imposed by the ground landlord this might be done; and if the House will consider the question from an impartial point of view it will be seen that there is a great deal to be said in favour of the present system. It must be of great advantage to those who wished to build houses or shops to know that, by virtue of the controlling power of the ground landlord, he would be protected against having opposite plots used for objectionable purposes that would destroy the value of his own plot. An hon. Member who spoke on this question excited some laughter when he said that there were persons in Liverpool who preferred to be lessees of the Corporation of Liverpool rather than freeholders. All I can say is that I am able to endorse that statement, not by my personal knowledge of Liverpool, but of London. The Corporation of London have been letting their land on 80 years' building leases—not a very long term, indeed a comparatively short one—and, Sir, when even a considerable sum of money has to be spent on the buildings upon the land, it is yet a fact that the 80 years' leases, so long as there are 40 years of them unexpired, command a higher price in the London market than London freeholds do. Therefore, I point out that it is by no means a disadvantge, but possibly an advantage, to occupy property held by lease from such a body or landlord as a Local Authority. A great deal has been said about the separation of the rating of ground and the rating of houses; but I think I have shown that this would produce no beneficial result. A good deal has also been said by certain persons as to there being a supposed increase of taxation which can be gained by the adoption of some such plan. I think I have been able to show the House that this could not arise from the mere separation of the assessment. Having heard every word of this debate, and listened with great interest to the speeches of hon. Members, I have to say that, while I do not desire to trouble the House by dividing to-night on the Motion of the hon. Member for Hull, and while admitting that the question may go as a sort of adjunct to the Committee, I think it is important, before coming to that determination, that the House should understand that, by referring the terms of the hon. Member's Motion to this Committee, they are referring what is only the limb of a much larger question, and that even if the Committee were to enter upon that inquiry, and extend its deliberations to the length which the Motion of the hon. Member would demand, the probable result would be that their inquiry would be abortive. Perhaps some apology may be due to hon. Gentlemen who have spoken in favour of the course proposed, because I have not dealt with all their arguments; but I believe I have shown that no really beneficial result can be obtained by leaseholders, landlords, or owners, by referring to the Committee the terms of the Motion of the hon. Member for Hull.

MR. DUCKHAM (Herefordshire, Leominster): Sir, I have been much interested in the debate upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Hull; but, as far as I have heard, it has only been upon a part of the question. The hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. A. C. Corbett) has boasted of having 30 acres of land on which he pays no rate and no taxes. I must confess that he is very differently situated from myself, or anyone else whom I know. It has been said by the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) that a great grievance is experienced in London with regard to local taxation. Sir, I must tell the House that we agriculturists have felt a great grievance for many years in connection with this subject; we feel that there are many interests on which this great question can and should be brought to bear very differently to the system at present practised. As a farmer, I am taxed on the improvements which I effect on the soil, and which are for the general benefit of the nation. Sir, I hope, if a Committee is appointed to inquire into the question of the local taxation of the country, that they will have such Instructions as will enable them to make inquiry into the whole question, and not merely into what really is no more than the fringe of a very great question, and that, from their inquiries, legislation will result that will do something to relieve the burden which we have so long laboured under, and which has been repeatedly brought before the House of Commons. And, Sir, not only do I trust that the Instructions to the Committee will be such as to give them power to inquire into the whole incidence of local taxation, but that they shall have power also to inquire into the desirability of establishing a better system of valuation by which local rating shall be regulated. Lord John Russell, when he introduced the Bill for the repeal of the Corn Laws, said that inquiry into and re-adjustment of local burdens would be necessary and must take place. I will not detain the House further than to remind it that a great interest is now being taken in the extension of the number of small holdings and in the extension of peasant proprietorship in the country, and to repeat the hope I have already expressed that the Instructions to the Committee will be such as to bring about an exhaustive inquiry into the grievance under which the farming interest now labours in respect of local taxation.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Sir, I have no desire to stand for any length of time between the House and the division which hon. Members are anxious to take upon this very important question. But there have been some observations made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster), with regard to which I may say that the short time which I desire to devote to them will not, in my opinion, have been wasted. The hon. and learned Gentleman informed the House that it is extremely difficult to come at this question of ground rents; he says that there are many shopkeepers and others in the City of London and large business centres who have made considerable fortunes in the businesses in which they have been engaged; and he asks how you can discriminate between the taxation levied on those profits and the taxation put on the ground rents of the houses where those businesses have been carried on? I wish to point out the fallacy of the hon. and learned Gentleman's observations. Shopkeepers in any locality or district cannot expect to maintain a monopoly of profit for any long time; if their profit goes beyond ordinary trade profits, there comes an influx of capital into the business, there follows an increase in the number of shopkeepers and the profits get distributed over a larger area. I wish to point out that, in the case of those particular localities in which large fortunes are made, it must, in the long run, be apparent to anyone who gives the subject a moment's reflection, that large profits must attach to the ground rent. Profits will not increase beyond a certain point in whatever business you may take, on account of the tendency of capital to flow in, and on account of the increased ground rent in the localities in which the businesses are carried on. The hon. and learned Gentleman brought forward an instance of a Stockbroker in a certain part of London, occupying small premises at a certain rent. Now, Sir, it is perfectly obvious that in the rent which the Stockbroker pays for his offices is included the ground rent as well as the rates and charges payable by the owner of the entire premises. If it be true that Stockbrokers, as a rule, make such large profits, there can be no doubt that the number of persons engaged in the business would be very largely increased; but the hon. and learned Gentleman should set against this imaginary case the large number of cases of Stockbrokers who lose all they possess in their endeavour to get a share of the profits which are made in the Stockbroking business. Be that as it may, it is a well-known law in economics that profit, when it goes beyond a certain point, becomes divided. But it is not so with ground rents. We find that the profit of Stockbrokers in the City of London is one of the reasons why ground rents have run up in London and other large centres; and I say that the contention of hon. Gentlemen on this side, as well as upon the opposite Benches, that it is fair and equitable that ground rents should bear a just proportion of municipal and local taxation, is a proposition which has only to be stated to be believed by everyone who gives it a moment's consideration. Sir, Irish Members are very largely interested in this question. I myself know the hardship and injustice that is done in the town of Kanturk, in Charleville, and in other towns in the county of Cork. The town of Kanturk is in the district which I have the honour to represent; it is the centre of a populous district where a large amount of business is done, and where much more might be done but is not, because the noble Earl who is the owner of the entire town contributes nothing towards the expenses of the place, although he derives an immense revenue from the ground rents. We could multiply instances of this sort, Mr. Speaker; but it is not now necessary to do so, because I believe that the experience of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House will furnish many confirmations of the truth of what I say. I have only to add, with regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Hull (Mr. Saunders), that it meets with the approbation of Irish Members on these Benches, as it will meet, I believe, with the approbation of all those who are interested in the improvement of the condition of the industrial community throughout the Kingdom.

Mr. SAUNDERS (Hull, E.): I cordially assent to the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson), and I think that the submission of the two questions to the Committee is the best course to be adopted.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed,

"That the words, 'That the question of imposing a direct assessment on the owners of Ground Rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations, or other improvements, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes,' be there inserted."

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I understand that the scope of the Reference to the Committee will be widened to a considerable extent by the Resolution which the House is about to adopt, and also by the decision which has been taken, as I think, rather in contradiction of a statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that the Committee should inquire into the relations between ground landlords and lessees. I now ask what is the intention of Her Majesty's Government with reference to this Committee? Names of the proposed Members of the Committee appear on the Paper, and I believe they were to be nominated tonight; but, I think it would be advisable, looking at the great importance of the question which the Committee has to consider, that some measures should be taken for increasing the strength of that Committee by the addition of the names of a few hon. Members who may be competent to deal with the subject. I do not know what are the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with regard to this; but perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will be able to give us some information.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) (Birmingham, W.): Sir, I think the House will feel that there is a great deal of weight in the observations of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. There is no doubt that the original scope of the Reference to the Select Committee has been considerably extended, and that the Committee will have to perform functions of a very important character. Under the circumstances, we think it desirable to strengthen the Committee by the addition of certain names of weight in this House. I am glad to say that it has been already arranged, in view of this proposed extension, that the Motion for this Committee shall not be made to-night, but be postponed to a time when it will be more conveniently brought forward. On that occasion I have every hope that the names proposed will be found to have the confidence of the House.

MR. GREGORY (Sussex, East Grinstead): Would it not be better, Mr. Speaker, that when the names of the Committee are proposed, the terms of the Reference should also be settled? We shall have to make the Reference sufficiently wide to include within its scope the Motion of the hon. Member.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Another Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "improvements," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "be referred to the Select Committee on Town Holdings,"—(*Mr. Lawson,*)

—instead thereof.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and *negatived.*

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put.

Resolved, That the question of imposing a direct assessment on the owners of Ground Rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations, or other improvements, be referred to the Select Committee on Town Holdings.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

——o——

RIVERS PURIFICATION BILL.

(*Mr. Hastings, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Lord Charles Beresford, Sir W. Guyer Hunter, General Sir William Crossman, Colonel Sandys.*)

[BILL 101.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.): Sir, in the absence of the hon. Member for East Worcestershire (Mr. Hastings), I have been called upon unexpectedly to move the second reading of this Bill, the object of which is to secure the purification of our rivers by bringing about a better arrangement with reference to sewers, manufacturers' refuse, and other drainage works which are turned into them, and which in dry summers make those rivers a perfect nuisance, as well as injurious to the general community. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the evidence laid before Parliament by the various Royal Commissions will be considered sufficient to show how desirable it is that legislation of the kind proposed should take place. The hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) made a speech last week at the Mansion House in support of an amendment of the present law; and, therefore, I trust that Her Majesty's Government will not think it necessary to oppose the Motion which I now make.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Edward Birkbeck.*)

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): Sir, I rise to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. And I do so with confidence, not because I am in any way opposed to the purification of our rivers. It seems to me that this is one of the most important questions which can claim the attention of this House. And I very much regret that at this late hour it is impossible to enter fully into its merits. The subject of the pollution of rivers is well known to Members of this House; but it seems to me that, however desirable it may be to arrive at a solution of that question, the measure before us is one which it would be dangerous to allow to pass. In the first place, the Bill makes no distinction between impurities caused by sewage operations and impurities caused by manufactures, as is the case in the Act of 1876; but, Sir, that distinction is one of the very greatest importance. I believe I may say, with some degree of certainty, that while the impurity due to sewage is a matter that can be satisfactorily dealt with, at a certain cost—because all sewage impurity is approximately of the same composition—the question of dealing with impurities which are the result of manufactures, is one which presents much difficulty, for it is well known to all Members of this House that the character of the impurity differs with the character of the manufacture—as, for example, alkali works, dye works, paper mills, and brewers. In this Bill, Sir, all the impurities arising from manufactures are treated in one and the same way; and, in consequence of this, the standards which have been fixed therein are either so stringent that they will act if they are passed into law, most prejudicially to the manufacturers in this country, or they are, in some cases, so insufficient that they would be of no avail. It is absolutely impossible, in most cases of this kind, to draw a hard-and-fast line; but the standards which are here set forth are unvarying, having regard neither to the character of the pollution nor the character of the stream into which they pass. If this question of the impurities arising from our varied manufacturing and mining processes is to be settled, it must be settled, to a great extent, upon a geographical basis. We may require one set of standards for one river, and even for different parts of one river, and these may be totally different from the standard which it is necessary to apply to other rivers. Then, Sir, I find among the provisions of the Bill a clause which provides that any person shall be guilty of an offence against the Act who puts into, or causes or permits to be put or carried into, any stream any solid or liquid matter calculated to interfere with the flow, alter the bed, or pollute its waters—that is, one single act is to constitute an offence under the Act. Again, action may be taken on the results of the analysis of one sample of water drawn for examination; but for the purpose of arriving at any fair conclusion as to the pollution of a river, it is hardly necessary to say that we ought to have a number of samples drawn of the water passing every 24 hours, in order that we may have an average sample of the water. Again, the Act of 1876 enables manufacturers to apply the best practical means in their power. We are unacquainted at the present moment with any scientific method by which rivers containing these various manufacturing pollutions can be rendered pure; but if such means can be established, there may be a chance of obtaining a satisfactory result. In this Bill, however, the application of such means are not permitted; and, therefore, I believe it will be unworkable. There is another clause in the Bill which is very striking and demands our attention. Clause 6 enables any occupier, or owner, or any representative of the Local Sanitary Authority, to institute proceedings in the County Court, and those proceedings may be taken by any individual, and without expense to him. Well, Sir, I say that this is opening the door, as it appears to me, to vexatious litigation of a very undesirable character. Again, in Clause 3 it would seem that the Judge, whose duty it is simply to enforce the law, is made responsible for the method of purification—that is to say, he is to dictate the way in which the purification is to be carried out. The distinction, as I have said, is not made in this Bill, as it ought to be made, between sewage and between the refuse or pollution caused by manufactures. Now, it seems to me that the time is come when we may satisfactorily deal with the sewage question; but we must proceed in this matter carefully, and by degrees; and before any attempt can be made to deal with the pollution by manufactures, I am of opinion that we ought to deal with the question of pollution by sewage. It is evidently extremely undesirable to interfere with the manufacturers of this country by any vexatious legislation; and I know it is generally felt by manufacturers that this Bill, if it becomes law, will most seriously interfere with the various enterprizes and manufactures carried on, especially in the North of England. I have had the pleasure of introducing a deputation to the President of the Local Government Board of a large number of gentlemen interested in the manufactures of the North, and they have unanimously declared that the Bill will have a disastrous effect upon their industries. Those gentlemen are perfectly willing to have the matter investigated; they are not at all interested in keeping the rivers in the present state, and they are fully aware that much may be done in the direction desired. And here I wish to call the attention of the House to the analogy and the difference between the Alkali Acts and the present Bill. The Alkali Acts for the purification of the atmosphere from noxious vapours have been most successful in their operation; they have been received by all chemical manufacturers with satisfaction, and the result has been most beneficial both to the public at large and the manufacturers in detail. I believe that legislation with regard to river purification may also, with due care, be rendered satisfactory both to the manufacturer and the public; but the distinction between air pollution and water pollution must be borne in mind, and the kind of legislation which is applicable to the one is evidently not applicable to the other as regards the uniformity of the standards of purity. I cannot support the standards which have been introduced into this Bill; some of them, indeed, are even of a monstrous character—thus I may state that one of the standards of purity for the waters running into streams which may be used for potable purposes permits an amount of acid to be present in the water which is one-fifth of the amount of acid which actually falls into the air of the City of Manchester—that is to say, that the rain water which falls in that city contains five times as much acid as is permitted to go into the river. This standard is, then, much too strict. But in another instance, which, with the permission of the House, I am about to give, the standards are not nearly strict enough. If we assent to the standard (f) for drinking water—namely, that the water should contain one part of sulphur in 100,000 parts of water. I can inform the House that the water which is supposed to be pure would smell very much like Harrogate water, and that it would be very improper to allow such a liquid to run into water to be used for drinking purposes. I could, if time permitted, refer to many similar inconsistencies in the Bill; but, Sir, I will not, at this late hour, intrude upon the attention of the House further than to recall to the notice of hon. Members the fact that the Bill does not attempt to do what is absolutely necessary—that is, draw a distinction between sewage impurity and manufacturing impurity; that it does not attempt to deal with the sewage question as it ought to be dealt with, and that it does attempt to deal with manufacturing pollution in a way that will be detrimental—I may say almost disastrous—to the trade of the country. I may also add that legislation of this importance for dealing properly with the great question of the pollution of our rivers, to be made efficient, must be a much simpler one than the present one, and that if it is introduced in the form of a Private Bill, such a Bill must receive Government support. For these reasons, Sir, I oppose this Bill, and move that it be read upon this day six months.

Mr. HUTTON (Manchester, N.): Sir, I think the importance of this Bill is hardly recognized by the hon. Member who made the Motion for the second reading, because there is no doubt that it will affect some of the largest manufacturing interests in the country; and I, on behalf of a number of manufacturers both of Manchester and of Salford, entirely agree with what has fallen on this subject from the hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe). Throughout Lancashire, Yorkshire, and in the manufacturing districts generally in the North of England, a number of large factories have arisen within the last 40 or 50 years, an enormous amount of capital has been spent in works there, and large populations created in the neighbourhood of rivers which flow through those districts; and I may say, that if this Bill is passed into law, those populations will be dispersed, and instead of prosperity there will be widespread poverty. We have in Lancashire about 90,000 persons applying to the Guardians for outdoor relief, which is something like 12,000 in excess of the number at this time last year; and I am satisfied that if the Bill becomes law that number will be enormously increased. Sir, it is impossible to estimate the damage which this Bill would do if it were sanctioned by Parliament. We have such a large population crying out for the protection of labour, that, rather than put other difficulties in the way of our industries, I ask the House most seriously to consider the injury that will be done by passing the Bill. We have all at heart the desire to secure greater purity of water in our towns; but I am convinced that not only would the Bill do a great injury amongst the populations in the manufacturing towns, but that the suggestions made by the hon. Member opposite could not be carried out. I do not hesitate to say that the Bill ought to be considered very seriously, and that the restrictions which it places upon labour ought to be struck out. Sir, I beg to second the Motion of the hon. Member for South Manchester (Sir Henry Roscoe).

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Sir Henry Roscoe.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.),: Sir, this Bill is certainly of a very extraordinary character, and it is to be regretted that it has been brought on so late at night, and in the absence of the hon. Member for East Worcestershire (Mr. Hastings), who is one of the promoters of the Bill. It appears to be a Bill which, if passed into law, would seriously interfere with, if not destroy, some of the most important manufactures of the country. The hon. Baronet who introduced the Bill stated that it was supported by my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell). I have the authority of the Attorney General for saying that he has never given support to the Bill, although he is an advocate for the purification of rivers, and that he sees very much to object to in the measures by which the Bill proposes to carry this into effect. I think that a reference to one clause of the Bill will be sufficient to show that it is impossible for the House to accept it. The Bill is based on the idea that the provisions of the Act of 1876 are insufficient. That Act throws the duty of showing that the provisions of the law are observed upon the Sanitary Authorities of the districts. Well, no doubt in some cases the Sanitary Authorities are the worst offenders, so that the law calls upon the criminals to prosecute themselves; but there is power of appeal to the Local Government Board, and the Local Government Board can call upon the Sanitary Authorities to proceed. But, Sir, the alternative which is proposed by this Bill is contained in Clause 6, and I venture to say that nothing more extravagant than that clause has ever been submitted to the House of Commons. It proposes in Clause 6 that if the Sanitary Authority refuses to take proceedings, then the person aggrieved has the right to proceed himself and charge the cost to the Sanitary Authority. It is, therefore, actually proposed that a person alleging a grievance shall be entitled to call upon the ratepayers to prosecute his claim at their expense. That is much the same as introducing a Bill into this House to provide that any person alleging any pecuniary loss or damage shall be given a right to call upon the Public Prosecutor to carry on his case at the public expense. I think I have said enough to show that, if there is any deficiency in the existing law, the remedy proposed by this Bill is not the way to meet it. As a remedy for any deficiency which there may be in the actual existing Authorities, we should look to some scheme of local government, whereby the Sanitary Authorities might be compelled to perform their duty if anything illegal takes place. Under these circumstances, I shall certainly support the Motion of my hon. Friend behind me (Sir Henry Roscoe).

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): There are two great questions which this Bill concerns. One is the manufacturers' interest, and the other is the public health. Those people who drink the waters of rivers have a very great interest in this matter, and it was on that ground that hon. Members were induced to back the Bill. The hon. Member opposite (Sir Henry Roscoe) suggests that it shall be referred to a Select Committee. [*Cries of* "No!"]

SIR HENRY ROSCOE (Manchester, S.): I moved that the Bill be read a second time on this day six months.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I beg pardon. I misunderstood the hon. Member; but in that case I will propose that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, because I consider it a matter of very great importance to the public health. I therefore propose that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The noble Lord is not entitled to make that Motion until the Amendment before the House has been disposed of.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT (1880) AMENDMENT BILL.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill do consist of Sixteen Members:—The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Sir THOMAS BRASSEY, Mr. AINSLIE, Lord CHARLES BERESFORD, Mr. BRADLAUGH, Mr. WILLIAM CRAWFORD, Mr. CROMPTON, Mr. GILES, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. NOLAN (Louth), Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, Sir JOSEPH PEASE, Sir EDWARD REED, Mr. SUTHERLAND, Mr. TOMLINSON, Captain Verney, and Sir Richard Webster, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Secretary Childers.*)

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, the sum of £544,772 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 17*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.] — New Writ Issued — *For* Cheshire County (Altrincham Division), *v.* John Brooks, esquire, deceased.

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee — Resolution* [March 16] *reported*.

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading —* Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment * [146]; Land Transfer (Scotland) * [144]; Compulsory Purchase of Land Compensation * [145].

Second Reading—Church of Scotland [6], *put off;* Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.) [44], *debate adjourned*.

Report—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order * [119].

Third Reading—Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland) * [86], and *passed*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BILL.—[Bill 6.]

(*Mr. Finlay, The Marquess of Stafford.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, its object was to remove obstacles to the re-union of the Presbyterians of Scotland; and he apprehended that though objections might be advanced against the Bill, there would be a general agreement among hon. Members on both sides of the House that it was desirable that there should be such re-union. It was well known that the great majority of the people of Scotland were Presbyterians. There were three Bodies of Presbyterians—the Established Church, the Free Church, the United Presbyterians—which among them comprised a very large portion of the population of the country; and these three Bodies were agreed in their teaching, in their Church government and discipline; and it would be impossible to point out any matter which could be considered at all essential on which they were not agreed. There was a great and growing feeling among the laity of Scotland that it was not right that the division which had so long prevailed should continue any longer. This Bill had been brought forward in deference to the feeling so widely prevailing among the Scottish laity that obstacles to re-union among Bodies so closely connected by their history, identical in teaching, identical in Church government, should be removed. He did not profess by this Bill to reconstruct the Church of Scotland. It was not for the Legislature to unite Churches. All that the Legislature could do was to remove obstacles to re-union. The actual work of re-union must be done by the Church themselves; and when they approached the subject, as he hoped they very shortly would, if this Bill became law, the Legislature might then give assistance by determining in what manner the endowments should be applied so as to facilitate the reconstruction of a great National Church of Scotland. The state of things ecclesiastically in Scotland was somewhat peculiar, and nowhere was it more peculiar than in the Highlands. His attention had been particularly drawn to the state of matters in the Highlands, and it was very mainly in the hope of remedying the state of things that there prevailed that he had been led to take this subject in hand. The Free Church in the Highlands was almost omnipotent. He did not say that it was so in every parish; but in most of the country parishes in the Highlands almost the whole body of the people belonged to the Free Church. It might be said, with hardly any exaggeration, that in country parishes in the Highlands the Endowed Church had no people, and the people's Church had no endowments. Some had been led to say that the remedy for the state of things was to disestablish the Church in the Highlands, and to apply the endowments to secular purposes. Hon. Gentlemen who entertained those opinions on either side of the House would, he presumed, allow the Highlanders themselves to have some voice in determining a matter which so nearly concerned them; and he said it with perfect confidence—he thought he might appeal to every man who knew the Highlands, and particularly appeal to an hon. Gentleman he saw present, his Colleague, the hon. Member for Inverness-shire (Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh), who knew the Highlands and the crofters well—he thought he might appeal with confidence on that subject to everyone who knew the Highlands as to whether the Highlanders were not, almost to a man, resolutely opposed to Disestablishment? The Highlanders desired the reconstruction of the Church; they detested the idea of its destruction; and they had very good reason for holding those views. There were very few, indeed, of the Free Church congregations in the Highlands which were self-supporting. The Highlanders did not think that it was a seemly state of things that they should be dependent for religious ordinances upon the charity of the large towns in the Lowlands—they did not think that it was seemly that it should even be in the power of the Lowlands to threaten the withdrawal of contributions if the views of the Highlanders and Lowlanders on ecclesiastical matters should not happen for the moment to coincide. He had introduced this Bill very much in the hope of removing the obstacles which prevented the Highlanders from having the benefit of these endowments for religious purposes which had existed in every parish from time immemorial, and which at present they were prevented from having the benefit of by their views and principles upon ecclesiastical matters. The state of things in the Lowlands was very different indeed from what it was in the Highlands. In the Lowlands the Church of Scotland was strong, and was increasing in strength every day. But one could not go into any town in the course of one's travels in Scotland without seeing side by side two, and sometimes three, churches differing in no point that could be made intelligible without an amount of explanation of which hon. Gentlemen from the South of the Tweed might be somewhat intolerable. It was related of an English traveller that, seeing two of these churches rising side by side, he asked a native of the place whom he met there—"My man, can you tell me what is the difference between these two Churches?" The man replied—"Well, Sir, there is a matter of some six feet in length, but no more than a few inches in breadth;" and he apprehended that, so far as essentials were concerned, there would be absolutely no more difference than the man, with, perhaps, even a stronger touch of the term "matter of fact," which was said to characterize the Scotch stated to his English interrogator. The laity of Scotland were beginning to feel deeply the scandals of such divisions between Churches which were united in all essential matters; and they felt deeply the waste of resources which was involved in keeping up two, or it might be three, churches where only one church was wanted. Districts where left without a church which wanted one sadly on account of this scramble for adherents, which led to the planting of a second, perhaps a third, church side by side of the church which existed in a district where really only one church was wanted. These were sentiments which were certainly widely entertained by the laity of Scotland, and it was in deference to these sentiments that he (Mr. Finlay) endeavoured to remedy an evil which he thought they must all deplore. Some hon. Gentlemen might be disposed to think that the true remedy for ecclesiastical evils in Scotland, and the only way to obtain union among the Presbyterians of Scotland, was to disendow the Church and to secularize the endowments. With these sentiments he confessed that he had no sympathy. He spoke with some knowledge of Scotland, and he might appeal to a good many hon. Gentlemen in the House who knew Scotland well; and he thought there would be general agreement with him when he said that to disestablish the Church of Scotland produce hatred and ill-will, would aggravate existing differences, and would bequeath a legacy of bitterness which would not die away for generations. But he took it that this was a matter which the people of Scotland were entitled to decide for themselves, and it was a matter on which the people of Scotland had spoken with no uncertain voice. Last year there was introduced into that House a Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland by an hon. Gentleman who then represented the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie), but whose zeal for Disestablishment had lost a seat to the Liberal Party in the present Parliament, and that Bill evoked Petitions from all parts of Scotland. Against the Bill there were presented Petitions signed by 690,000 persons from all parts of Scotland, and signed, to a very great extent, by the adherents of the Free Church in the Highlands. These Petitions were got up in a comparatively short space of time, and under pressure. And in favour of the Bill there were presented Petitions signed by 2,779 persons. That was the voice of Scotland. When it came to the test of figures and counting of heads, that was how Scotland spoke on this matter. But it might be said that there were special objections to that measure of Disestablishment. He would supply to the House another test for which no such special reason could be given. Shortly before the last General Election a sort of Census was taken of the electors of Mid Lothian, and a declaration was presented to those electors for signature in these terms—"We are opposed to the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of Scotland." Out of 10,877 electors the declaration was signed by 7,519; so that there was an actual percentage of 69 per cent of the electors of Mid Lothian who really signed the declaration that they were opposed to Disestablishment. It must not, moreover, be supposed that all who, for one reason or another, declined to sign that declaration against Disestablishment would have signed a declaration for Establishment; but, at all events, we had the fact that 69 per cent signed a declaration that they were opposed to any measure of the kind. What he proposed by this measure was to preserve the framework which had existed for religious purposes in Scotland from time immemorial — to preserve the territorial and parochial system, which could not exist except in an Established Church, and to utilize those endowments for religious puposes which the piety of former ages had consecrated to them. It had been said by one who knew Scotland well—Thomas Carlyle—that Dissent in Scotland never proceeded from disagreement with the principles of the National Church; that all Dissent in Scotland had proceeded from a closer and more rigid adherence to the principles of the National Church; they had separated from the Church, not because they disagreed with its tenets or with its forms of government, but because they believed that the majority of the day were not adhering with sufficient strictness to those tenets and to the government. And that saying of Carlyle was really the key to the ecclesiastical situation in Scotland. What he said of Scottish Dissent generally was pre-eminently true of what was—next to the Established Church—by far the largest Presbyterian Church in Scotland—he meant, of course, the Free Church. The Free Church originated in the Disruption of 1843, and that Disruption was due to two causes, of which one had been completely removed, and the other he proposed to remove by this Bill. The first of these causes was the grievance of patronage, which was re-introduced by a Statute of Queen Anne and hurried through Parliament in 1712. The Statute produced —in the course of the 130 years that elapsed between the day of its passing and the Disruption—500 cases of disputed settlement; and from the disputes that arose out of that Statute on the subject of patronage undoubtedly originated the controversy which ended in the Disruption of 1843. The grievance of patronage had now, he was thankful to say, been completely removed by the more beneficial Statute passed in 1874. But that, however, as he had said, was not the sole cause of the Disruption of 1843. Out of the question of patronage there arose a series of unfortunate collisions between the Civil and the Ecclesiastical Courts. It had ever been the doctrine held by the Church in Scotland that there should be what was called spiritual independence within the Church. Now, he begged hon. Members to observe that in the claim in Scotland to spiritual independence there was nothing that savoured in the slightest degree of priestly tyranny. It was the glory of the Church of Scotland that in every Court of the Church laymen and clergymen sat side by side, and that the laity had an equal voice with the clergy in determining what the decisions of the Church should be. That was a feature in the Scottish Church organization which he thought might be copied with advantage by other Churches in other parts of the United Kingdom. He desired that the House should observe that fact. That the laity had an equal voice with the clergy in determining all matters of ecclesiastical cognizance gave a different colour altogether to the claim for spiritual independence, as compared with that which it must present if it were advanced on behalf of every other Church less happily constituted. Out of the question of patronage there arose disputes between the Court of Session—which was the great Civil Court of Scotland—and the General Assembly of the Church, which was the Supreme Court of the Scottish Church. There were a series of unfortunate decisions which involved—looking at this matter, as he did, from the Free Church point of view—an encroachment by the Civil Courts upon spiritual matters, with which they ought never to have interfered. He was not going to weary the House with a recital of the painful details of the "ten years' conflict," as it was called, North of the Tweed. He was well content, as far as possible, that the dead past should bury its dead; and he did not desire to stir up the ashes of the fires of a controversy, on questions of this kind, which was now extinct. But out of these decisions, involving an invasion of the spiritual independence of the Church, as well as out of the question of patronage, originated the Disruption of 1843. There was an assertion of the spiritual independence of the Church, when nearly 500 clergymen of the Church of Scotland gave up their manses, their stipends, all they had in the world, and threw themselves upon the world, in reliance on that Higher Power, whose behests they believed they were obeying. He thought that what took place on that May morning was a matter of which every Scotsman, whatever his ecclesiastical or political views might be, could not fail to be proud. The keenest and most critical of observers, Lord Jeffrey, said, when he was told that more than 400 clergymen had abandoned their livings in the assertion of the principle of spiritual independence—

> "I am proud of my country; there is not another country on earth where such a deed could have been done."

That was a sentiment with which every Scotsman must agree; it was a sentiment which every Scotsman must feel glad was uttered by such a man as Lord Jeffrey, although he did believe there were other countries where, if the occasion arose, an equal sacrifice would be made. This claim for spiritual independence, as he had said, led to the Disruption. The founders of the Free Church came out from the Church of Scotland; but they were not Disestablishers. That was a point of the first importance that should be made clear; and he asked the permission of the House to read two short statements which was made by the great man who might be considered the founder of the Scottish Church—Dr. Thomas Chalmers. Dr. Chalmers was the Moderator of the first Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, and he said this—

> "Though we quit the Establishment, we go out on the Establishment principle. We quit a vitiated Establishment, but would rejoice in returning to a pure one. We are the advocates for a national recognition and support of religion, and we are not Voluntaries."

That was what Dr. Chalmers said when the Free Church was founded; and the experience that he had of things between the Disruption and his death was expressed in what was his latest utterance on the subject. When he spoke on this matter before his death in 1847 he said this—

> "My hopes of an extended Christianity from the efforts of Voluntaryism alone have not been brightened by my experience since the Disruption. We rejoice, therefore, in the testimony of the Free Church for the principle of a National Establishment, and most sincerely do we hope that she will never fall away from it."

Those were the principles of the Free Church of Scotland, and to those principles he believed that a very large majority of the laity of the Free Church were still faithful. There could be no doubt, at all events, about the fidelity to these principles of the Free Church population of the Highlands of Scotland. The object of his measure was to assure the possession of the spiritual independence which, with the grievance of patronage, led to the Disruption of 1843; and he proposed, very shortly, to state to the House how the measure proposed to deal with the matter. It was a very short Bill. The 1st clause provided that, by the constitution of the Church of Scotland on the basis of the Confession of Faith and the Presbyterian Church government and discipline, the Church

Courts had the exclusive right to regulate, determine, and decide all matters spiritual, and that Civil Courts should not interfere with the Church Courts in determining such matters. The 2nd section defined what were matters spiritual, and, he hoped, defined them in such a way as to make it impossible, or next to impossible—practically impossible—that the embarrassing question should arise as to whether a particular matter was civil or spiritual. The 3rd section provided that the Civil Courts should not interfere with the congregations in the elections of their ministers. The 4th section transferred from the Court of Session to the Courts of the Church the jurisdiction which was now vested in the Court of Session, sitting as the Court of Teinds, as to the creation of parishes, *quoad sacra,* as they were called in Scotland—that was to say, parishes which existed purely for spiritual purposes, but which did not in any way affect civil rights. It was thought right and proper that that was a matter which could be vested in the Church Courts, as being a matter not at all of civil, but purely of spiritual concern. The 5th section provided that nothing in the Act should abridge any rights which the Civil Courts possessed to determine any matters of a civil nature, or any question as to the consequences which were by law annexed to the decisions of Ecclesiastical Courts. That was the whole measure, and he hoped to be able to make it clear that this measure, short and simple as it was, was adequate to remove every difficulty that stood in the way of the principle that prevented re-union between, at all events, the Established Church and the Free Church of Scotland. There was another Body—the United Presbyterians—not nearly so large as the Free Church, but as to which he would say a word by-and-bye. It would be observed that the scope of the Act was declaratory, and it had been framed in that way for two reasons. The first reason was one that would be very well understood in Scotland. The Church did not come to the State to ask the State to confer anything upon the Church. It was held in Scotland that when the Church and the State entered into an alliance, as they did when a Church was established, all that the Church asked the State to do was to recognize the rights which the Church possessed and derived from another and a higher source, which was very explicitly recognized indeed in the old Scottish Statutes on the subject, which were still in force. The second reason why the Act had been made declaratory was that he hoped and believed that it merely expressed the true state of the law. There was nothing so very alarming about this doctrine of spiritual independence, as understood in Scotland, when it was properly apprehended. This Bill, if it became law, would confer upon the Church of Scotland nothing which, in practice, she did not already enjoy. Of the decisions which led to the Disruption, a great many had fallen to the ground with the repeal of the Patronage Act of Queen Anne in 1874; and the Court of Session had been diligently engaged, ever since the Disruption, in retracing its footsteps in those matters which so unhappily conduced to that calamity in 1843. There had been a series of decisions in 1849, 1851, 1861, and 1870, in which the spiritual independence of the Church had been very clearly recognized. In one of these cases Lord President Boyle said—

> "We have as little right to interfere with the proceedings of the Church Courts in matters of Church discipline as we have to interfere with the proceedings of the Court of Justiciary in a criminal question."

And the Lord Justice Clerk (Lord Moncreiff) said in another of these cases—

> "Within their spiritual province the Church Courts are as supreme as we are within the Civil."

In the course of the discussion which took place in one of these cases, a very distinguished Scottish Judge, whose charming Memoirs of his own time might have rendered his name familiar even to hon. Members who had had the misfortune to be born on the South of the Tweed—Lord Cockburn—said that—

> "Such decisions amounted to a reversal of those decisions that had produced the Disruption."

And it was very difficult, indeed, not to agree with what Lord Cockburn said upon that subject. What was wanted was not that the Legislature should alter the law in the way of conferring anything upon the Church, but that the Legislature should declare the rights enjoyed by the Church, so as to remove those doubts which still remained as the result of the unfortunate decisions which preceded 1843. One very important question, of course, was this—Was this measure, if it became law, adequate to meet Free Church principles? Upon that point he thought he might appeal to the House for support from a very unexpected quarter. He thought that the extraordinary alarm and hostility manifested by the keen Disestablishment Party in Scotland with regard to this Bill went far indeed to show that they felt that if it became law Free Church principles would have been recognized so as to pave the way for union. If not, why should they be afraid? If the Bill did not embody Free Church principles so as to render re-union probable—re-union within a National Established Church—if it did not do that, why were they afraid of it? If it did not do that, it could not, from their point of view, do them any harm. But the keenness of the opposition was itself a testimony to the fact that the measure, if it passed, would be effectual for its purpose. They were said to be somewhat metaphysical to the North of the Tweed; but he thought that all other Scotsmen were put to shame in that matter by the keenness of a Scottish Disestablisher anxious to prove that a measure of this kind, of which he was afraid, was not adequate to meet Free Church principles. Ingenuity was exhausted in framing conditions said to be necessary to satisfy Free Church principles—conditions, the more impossible the better; and if these impossible conditions—which, he would observe, were never put into any definite shape, lest there should be danger, perhaps, of their coming within the sphere of the practicable and being granted—if these impossible conditions, by any accident, were crystallized into shape, and were granted by the Legislature, the framers of these conditions would forthwith proceed to devise others more impossible still. The object was not to secure the admission of Free Church principles; the object was to make re-union impossible on the basis of an Established Church. He thought that it was unnecessary to weary the House by endeavouring to state the objections that had been raised, and one very good reason for not stating them was that they were almost entirely unintelligible. He (Mr. Finlay) thought he was in a position to lay before the House satisfactory evidence as to the adequacy of the measure to meet Free Church principles. Free Church principles had most fortunately not been left in the fluid—he had almost said the gaseous—state in which they were presented by some who now claimed to represent the Free Church. They had been put into intelligible shape in the "Claim of Right," the historical document on which the Free Church was founded; and in 1878 the Committee of the Free Church General Assembly, in replying to an overture for union which had proceeded from the Established Church Assembly, said that "Re-union could take place only on the basis of the 'Claim of Right.'" The test, then, was this. Did this measure satisfy the "Claim of Right"? If there was one man who was qualified to speak with authority on a point of this kind, as representing the Free Church laity of Scotland, it was that very distinguished statesman and lawyer, Lord Moncreiff. Lord Moncreiff was a Free Churchman, a Member of the Assembly of 1843, when the Disruption took place, and his family had for the last 200 years been associated with a great deal that was best in the history of the Church of Scotland. At a large meeting held on this subject in Edinburgh, on Friday last, there was read a letter from Lord Moncreiff, which, after speaking in kind terms of the measure now before the House, went on to say that—

> "While it probably admits of improvement in its details, I should be quite content to accept it, as it stands, as a legislative concession of the Free Church Claim of Right."

He thought that testimony of that sort, coming from such a quarter, ought to be decisive; and he could also appeal, on this point, to one who was highly representative of what was called the Constitutional Party among the clergy of the Free Church—a pre-Disruption minister—the Rev. Dr. George Mackay, of Inverness, who presided a few days ago at a very large meeting of members and adherents of the Free Church, held at Inverness, in support of this Bill. Dr. Mackay ought to know something about spiritual independence and Free Church principles, because in 1843 for these principles he gave up everything that he enjoyed as a minister of the Established Church. Speaking at the meeting the other day, Dr. Mackay used these words—

"The Bill made provision for all the privileges which he and others claimed before the Disruption. Everything which he contended for before the Disruption was given effect to in this Bill. As a pre-Disruption minister he cordially agreed with every clause of the Bill."

Of course, a measure might be adequate to meet Free Church principles; but there remained behind another important question on which it was only reasonable the House should ask for information; and that was whether, supposing Free Church principles were guaranteed by this measure, anything in the shape of re-union was likely to take place? That was a matter emphatically for the laity of Scotland. The laity of the Established Church were pretty well of one mind upon the subject; and he thought he would be able to show to the House that there was every reason to believe that the great majority of the laity of the Free Church were of the same mind on the point. There had been presented to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) a Memorial, signed by upwards of 1,000 ministers and office-bearers of the Free Church of Scotland, and in that Memorial they said they were ready to accept the Bill as a basis for negotiations for re-union, and wound up thus—"We are ready to do all that lies in our power to promote such measures on the part of the Church to which we belong." He might further appeal to the Petitions sent up with reference to this Bill. There was held on the 16th of February in Edinburgh a Conference, attended by upwards of 400 ministers and office-bearers of the Free Church. They unanimously adopted Resolutions in favour of this measure, and after some delay Petitions were started in different parts of the country in support of the Bill. They were somewhat hurriedly got up, and, owing to the want of time and the extreme inclemency of the weather, in the country parts especially, the signatures were not so many as would otherwise have been obtained; but the total signatures to these Petitions amounted to 156,832 names. There were some supplementary Petitions, but this statement was made up, he believed, only to include those that were presented in good time yesterday. But 156,832 signatures was a very respectable number, indeed, to have been obtained to Petitions in support of a measure of this kind, got up in the course of a fortnight at the outside. The other side had not been idle. They also had got up Petitions. But they presented the same melancholy contrast as in the case of Mr. Dick-Peddie's measure for Disestablishment. The signatures obtained against the Bill amounted only to 1,941, as against 157,000 for the Bill. That was not at all a bad test of the feeling of Scotland on a matter of this kind. Meetings had been held in different parts of the country, and he referred particularly to one held in Edinburgh last week, at which a letter was read from the Duke of Argyll, speaking on behalf of the laity, in which his Grace expressed the opinion that the Bill now before the House would do much to remove obstacles that stood in the way of a re-union of the whole of the Presbyterians in Scotland. He (Mr. Finlay) did not disguise from the House for one moment the fact that there was at the present moment a majority of the clergy of the Free Church who had adopted a movement for the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland; but the important point to observe was that the clergy of the Free Church in this matter most certainly did not represent their congregations. A Memorial was presented to the Prime Minister signed by 1,475 Dissenting clergymen in Scotland. Did those clergymen represent their congregations or not? He could give the House two instances which he thought were fair samples of a very great many more, and he could give the names, if desired. In a Lowland congregation not far from Edinburgh—whose minister was one of the 1,475—a Petition had been sent up in favour of this Bill, signed by 1,002 members and adherents of his congregation, being practically the whole congregation. He (Mr. Finlay) was assured, on the best authority, that one could count on their fingers the members and adherents who had declined to sign. He would take another illustration from a Highland parish, whose minister was also one of the 1,475. There were in the parish about 1,000 persons old enough to sign a Petition to the House, and of that number a Petition in favour of this Bill was signed by 787. He did not believe that the majority of the clergy of the Free Church would continue to act in this matter contrary to the desires and the wishes of their congregations; and his reason for thinking so was that the standards of the Free Church were so very explicit upon the propriety of the maintenance of an Established Church. In the Protest of 1843, which was one of the pillars of the Free Church, there occurred a statement that it was the right and duty of the civil magistrate to maintain and support the Establishment of religion in accordance with God's Word. After this Disestablishment movement was started amongst the clergymen of the Free Church a party of the clergy known as "Constitutionalists" took the opinion of the most eminent counsel of the Scotch Bar—Mr. (now Lord) Rutherford Clark—and the present Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) on the subject, and one sentence from that opinion he should like to inflict upon the House. It was this—

> "Anyone who does not hold the Establishment principle rejects, in our opinion, an essential part of the constitution of the Free Church."

And they further advised—

> "That no majority of the Free Church, however large, had any power to alter such an essential principle."

The United Presbyterian Church stood on a somewhat different footing in regard to this matter, as its standards left the matter of Establishment open; but there was no doubt whatever that the great majority of the clergy of the United Presbyterian Church had adopted Voluntary principles, and held it wrong that there should be any connection between Church and State. That was true of the clergy, but it was not true of the laity. He did not for a moment deny that there were a great many of the lay members of the United Presbyterian Church who held the Voluntary principle; but the fact was often overlooked or forgotten, amid the proclamations that were made on this subject, that there was a very large body of the lay opinion within the United Presbyterian Church favourable to the maintenance of an Established Church. He spoke from what he got to know during his electoral experiences in Scotland—that a large and influential body of lay opinion in the United Presbyterian Church was entirely adverse to this agitation for Disestablishment. His measure had been described as "ridiculously small." One friend, with the candour which friendship could always claim, said it was "a pill to cure an earthquake." He did not think Parliament would object to a Bill because it was short, and he hoped it was not very difficult to understand. Those who talked in that way seemed to think that what was wanted was some grand heroic remedy; but his desire was to remove the thorn which was the cause of the irritation, and not to go in for the capital remedy of amputation by Disestablishment. If the measure was small, at any rate it could not by any possibility do harm. Some clerical leaders of Disestablishment had for years past been telling them that the Established Church did not possess spiritual independence, and that for any Church to be without spiritual independence was a sin. Why, then, object to the cessation of a sin? Was it considered that the agitators for Disestablishment had a vested interest in the sins of the Established Church? Another objection sometimes raised was that the Bill would give spiritual independence to the wrong people; but how could they legislate except with reference to the Church of Scotland as it now existed? Any legislation with reference to the Free Church or to the United Presbyterian Church would be beyond their province altogether. They were always told these Churches did not want spiritual independence, because they had got it already. Yet when a measure of this kind was introduced they declared it was not for the Established Church, but for the Dissenting Churches that Parliament should legislate. He would gladly do anything to recognize the position of the Free Church. He was brought up in the Free Church, and he was attached to it by the closest ties of kindred and friendship; but no one in the Free Church who was agitating for Disestablishment would tell them what they wanted. The only definite thing they could get was a cry for Disestablishment. He maintained that, instead of being a concession to Free Church principles, it would be an outrage on Free Church principles to pull down the Established Church of Scotland. He was not prepared to advocate legislation directly in the teeth of the Free Church standards upon this point. If anything practical could be suggested whereby one could show one's appreciation of the heroic beginnings of the Free Church and of the great principles for which that Church had ever striven, he, for his own part, would most gladly strive to give effect to it. But they were told that this measure might injure the Free Church. He should be sorry to think that it would. What he looked forward to, and what he longed for, was not the absorption of the Free Church, not for the abstraction of adherents of the Free Church, but a treaty of union between these two Churches, in which the great traditions of the Free Church, and the interests of every individual minister of that Church, should be jealously safeguarded; and such a treaty of union he hoped to see brought about, and, he trusted, at no distant date. The only danger of injury to the Free Church, in his judgment, was, if the majority of the clergy should unhappily be led to persist in an agitation with which their congregations were not in sympathy—an agitation in which, he trusted, they would not persist. No one knew better than the leaders of that clerical movement in the Free Church how uncertain the majority they at present commanded was. Many clergymen of the Free Church had acquiesced in the cry for Disestablishment merely in despair of any other solution of the question. If an honourable solution of another kind should be presented he hoped and believed that the majority of the clergy of the Free Church would be found taking a course similar to that which their congregations would like them to take, and a course entirely in harmony with the great principles of the Free Church. It could do no harm, by passing this measure, to take a step in the direction of rendering the Established Church in Scotland a truly national institution. It could do no harm to render the endowments for the purposes of religion available in every part of the country. The Church of Scotland was a truly national and democratic institution. The history of the Church of Scotland was the history of Scotland, and its spirit was thoroughly in union with the spirit of the Scottish people. For the last 40 years the Free Church population of the Highlands had adhered with a fidelity which was touching to the great doctrine that there ought to be an Established Church, although their principles prevented them from having the benefit of the endowments in their own parishes. He knew nothing more touching in history than the way in which the Free Churchmen in the Highlands had adhered to their principles under the most trying conditions. It was on their behalf that he asked the House to read this measure a second time; and he appealed to the House not only on behalf of the Highlands, but on behalf of the laity of Scotland generally, who were sick of these brawls, to allow to be read a second time a measure which was intended to provide a peaceful solution for these ecclesiastical questions, by which Scotland had of late years been distracted. The hon. and learned Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Finlay.*)

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College), in rising to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that he felt less compunction in doing so in consequence of the assurance they had received from the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Finlay) that the Bill, if passed, would confer on the Church of Scotland nothing she did not already fully possess, for if that were the case it was obvious that there was no pressing hurry to pass the Bill. He congratulated the hon. and learned Member on the skill with which he had marshalled his facts and arguments in favour of his proposition. He must say that while before he heard the arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman he was rather inclined to agree with the opinion of the friend to whom he had referred, who had characterized his Bill as "a pill to cure an earthquake," after having heard them he felt rather inclined to describe the Bill as "a pill to cause an earthquake," because the hon. and learned Gentleman had told them that if it passed it would cast asunder the Free Church; that it would cause disruption in the ranks of the United Presbyterian Church; that the laity of the Nonconformist Bodies of Scotland would desert the clergymen; and that the most direful things would happen. Was a Bill which would produce all these results a small thing to ask the House to pass? The hon. and learned Gentleman had quoted the Duke of Argyll—and very properly—as a great authority upon ecclesiastical questions in Scotland. He told them that an acknowledgment of the Claim of Right was all that was required to produce re-union among the Presbyterian Bodies. Was that the opinion of the Duke of Argyll? He would remind the hon. and learned Gentleman of the remarks of his Grace in the House of Lords in a speech on the Patronage Bill of 1874. He said—

> "I have always said there is no hope whatever of the re-union of the Free and Established Churches, except on the ground of Disestablishment; for, independently of principle, there are insurmountable physical difficulties in the way. Nine hundred ministers are supported by voluntary contributions; and what would become of them in the event of any admission that the causes of separation had been removed? Why, my Lords, they would starve."—(3 *Hansard*, [219] 829.)

Although he did not entirely agree with the way in which his Grace put it, he thought that left no ground for the belief that the Duke of Argyll could now logically say that what was proposed in this Bill would bring about a union of the Free and the Established Churches. The debate, so far as it had gone, reminded him (Dr. Cameron) very much of what occurred when the House was asked to read the Patronage Bill in 1874. The objects for which that Bill was proposed and urged upon the attention of Parliament were much more defensible, in his opinion, than those of the Bill now before them; and what was the course which the present Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) took with regard to that Bill? He opposed it with very great earnestness and vigour. It was urged that that was a Bill which would increase the strength of the Established National Church of Scotland. Upon that point the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The Lord Advocate said that his intention is to strengthen the Church. But how? Why, by weakening the other religious Bodies . . . . by investing the present Established Church with such wealth and such unbounded liberty with respect to the interference of the Civil Courts that you will confer such a condition of popular privilege on the laymen of the Established Church that laymen of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches will be tempted to come back into the Established Church, and to leave their ministers to look out for themselves or to starve."—(3 *Hansard*, [220] 1122.)

Those arguments that were adduced by the Prime Minister in support of his opposition to the Patronage Bill he submitted applied with tenfold force to the present occasion. It was said by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Finlay) that the Constitutional Free Church Party throughout the Highlands were unanimous in their desire that this Bill should pass. What proof had they of that? A number of Petitions had been sent up; but how did they know that these Petitions had been signed after a full explanation of all the ins and outs of this Bill? They knew in regard to the Petitions on another Ecclesiastical Bill last Session that the Committee on Public Petitions stated that many of the signatures had been appended in the same handwriting; and the Secretary for Scotland would know that at least one of the Petitions from his own district had been analyzed, when it was found that, out of 3,053 signatures, upwards of 400 had been signed in the same handwriting, and upwards of 300 were signed by persons so ignorant of the ordinary form of signing that they signed themselves as "Mr.," "Miss," and "Mrs.," while of the 3,053 there were only 100 Dissenters. Yet that was one of the Petitions which had been produced as evidence of the overwhelming opinion on the part of the people of Scotland. His hon. and learned Friend told them that this Bill would produce union. That was exactly what they were told when the Patronage Bill was before the House; and what was the result of the Patronage Bill? The Prime Minister had described that, and had told them that, in the view of the Nonconforming majority of Scotland, the passing of the Patronage Bill was an attempt to buy and bid and piecemeal to bring within the walls those who had been ejected wholesale from the Establishment; that it was resented accordingly; and the Free Church was, by the passing of that Act, converted from its previous attitude of neutrality on the question of Disestablishment into the active advocacy of that measure. This Bill proceeded upon the Preamble that it was desirable to remove obstacles to the re-union of the Presbyterians of Scotland. He was willing to concede that Preamble, with certain reservations; but he must altogether deny that it justified the proposals embodied in the Bill. If the Presbyterians of Scotland constituted the whole population of that country, and if the different Presbyterian Bodies were agreed upon a basis upon which they could re-unite, and if a legislative obstacle alone stood in the way of their reunion, he did not deny that it would be perfectly proper for any hon. Member to bring in a Bill to that House in order to remove that obstacle. But the whole population of Scotland was not Presbyterian. The Presbyterian Bodies themselves were very far from being agreed as to any basis on which union between them could be accomplished. The obstacles which the Bill proposed to remove were obstacles which existed only in the minds of a very small section of one of the Presbyterian Churches; and to whatever extent union might be promoted by the proposals in the Bill, it could only be promoted at the expense of an equal amount of disunion and disintegration in another direction. If he could show that the Bill would not promote union among the Presbyterians of Scotland; that it would not remedy any grievance complained of by the Established Church, the Free Church, or the United Presbyterian Church; that it would at best, if it did anything, promote secession from the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches of a small minority of their membership; that that secession would strengthen the Established Church certainly; but that it would do so at the expense of weakening the Voluntary Presbyterian Churches of Scotland—if he could show that the utmost effect which the Bill could have would be to alter the lines of demarcation which now existed among Presbyterian Bodies in Scotland, but to leave the Presbyterians of that country at least as divided as they were at the present time—he thought he should have made out a case which would induce the House of Commons to pronounce a decided opinion as to the inexpediency of tinkering with the Church of Scotland for the objects proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman, as it did a few days ago in the case of the Church in Wales. The Church of Scotland, so far as it was dependent on the public support, was supported, not by funds provided by the piety of our ancestors for that purpose, but out of funds which were public property. The teinds were not provided by the piety of our ancestors for the support of the Presbyterian Church. The teinds were provided by our Catholic ancestors for the support of the Roman Catholic Church, and from that Church they had been taken. As to those Churches in the Highlands to which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred, how were they supported? They were, to a large extent, supported by a Parliamentary grant. This Church being supported out of public moneys, the question of any reconstruction of it was one that affected not only Presbyterians, but all classes of Her Majesty's subjects who were interested in that public property; and he must say that any proposal to reconstruct the Church of Scotland on a basis which left a single section of the community—even if that section should include the entire Presbyterian Bodies—in unchallenged possession of all the rights and privileges at present enjoyed, appeared to him to be a step that would show a very great disregard of the rights of the non-Presbyterian Bodies in Scotland, and show an equal disregard of the rights and opinions of that very large body of Presbyterians who were in favour of the dissociation of Church and State in Scotland. But admitting, for the sake of argument, the principle of the Established Church and the desirability of removing every obstacle in the way of the reform of that Church, this Bill had not been introduced in response to any cry for reform on the part of that Church itself. His Grace the Duke of Argyll, to whom his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Finlay) had referred, at a meeting held in Glasgow some months ago said—

> "I defy any man, however clever and acute he may be, to find a hole in the panoply of armour whereby the freedom of the Church of Scotland is girt around by walls of security."

If the Church was so free without any declaration, he did not see why they should pass a Declaratory Bill which would require new judicial interpretation before they knew the precise effect of it. Although he admitted perfectly the good faith and ability of the hon. and learned Gentleman, the House must not forget that the greatest difference of opinion had prevailed among legal and other experts in Scotland as to what the effect of this Bill would be. What was the lay opinion as to the requirements of the Established Church in Scotland? What was the opinion of her clerical spokesmen? The Committee of the Established Church on the relations between Church and State, whose Report was quoted in a Circular that had been sent round to hon. Members, arrived at a number of Resolutions in which the position of the Establishment was summed up. They declared that—

> "In sundry Acts of Parliament, ratified and confirmed at the Revolution, the Courts of the Church of Scotland were declared to possess that exclusive jurisdiction in all that was spiritual within the said Church which the Bill recognizes as belonging to them. Within the last 40 years the Civil Courts of the Realm have repeatedly and emphatically confirmed that exclusive jurisdiction of the Church, and the Church has herself regarded such jurisdiction as her inalienable right."

Under these circumstances, the Resolutions declared, the Church was in no need, on her own behalf, of such a declaration of her independence as was proposed in this Bill, and had had no part in suggesting it. That was the official position of the Church of Scotland. She was perfectly satisfied with her position. She believed that she already possessed everything that was offered to her under this Bill. The Committee went on to say—

> "They cannot but regard with interest and sympathy the proposals to remove obstacles to the re-union of the Presbyterians of Scotland, which seeks by that declaration to remove doubts and difficulties from the minds of the Presbyterians."

He did not question the justice or the moderation of that finding; but what did the Committee propose? It proposed that if this Bill were passed, the General Assembly of the Established Church should hold a conference with the other Churches in order to consider some basis on which she and they might be incorporated in one National Church. Did that not appear rather like putting the cart before the horse, to ask them to pass this Bill before any basis had been agreed upon? If that conference had taken place, and a basis of union had been arrived at, then the hon. and learned Gentleman would have been able to come to that House and assure them, not from hearsay or from impressions, but from the actual findings of the Church Courts assembled in the Conference what the views of the different Churches concerned were upon the subject. He would not have been obliged to refer to Petitions got up anyhow. He would have been able to produce the findings of the different Church Courts, and to say that it had been agreed that upon that basis union could be accomplished, and to ask the House to pass his Bill to remove the obstacles which stood in the way. That would have been a logical reason for passing the Bill; but to ask the House to pass a Bill before they knew that it would be of any good whatever in the way of removing the obstacles to union seemed to him proceeding in a false and vicious direction. If the other Churches had been silent, they might have assumed their assent; but he did not know whether it had struck the House that, while the hon. and learned Gentleman had given them a vast amount of information on various other topics, he had not told them what was the position which had been taken up by the representatives of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches in regard to this Bill. As to the United Presbyterian Church, whatever might be its theoretical tenets, it was practically a Voluntary Church. They had held a large Conference in Glasgow to consider that Bill, and had passed a number of resolutions. These resolutions affirmed that the Conference was convinced that the obstacles to the re-union of the Presbyterians of Scotland would not be removed by passing any such measure as that now proposed; that they deemed the passing of any such measure, in present circumstances, a great injustice; they were assured that the United Presbyterian Church would not entertain any proposal for continuing the public endowments for religious purposes, either by conferring them on a re-united Presbyterian Church, or by dividing them among the different denominations of the Christians in Scotland; and the Conference, in fact, was of opinion that the one way in which union could be brought about was on the basis of Disestablisment and Disendowment. The Free Church was a larger branch of the Presbyterian Church than the United Presbyterians, and was more closely allied to the Establishment in its tenets; and the hon. and learned Gentleman had told them that his Bill would place the Establishment exactly on the basis laid down by the Free Church in the Claim of Right. The hon. and learned Gentleman had told the House what Dr. Chalmers's views were; but it appeared to him that a great many things had happened since the days of Dr. Chalmers. The Committee of the

Free Church on the relations between Church and State stated—

> "Not only did the Free Church come out from the Establishment, claiming to be the Church of Scotland free, but in coming out they necessarily created, and since then by God's blessing has increased around her, a great system of religious instruction, of congregational life and work, of domestic and missionary activity and opportunity. Moreover, the progress of years has led to the formation of new relations and new impressions as to duty and privileges."

The hon. and learned Gentleman ignored the change that had taken place of late years in the attitude of the Free Church. What was the position of the recognized mouthpieces of that Church with regard to this Bill? The Committee of the Free Church on the relations between Church and State reported that they considered the proposals of the Bill deserved to be not only rejected, but condemned; that the proposals contained in the Bill constituted not merely a wrong, but something more, which the Committee abstained from characterizing; that the direction in which the Bill pointed would be found to lead only to new divisions, new strife, and new confusion; and that the Free Church must renounce the very meaning of the Disruption conflict if she was to acquiesce in the continued occupation by the Church now established of the recognition and the privileges which Establishment implied; and the Committee further pointed out that, in their opinion, there was but one mode in which union could be brought about, and that was on the basis of Disestablishment. That Report of the Committee came before the Commission of the Free Church Assembly, and the finding of that Body was even stronger. It appeared to the Commission that, so far as the Bill referred to the essential independence of the Church of Christ, it was inadequate and delusive; that, in reference to the reunion of Scotch Presbyterians, the Bill pointed in a direction misleading and impracticable; and that the passing of the measure, considered as a matter affecting Scotch Presbyterians generally, without their consent, and mainly in the interests of one of them, would be a new and grave example on the part of the Legislature of a complete disregard of the rights and interests and wishes of the Free Church of Scotland. This Resolution was carried by 60 votes against 14. To sum up—the Established Church said that they already possessed all the rights which the proposal before the House was intended to confer—that the Bill was, in fact, illusory and delusive, so far as conferring any freedom on the Church of Scotland was concerned. The United Presbyterians characterized the measure as unfair, unjust, and illusory. The Free Church also said that the Bill should not only be rejected but condemned, and that to pass such a measure would be a great disregard of the interests, wishes, and feelings of the Free Church of Scotland. In a statement in support of the Bill issued to hon. Members an attempt had been made to minimize the importance of the finding of the Free Church Commission. It was stated that only a small number of the Members of the Commission were present, and that they took up an attitude inconsistent with the position of the Free Church which made the Protest of 1843. If the representative character of the meeting of the Commission were impugned, that appeared to him to be an argument for putting off the second reading of the Bill for six months, because, by that time, the General Assembly would then have had an opportunity of considering the measure and pronouncing an opinion upon it; and it would be no longer necessary to surmise as to what would have been the result if a larger meeting had been able to attend to the discussion of this Report. He must say that after the eulogium which the hon. and learned Gentleman passed upon the Fathers of the Free Church, and the admiration he expressed—and which all must share—for the manner in which they gave up their livings and emoluments, and came forth rather than remain in a Church which did not possess the rights and the freedom to which they laid claim, he must say that the charges of inconsistency against that Church came with a bad grace from the descendants of the men who remained within the Church, and who gave up the claims which were put forth in her name. But the practical question for the House to consider was not whether the position taken up by the Free Church was inconsistent with the Protest of 1843, but whether it was sufficiently consistent with the recent attitude of the Free Church on matters of Church policy to lead them to believe that it was one which would be likely to be departed from. When the Patronage Act was before the House of Commons for the first time, the General Assembly of the Free Church passed a Resolution in favour of Disestablishment, and ever since that time similar Resolutions had been yearly passed. The consistency of the Free Church in passing such Resolutions had been repeatedly challenged; but it had been as repeatedly vindicated, and even the promoters of the Bill must admit that the present attitude of the Free Church and its Commission was entirely consistent with the attitude which, in regard to these Disestablishment Resolutions, the General Assembly had for such a long time taken up. The hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to that feature of Presbyterian Church government, the large representation of the laity in their Church Courts; and he thought it a pity that when he did so, and spoke apparently with such confidence as to the opinion of the laity of the Free Church, he did not take the trouble to inform himself as to how the opinion of the laity in the Church Courts of the Free Church had been expressed on the matter of Church policy which would guide their vote with regard to his Bill. He had in his hand an analysis of the various votes on the Disestablishment Question which had been taken in the General Assembly of the Free Church since the year 1878. He found that during that time 1,457 votes of ministers were recorded in favour of the Disestablishment Resolutions against 333 on the other side. That was a majority of some four to one. Not only so, but 972 votes of elders or laymen were recorded in favour of the Disestablishment Resolutions against 288 in favour of the Established Church. That fact with regard to the lay elders showed, he thought, that the vast majority of opinion on the part of the lay as well as clerical members of the Courts of the Free Church was in favour of Disestablishment, and consequently against the proposals of the present Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that in the Highlands, at least, public opinion was unanimous upon the point; but an analysis of the voting of the members of the Highland Synods, as represented in the General Assembly, showed, he was told, that there was a majority of even Highland opinion, and, he believed, even a majority of lay opinion in the Highlands, as represented by the elders, had been recorded in favour of these Disestablishment Resolutions. On no previous occasion was the majority in favour of these Motions so large as in 1885, when the Disestablishment Resolutions was passed by 406 against 67, and the vote on that occasion included 156 elders in favour, and only 37 against the Resolution. The Committee of the Established Church, in the Resolutions to which he had referred, recommended a Conference of the Churches to arrange a basis of union; but when it became apparent that nothing could be hoped for from the Conference of the Church Courts, and just as it became apparent, the Churchmen changed their tactics, and the defenders of the Church were now appealing to the laity, saying that it was a question to be decided by them, and that they must not be led by the clergymen on this matter. Well, the grounds on which attempts had been made to influence lay opinion and the Bill itself proceeded on very different lines. From the first there had been a demand by the Constitutional Party in Scotland that there should be an equitable participation among the different Presbyterian Bodies of the endowments of the Church. That was a matter which had not escaped the attention of the hon. and learned Gentleman who introduced the Bill. When he was before his constituents, he was expressly asked as to whether he would propose that the Nonconformist ministers should have a share of the endowments; and he expressed the opinion that the obstacles to union being removed, and union taking place, of course they would receive their share. Since the Bill had been before the country, several unofficial proposals for the participation in the Church funds had been brought forward; and in the appeals to the laity very great stress had been laid upon the certainty that the funds at present devoted to the Establishment would be participated in among all the Churches. He did not know precisely what might be intended; but the hon. and learned Gentleman had intimated that if his Bill were carried, and the Churches united on its basis, he would come again to

Parliament with a measure intended to redistribute the ecclesiastical endowments of Scotland. He (Dr. Cameron) thought it would be better for them to have a complete scheme before them. In the interests of all concerned, it would be well to know what it was proposed to do with the endowments before they left the ministers of the various Nonconforming Churches at the mercy of the Established Church, which at present monopolized the endowments. He believed the effect of this Bill, were it passed, would be similar to that produced by the Patronage Act. That measure was brought forward to remedy a grievance felt by the members of the Established Church; and it was stated that it would strengthen the Establishment at the same time. It had done very little to strengthen the Church, for the amount of secessions from the Free Church had been as nothing, and the effect of the measure had been very great in stirring up strife. This Bill would have the same effect. If the attitude of Churchmen in connection with the former Act was deemed aggressive, their action now in connection with the present Bill must be regarded as doubly so, for the Bill owed its strength, not to any support it was receiving from the Constitutional Party in the Free Church, but to the support it was receiving from Churchmen, in the hope that the Church of Scotland would benefit by the secession from other Churches to which it was likely to lead. The very proposal of the declaration contained in the Bill was made to the General Assembly of the Established Church when the Patronage Bill was under discussion before it, and the General Assembly refused to sanction any such declaration on the ground that it could add nothing to the rights to which it laid claim, and would appear to throw doubts upon its possession of them. The Prime Minister made a statement during the last Election to the effect that no legislation adverse to the Church of Scotland would be undertaken during the present Parliament. He thought in fairness that it followed that no legislation adverse to the Free or United Presbyterian Churches should be permitted. Either the Bill effected nothing, as was argued, in which case it was unnecessary, superfluous, calculated to settle nothing, and to unsettle many things; or it effected some real change in the relations between Church and State in Scotland. If it made any such change, Parliament would, in passing it, set up a grave and dangerous precedent, proceeding on which they might find themselves called upon to engage in such a work of Church reconstruction as would be anything but congenial to the spirit of the Democracy of this 19th century. In no case could the Bill bring about any reunion between the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches and the Established Church of Scotland; and in no case could it bring about any reconstruction which could be regarded as final. Avowedly introduced in the interests of a small section of one of the Presbyterian Churches, it owed its danger to the support givent to it by aggressive Churchmen, who, without alleging the smallest grievance on their own part demanding redress, had moved heaven and earth to promote it. The Bill, which, it had been admitted, would have no practical effect so far as the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland were concerned, was supported openly on the ground that it would strengthen the National Church at the expense of the Dissenting Presbyterian communities; and to pass such a measure would be an attack on the part of the Legislature on the Voluntary Churches, for its result, if any, would be to disintegrate and disunite them. He asked the House, therefore, on behalf of the Voluntary Churches of Scotland, to refuse to countenance any such an attack upon them by rejecting the second reading of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. PRESTON BRUCE (Fifeshire, W.), in rising to second the Amendment, said, he could not refrain from expressing his admiration of the speech in which the hon. and learned Member for the Inverness Burghs (Mr. Finlay) had moved the second reading of the Bill. He would not attempt to follow the arguments of the hon. and learned Member throughout, but would only make two observations upon points upon which the hon. and learned Member laid stress. The hon. and learned Member had tried to show the House that he had a certain amount of public support to his measure in Scotland. He did not think the hon. and learned Member was successful in showing that he had the support, to any considerable extent, in the Lowlands of Scotland; but, perhaps, he made out more of a case indicating support in the Highlands of Scotland, and that from persons outside of the present Establishment. He thought it was rather remarkable the way in which the hon. and learned Member put the position of the Free Church Highlanders. The hon. and learned Member said the Highlanders desired reconstruction and detested destruction. He dared say, if the question was put to them in that way, they would be inclined to favour a measure of this kind, so long as they were told that the alternative was absolute destruction of the Church, and no Church at all. That, of course, was not the position of those who opposed the Bill. Everyone had acknowledged that a layman, in reading over the Bill, would have some difficulty in saying what it would effect. It was of great interest to know whether the author of the Bill maintained that it would effect a great change, a small change, or no change at all. He could not say that the hon. and learned Member was very distinct upon that point. At one time he told them that his Bill effected such a change that the important judicial decisions which preceded the Disruption could not have taken place had the law stood in the way which the hon. and learned Member intended to place it. If this measure overturned these important principles, which were acted upon and affirmed over and over again at that time, then it was impossible to describe it as a small or unimportant measure. But in another part of his speech he understood the hon. and learned Member to say that it must still remain the duty of the Civil Courts to determine the limits of the jurisdiction of the Church Courts.

Mr. FINLAY: I did not say so.

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE said, he understood the hon. and learned Member to say something very much to that effect. He said it was "impossible, or next to impossible," that these questions could arise again.

Mr. FINLAY: I said it was practically impossible that under the Definition Clauses of the Bill any questions as to spiritual matters could arise.

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE said, he must take the hon. and learned Member's word for that. He thought it was unnecessary to go further into the point, because it seemed to him that there were preliminary reasons why the House ought to reject the Bill. The Preamble stated that it was a Bill to remove obstacles to the re-union of the Presbyterians of Scotland; therefore, surely, there was no occasion to go on with that Bill, unless some *primâ facie* case could be made out to the effect that the Bill was likely to accomplish that object. The natural interpretation that anyone would put upon the phrase "re-union of the Presbyterians of Scotland" would be a re-union of the various Church Bodies in Scotland. Was that what the Bill promised?—a re-union, for instance, between the Free Church as a body and the Established Church as a body? He maintained that they had ample grounds for saying that there was no prospect whatever of the Bill leading to a re-union in that sense. In the year 1884 a Motion was adopted in the Free Church Assembly by 372 to 59 to this effect—

> "That with a view to justice, peace, and re-union among Presbyterians Disestablishment and Disendowment were essential."

As to the United Presbyterians, surely it was unnecessary to labour the point. The position of the vast majority of that Church was this—that re-union could only take place after Disestablishment and Disendowment. The hon. and learned Member professed to know the principles of the Free Church better than the Free Church itself—a very extraordinary position for him to take up. The hon. and learned Member said that the judgments of the Church Courts were those of the Dissenting ministers only, and did not express the views of the laity connected with the non-established Churches; but at another time he argued that the system of government of the Scottish Churches was a democratic system, and that for this reason they might be safely intrusted with a large measure of spiritual independence without its meaning anything like priestly tyranny. The constitution of the non-Established Churches was quite as democratic as the constitution of Established Churches; therefore, the hon. and learned Member could not have the benefit of both these arguments. If these Churches were democratic in their constitution, then they were entitled to take the expression of their highest Courts as being the expression of the opinion of both clergy and laity. The Bill did not promise the re-union of the Churches as corporate bodies; but there was another sense in which re-union might be said to be promoted by the Bill. It might detach individuals or sections from one or other of these non-Established Churches, and unite them to the Established; but that was quite a different kind of re-union. The position of the hon. and learned Member with reference to this question was distinctly that of a small section of the Free Church. He (Mr. Preston Bruce) did not believe that the hon. and learned Member represented in this matter more than a small section of the Free Church. That small section produced a motion at the Free Church Assembly of last year, and the motion asked for a Declaratory Act very much on the lines of the Bill of the hon. and learned Member. Only 67 voted in favour of that motion, out of a total of about 500 members of that Assembly. If that was the kind of re-union contemplated by the Bill of the hon. and learned Member, surely those words which his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had quoted as having been used in 1874 by the Prime Minister were very much to the point. The House should carefully consider whether it was right to give facilities in the way proposed for detaching individuals or sections from another Church. And he quite agreed with his hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) that the case for the Bill was much less strong than it was before the passing of the Patronage Act in 1874. Then there was a distinct grievance complained of which had been removed. Here there were no grievances at all. The Established Church said—"We have no need for a Declaratory Act of this kind." He hoped the attitude of the present House would be rather that of the Prime Minister in 1874 than that of the Tory Government of that year, because it was to be remembered that the Patronage Act was carried through by a Tory Government against the opposition of the Liberal Party. He believed there was a desire in Scotland for union among Presbyterian Churches, and that desire existed not only among members of the Establishment, but also very widely among members of the non-Established Churches; but among those who desired that union there was a great line of demarcation. There were those who thought that the union could be brought about on the basis of the Establishment; there were others who thought that the union could only come about, if at all, after Disestablishment and Disendowment. He believed that many members of the Established Church themselves held that opinion, and among them they could count upon so high an authority as the Duke of Argyll. The great question of Establishment *versus* Disestablishment must be settled before the question of union could be settled; and, therefore, it was of importance to note what was the present position of the question of Disestablishment in Scotland. In November of last year the Prime Minister made an important speech, which all would recollect, on that subject. In that speech he placed Disestablishment at the "end of a long vista;" but he afterwards explained that that "long vista" meant the duration of the Parliament which was then about to be elected—that was to say the present Parliament—and many persons were of opinion that this was not a very long vista. That position taken up by the Prime Minister was reluctantly acquiesced in by those who desired a settlement of the question on the lines of Disestablishment; but he thought they might fairly make a strong appeal to the right hon. Gentleman and his Government, if they were pledged not practically to take up Disestablishment, at any rate not to make a move in another direction—they might, at any rate, ask that the *status quo* as between these parties should remain unaltered. He hoped he had shown some good reasons why this Bill should not be accepted. It offered no genuine prospect of re-union among the Presbyterian Churches; it removed no felt grievance now existing in the Established Church. On the other hand, it threatened unfairly to weaken and undermine the position of the Free Church in a manner which this House, he thought, so far from approving, should distinctly condemn.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): We have heard a very excellent statement and defence of this Bill from the hon. and learned Member for the Inverness Burghs (Mr. Finlay), and we have heard criticisms of the Bill——

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL, resuming, said: My hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Inverness Burghs (Mr. Finlay) has spoken on the subject of this Bill as a Free Churchman. I, Sir, wish to speak on behalf of those who are members of the Established Church, and to explain the position which that Church takes with regard to this Bill. The Bill was not suggested by the Church of Scotland, nor proposed in its behalf. It is proposed on behalf of those who would wish to be re-united to the Church; but to this Bill the Church gives, so far as it has had an opportunity to express its opinion, its cordial approval. We recognize in it a response to the invitation which the Church of Scotland has given for many years past for some movement towards union amongst the Presbyterians of Scotland. I am anxious to make that plain to the House; and, therefore, I have to ask the indulgence of the House while I refer to one or two facts in support of my statement. In 1870, before the abolition of patronage, the General Assembly recorded their hearty willingness and desire to take all possible steps consistently with the principles on which this Church is founded to promote the re-union of Churches having a common origin, adhering to the same Confession of Faith and the same system of government and worship. Then in 1874, after the passing of the Patronage Act, a Committee of the General Assembly, entitled the Committee on Union with other Churches, resolved to recommend that the General Assembly should, without further delay, formally approach the other Presbyterian Churches in Scotland with a view to union. They were of opinion "that in order to the accomplishment of this great object the Church of Scotland should be prepared to consider any basis of union which is consistent with its historic principles." In the following year the General Assembly, renewing the expression of their desire for co-operation with other Churches in all good works, declared themselves "ready to consider any suggestion which other Presbyterian Churches may make as to the removal of what they may feel to be obstacles in the way of re-union." Then, in 1878, the Assembly instructed their Committee to approach the other Churches on the subject of re-union; and in the following year, on receiving the report of their Committee, the Assembly recorded their regret that on the subject of union the replies did not encourage the hopes of further correspondence on the subject being followed with immediate results; but the Assembly renewed their expression of their hearty willingness and desire to take all possible steps consistent with the maintenance of an Establishment of religion to promote the re-union of such Churches having a common origin and holding the same standards. All formal action of the Church in the matter thus came necessarily to a close, at least for a time. This Bill may be regarded as an answer to the invitations which the Church made in those years. Why has this Bill appeared now? And how is it that its provisions have not been formulated before? These are natural questions; and I believe that satisfactory answers can be given. Let me premise, however, that the provisions, though not presented until now in the form of clauses of a Bill, have for a long time been spoken of in Scotland as what would be necessary to bring about reunion. What was said to be necessary was, in the first place, the abolition of patronage, and, in the second place, a Declaratory Act on the subject of spiritual independence. In truth, the minds of people were not unprepared for such a measure, which is shown by the fact that the appearance of the Bill has caused no surprise in Scotland. On the contrary, as my hon. and learned Friend who moved the second reading has shown, the Bill has been received with general expressions of approval. As my hon. and learned Friend said, the Secession, or Disruption, of 1843 was chiefly brought about by a division of opinion on the question whether the spiritual independence of the Church had been invaded and denied. Those who seceded said it had; those who stood by the Church said it had not. The Seceding party put their views into form in the Claim of Right. Those remaining in the Church agreed with the general propositions in that Claim, but not with its representation of what was implied in the decisions of the Civil Courts complained of. The Church party, equally with the Seceding party, maintained that the Church possessed an independent jurisdiction in spiritual things; but then they differed from them in holding that that jurisdiction had not been lost or compromised in the controversies of those days. As to the Claim of Right, those who adhered to the Church after the Secession admitted the major premiss, but not the minor. My hon. and learned Friend paid a very just tribute to the noble sacrifices made by those who founded the Free Church. I do not in any way dispute their claim to admiration. At the same time, I think it necessary to add that they were not the only parties who made sacrifices for their convictions. Although those who remained by the Established Church were not called upon to make sacrifices of the same kind, they did make sacrifices which were quite as difficult to make; they had to oppose what at the time was a popular movement, and had to face something like popular obloquy. I do not wish to argue the question as to the effect of the decisions of the Civil Courts on the spiritual independence of the Church, but simply to state the position of parties in the matter. What, then, happened to the Church? It had passed two Acts of Assembly, which, on appeal by those who felt aggrieved by them, had been declared by the Civil Courts to have been passed *ultra vires* of the Church, because interfering with civil rights. One of these was the Veto Act modifying patronage, and the other an Act giving to ministers of unendowed chapels the full standing in Church Courts of parish ministers. The Church, therefore, rescinded these Acts, which had been found to be irregular, and sought to attain in a legitimate way, by Acts of Parliament, the objects which had been aimed at by those Acts of Assembly. For the modification and the regulation of patronage they had Lord Aberdeen's Act; and for the institution of new parishes they had Sir James Graham's Act, under the operation of which the Church, by her own efforts, has founded and endowed 341 parishes since that time. Notwithstanding Lord Aberdeen's Act, the question of patronage was found after several years' experience to be not satisfactorily dealt with; hence there was a request to Parliament to abolish patronage, and transfer to the congregation the right of electing the minister. That took place in 1874, and it was asked for by the Church and given to the Church as an Act to remove a grievance which the Church felt, and by no means for the purpose of poaching on the domains of other Churches. It was, no doubt, felt to be a matter for congratulation that this relief to the Church would at the same time remove a difficulty which had kept many from returning to the communion of the Church. The Patronage Abolition Act removed entirely the cause of offence which had been the first origin of the Church's troubles; and hence it was that on the passing of that Act the General Assembly made new approaches to the other Churches on the subject of union. But the question of spiritual independence remained. As regards this, the Church maintains that it enjoys independence in its Church work to the fullest extent practicable—to a greater extent than any other Church can do. She can point to the decisions of the Civil Courts since 1843 as confirming this claim; therefore she requires for herself no new declaration of her spiritual independence, and she sees in what this Bill says on the subject nothing that is new. But others outside the Church—Free Churchmen—have still the impressions which were left on them by the old controversies, and by the allegations of the Claim of Right, and they desire a distinct statutory declaration on the subject. The Duke of Argyll, in the letter which has already been referred to, says their jealousy on this point is not only natural but laudable; that it is the homage of earnest men to the great principles on which the Presbyterian Church was founded, and which constitute its special glory in the history of Christendom. The desire for a Declaratory Act has been in the minds of many for some years past; but how is it that it has found this definite expression now? I believe we owe the appearance of the Bill to the agitation for Disestablishment. That movement has only served to show how strong is the feeling in Scotland for maintaining a National Established Church, and has suggested the removal of any obstacle to a re-union of those who on all essential points and in the matter of Church government think alike. All who are acquainted with Scotland will agree that the movement for Disestablishment has not been received with anything like popular enthusiasm. It has been practically a failure; and demonstration of that result was given last year by the Petitions, to which my hon. Friend has referred, against the Bill which proposed to disestablish and disendow the Church. I would remind the House that a few years earlier there was a remarkable Petition from Free Churchmen in the Highlands, signed by no fewer than 51,000; and another from ministers and other office-bearers of the Free Church, signed by 408 persons, asking that a Resolution then before the House for disestablishment and disendowment should not be entertained. The grounds stated were the following:—

> "Because in the opinion of your Petitioners the removal of religion in its public profession in Scotland from the cognizance and support of the State, and the leaving of its moulding and advancement entirely to the action and influence of individuals or of voluntary associations, would be dangerous to the interests of true religion itself, and not less therefore to the just claims and influence of civil government."

I believe these words express what is still the mind of Free Churchmen in the Highlands. I may be reminded that the Church of Scotland is very weak in some parts of the Highlands. That is true. But the Highlanders petition for this Bill. The question is not how many people belong to the Church, but how many wish to see the Church disestablished. It is the only possible Established Church for Scotland, and its members wish to see it made as comprehensive as is consistent with its principles as a Church. In this case it cannot be said, as was said by some the other day of another Church, that it is an alien Church, or connected with ideas of conquest, or the Church of a mere fraction of the population, or a Church in the government of which the people have not a voice. Whom will this Bill satisfy? It ought to satisfy all Presbyterians who have not drifted from their original Church principles. The Free Church, if satisfied on this point of spiritual independence, ought to welcome the hope of re-union with us in an Established Church. And as to the United Presbyterian Church, now that patronage is abolished, it may be reminded of what was said by the founders of the Churches of which it is composed. It is stated in a republication of the Act and Testimony of the Burghers, 1747, that—

> "Were the grounds of their secession happily removed they would account it one of the most singular felicities of their time to return with pleasure to the communion of the Established Church of Scotland."

The Relief Church was originated by a few ministers in 1761, who formed themselves into a Presbytery—

> "To afford relief to all who adhered to the constitution of the Church of Scotland as exhibited in her creed, canons, confessions, and forms of worship, but who disapproved of the law of patronage presently exercised in the Church."

Those whom the Bill will not satisfy are the opponents of the union of Church and State. But it is to be remembered that nothing will satisfy them in this matter which will not offend the convictions of those—a much larger number of persons—who hold that the union of Church and State is of essential benefit both to the Church and to the State. We desire a re-union of Presbyterians—that is, a union again of those who have been united before, which was in a Church recognized by, and connected with, the State. It may be objected to this Bill that it does not show how the reconstruction of the Church, by the re-admission of those who seek by this Bill to remove obstacles to re-union, would be accomplished. But once the way is made open, the process of re-uniting may surely be left with confidence to the Christian common-sense of the Churches. Parliament, at least, cannot prescribe in this matter. On this point I would refer hon. Members to the words of the Duke of Argyll, who says—

> "I venture to add that, in my opinion, the support of this Bill by the laity of the Presbyterian Church, who desire to see as much union as can be obtained, ought not to be made dependent on preliminary negotiation of any kind. If we are satisfied that on its own merits it is right and just; if we are sure, as we may well be, that it is mainly a straightforward re-assertion of the old constitution of the Presbyterian Church, of the living and working constitution which our ancestors bled and fought for in common, we may well leave to time and reflection the effects which it will produce on the divisions which we all deplore."

I feel that the members of the Church of Scotland owe their thanks to the hon. Member for bringing forward this Bill—

that the whole of Scotland also owes him its thanks for what Lord Moncrieff, himself a Free Churchman, has characterized as a "spirited and patriotic attempt to settle a distressing controversy."

MR. S. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I ask the indulgence of the House in rising for the first time, and I trust the favourable construction which you, Sir, asked from the Throne at the opening of Parliament should be put upon the actions of this House may be extended by the House to my remarks. The Bill now before the House for a second reading applies to Scotland only. It is a Bill proposing to improve the constitution of the Church of Scotland, which I regret we should be compelled to debate in this House. Religion, in my opinion, is far too sacred a matter to be mixed up with politics and debated by the House of Commons. But, Sir, so long as the existing relationship continues between Church and State we must, I fear, face the question, and seek for a happy solution. This Bill is said to be promoted by its authors in the interests of union between the three Presbyterian Churches in Scotland. I do not perceive the slightest trace of evidence in the Bill to convince me that it would accomplish this much to be desired end. I rather think it would have an effect precisely the reverse. The title and Preamble states it to be a Bill to declare the constitution of the Church of Scotland—a most extraordinary and exceptional title. Why? The constitution of the Church of Scotland is well enough understood already, and requires no such declaration as is proposed. A Church with a history and a life extending over from two to three centuries should be well known to the people of Scotland, and to assume that they stand in need of an Act of Parliament to declare it is not by any means complimentary to their intelligence. Much is made of the question of spiritual independence, which to many Members of this House may appear somewhat puzzling. But it is well understood in Scotland, and there is no difficulty whatever in learning whether it does or does not exist in the Established Church. In connection with this question of spiritual independence this Bill makes a feeble attempt to solve what has hitherto proved insoluble—namely, to free the Church from State control, and yet to leave her dependent upon the State support. The decisions of the Church Courts are not, in future, according to this Bill, to be subject to review by the civil power, although these may, and would most certainly, carry with them the material welfare of individuals arising out of the temporalities of the Church. The idea is preposterous, and all such attempts to revive an ecclesiastical hierarchy must be firmly suppressed. The Free Church claim for spiritual independence is manifestly the foundation of this Bill. But the Free Church ministers of 1843 sacrificed their livings to obtain their freedom and to gain spiritual independence. This Bill seeks to confer the same privilege by sacrificing the first principles of civil government. It has long been the dream of a small section of the Free Church that they should have what this Bill pretends to bestow, and it looks remarkably like as if this was an effort put forth to build a golden bridge whereby they might return to the bosom of the Established Church. But I think you will agree with me that all such attempts to strengthen one branch of the Church by first weakening another branch by aid of an Act of Parliament deserves to fail, and may, I think, be characterized as a policy of meanness. No doubt, legislation is much wanted to allay strife and the rancorous bitter feelings now unhappily prevailing in country districts. But this Bill would aggravate rather than tend to soften the strained conditions of society in many rural parishes in Scotland. Three-fourths of the people, I may safely say, are Presbyterians, having one faith, one creed, one baptism. But, unfortunately, in consequence of the secessions during the last 150 years, and the great Disruption of 1843, when 400 ministers of the Church of Scotland nobly gave up their livings for conscience sake the Church is now divided into three parts—the Established, the Free, and the United Presbyterian Churches, all professing the same creed, and practically preaching the same doctrine, causing an enormous waste of men and money. All the country North of the Caledonian Canal may be said to be ministered to by the Free Church. In the counties of Ross, Cromarty, Sutherland, and Caithness only one in 61 of the population of these counties is a member of the Established Church. In five parishes—namely, Carnock, Gairloch, Shieldaig, Barras, and Lochs, having a population of 11,454 souls, and the value of the livings amounting to £1,049, there are five clergymen, ministering to only 22 communicants, and one of these parishes has only two members on the communion roll. Matters are certainly not so bad in the South of Scotland; but even there they are not at all satisfactory. I know of one parish within 30 miles of the Border where there are only 400 souls, all told, with three ministers and three churches. These facts show very clearly that there is a strong case for union—what I term an incorporating union, which is much wanted—but not one of absorption such as this Bill so unworthily proposes. This Bill, if it were carried out, would leave many ministers and their families to starve. I admit that the remedy is difficult, but it is not impossible. The question reduces itself, so far as this House is concerned, to a matter of money. Well, what are the facts as to the emoluments of the Church of Scotland? Briefly stated, the teinds or tithes, and other national sources of income, amount to £350,000 a-year—certainly not a large sum to quarrel over, especially when you compare it with the amount raised annually in Scotland voluntarily for religious purposes. The Established Church raises annually in this way £300,000, the Free Church £600,000, the United Presbyterian Church £400,000, and the other denominations I estimate about the same as the United Presbyterian Church—namely, £400,000. This gives the handsome total of £1,700,000. Adding to that the amount received by the Establishment from State aid, we have a sum of £2,050,000 raised annually for religious purposes in Scotland. But it will be seen that the sum contributed by the State is only one-sixth of the whole. I consider that if an incorporated union could be formed on a basis satisfactory to all denominations, the small amount now in dispute could be saved twice over, and the difficulty could be easily surmounted. I think it the duty of every patriotic Scotsman to labour for the re-union of the Churches, and thus promote the high and holy ends of their common Christianity; but I shall vote against this Bill, because I believe it will prevent that union.

SIR ROBERT ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrews, &c.): I quite agree with the hon. Member who has just sat down that we should labour for the union of the Presbyterian bodies in Scotland; but, unfortunately, I disagree with him as to the methods by which it is to be brought about. I wish to explain the course which the Church of Scotland has taken from the first in regard to this question of union. The hon. Member said that we have had the Scottish Church for 300 years, and surely we knew what her constitution is, and her laws, and her spiritual independence. It is true we have had the Church for 300 years, and it has year by year more endeared itself to the people of Scotland; and I think that it will appear shortly, if it has not appeared now, that the Scottish people are determined to keep that Church, which is a thoroughly democratic Church, and which allies itself with every wise and popular movement. The hon. Member for Glasgow University (Mr. A. J. Campbell) has quoted declarations by the Assembly of the Scottish Church to show that from the first, long before this Bill was brought in and talked of, it had been anxious and willing to use every possible means of re-union with Presbyterian bodies, and to act cordially and generously towards other bodies; and others might be added to his list. I may say, in this connection, that a more unfair charge has never been made against any Church than that which I have heard several times in this House, and sometimes out of the House, that the Patronage Abolition Act of 1874 was brought forward with some keen desire to benefit the Church at the expense of other Churches. I will undertake to say, having known the whole action of the Church and the Assemblies from the very first, that no Act was ever promoted or brought into this House in a more honest, more honourable, or a more thoroughly straightforward manner than the Patronage Act. I may say also that the passing of that Act has removed the main objection taken, and fairly taken, by members of the Dissenting Bodies of Scotland to union with our Church, and that, taken as a whole, it has answered its purposes admirably well. The appointments under the Patronage Act of 1874 have been almost uniformly wise ones, and the disputed settlements have been very few. In the year 1873 the General Assembly passed a Resolution, in which they renewed the expression of their hearty willingness and desire to take all possible steps, consistent with the maintenance and support of an Established Church, to promote co-operation in good works and the reunion of Churches having the same faith and Church government. This House will be surprised to learn that the three Presbyterian Bodies are practically one in government, one in Confession of Faith, and one in their form of worship; and notwithstanding that there is more ecclesiastical arguing, more fighting, and more quarrelling between these three bodies than one can imagine from that point of view, I think that we, as Churchmen, certainly owe a debt to the hon. and learned Member for the Inverness Burghs for having introduced this Bill. I do not deny that this Bill is introduced in the interests of the Free Church, but because it is introduced in the interests of the Free Church that is no reason why it should not be heartily welcomed; and it will certainly relieve the Church of difficulties which it is supposed to labour under. So far we shall give it our most hearty support. With regard to the action of the Church to other Churches, it has been one of universal friendliness, generosity, and cordiality, and I believe that there is at this moment a most earnest desire on the part of all sections in Scotland to see this Bill passed, in order that there may be a basis of union upon which the Churches can open negotiations. If there is one point upon which I concur with the hon. and learned Member who introduced the Bill, it is that the people of Scotland have resolved that their Church shall be reformed, if you will, and coalesced with other Churches, but that they will not lose that Church, for which they entertain the profoundest respect, and which has for 300 years uniformly placed itself on the side of freedom and of the people. [*Cries of* "No, no."] Some hon. Gentlemen behind me do not agree with this, but I think their acquaintance with the history of Scotland cannot be very deep. I repeat, if there is one Church which has uniformly placed itself on the side of freedom, and on the side of the people, it is the Church of Scotland; and although I do not object to Gentlemen having their own opinions in regard to Disestablishment, I am thoroughly convinced that the people of Scotland have made up their minds that they will, if possible, reform their Church, and that under any circumstances they will maintain the union of Church and State, which is not only a part of their own principles, but is a fundamental principle of the Free Church, and, I think it may also turn out, of other Presbyterian bodies as well.

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL (Renfrew, W.) said, he desired to make some points of the Bill clearer to the minds of hon. Members who represented places South of the Tweed. In Scotland, it must be remembered, there were a certain amount of subtleties which the people delighted in cuddling, as it were; and in these subtleties, which might not be altogether patent or visible to those born South of the Tweed, they had the foundation of a great many of the differences which unfortunately afflicted the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland. When patronage was first established in the Reign of Queen Anne, in 1712, it was not of the character of the patronage repealed in 1874, but grew to it. At the time it was first proposed, Church extension then, as now, was going on, and pious persons founded and endowed churches; and those who did so, and their representatives and heirs, thought themselves entitled to present to the temporalities of these churches. Later on, the State was given the power to support the temporalities of the Church, and to support under the Act of Patronage simply those who had been inducted to the temporalities and not to the spiritual part of the Church government. During what were called the "dark ages" of the Church they found that by successive enactments, and by the general feeling of the majority of the people, and by the Church Courts, they leaned rather to the view that the State should have a certain jurisdiction which was never contemplated by the Act of Union, or the three Acts ending 1560. At the beginning of the present century Dr. Chalmers, in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, proposed to abolish the Act of Patronage because many eminent members of the Church argued for many years against the principles which had gradually crept into the Church. The Disruption movement, beginning in 1832, was a protest against the gradual encroachments of the State. He sincerely honoured those gentlemen of the Free Church who took upon themselves the step of 1843, because they thought it was conscientiously their duty to do it. Then followed the Patronage Abolition Act of 1874, and what they had now got to consider was the reason for this Bill. There was in the minds of some of those who made such sacrifices in 1843 the idea that the taint of what the State had done before still existed in the Church of Scotland, and that, perhaps, the decisions then given were still binding, and that the State had a certain amount of authority over the spiritual Court, which members of the Church denied. This Bill, therefore, was to make a statutory declaration that these things did not exist. Everyone must hope and trust that the Bill would be the basis upon which the great Churches in Scotland might again unite. He felt deeply upon this subject, because he had so many friends belonging to these different Churches who had supported him, and who were determined to always support the Church through thick and through thin. The Petitions which he had presented in the House from a large body of the Free Church in his part of Scotland reiterated this feeling, that if they could only see a means by which they would be able to have a basis of union with the Church of Scotland, that was the dearest wish they could have. He thought that if the laity themselves were able to give full expression to their own opinions they would find that the Church Courts, under these circumstances, would be willing to work for union with the laity of the Free Church. They had heard it stated in that House that they should be doing a great deal of damage to the other Churches by passing this Bill. The great desire of the people of Scotland was that a union of the Churches should take place, because they saw that by such a union they might so far advance the work of their Master. Some hon. Members had shown horror at this Bill, yet they did not seem to show any horror at all at the terrible destruction which would take place if the Church of Scotland was disestablished. He believed the people of Scotland, as a whole and generally, would never willingly see their Church disestablished and disendowed. He trusted that the House would see its way to pass the Bill. In his opinion, it was not a dangerous measure, and he felt perfectly certain that it would do good. He might claim that in this House, which had been elected on democratic principles, the first duty that they should do would be to seek to follow out the wishes of the great majority of the Scottish people, and endeavour, at all events, to give them a basis upon which to unite.

Mr. BEITH (Glasgow, Central): The principle which this Bill proposes to accentuate and confirm is that known in Scotland as the principle of spiritual independence. It is the same principle as was contended for in England under the title of "liberty of conscience." In Scotland, from causes peculiar to the nation, the long battle in vindication of this principle has been fought in a manner more concrete than in England; but in both countries the issue so far has been the same. In England to her Nonconformist struggle, and in Scotland to the unflinching contest maintained by the Evangelical section of the Presbyterian Kirk, which has always represented the majority of the Scottish people—to these two contests, each extending over centuries, do the people of both countries largely owe their civil and religious liberties. The principle, therefore, which forms the subject-matter of this Bill is a Liberal principle of the first importance. I desire to point out to this House that the privileges represented by this principle have always been claimed as an inherent right. They are not to be conferred by Statute, and they ought not to be accepted as the gift of any Government, whatever might be its character or constitution. All free men, either as individuals or in association, are called upon to vindicate their rights in this respect, and to act upon them irrespective of consequences. The Bill before the House deals with this principle on purely Scotch lines, and for a Scotch purpose, and I desire in a few sentences to make the ecclesiastical position in Scotland intelligible to the House of Commons, if that is at all possible, and to show what the true object of this Bill is. From the Reformation downwards the Presbyterian Church of Scotland has claimed as a Divine right independence of all civil authorities in matters purely spiritual, and she has also claimed to be the sole judge of what subjects did and did not come within the scope of that designation, at the same time taking the risk of consequences. But the House must understand that the Presbyterian Church of Scotland is not an hierocracy. The ministers do not form the Church, nor do they govern or control its procedure. It is composed of the ministers and people of Scotland. The constitution is representative and, if I may use the term, democratic; and its proceedings, by means of its venerable Courts, represented the conscientious convictions of the Christian people, and therefore carried in concrete form a moral power and influence, which accounted largely, if I may be permitted to say so, for the moral and intellectual advancement of the nation. Well, from the Reformation downwards the principle of spiritual independence or liberty of conscience has been claimed by the people of Scotland through the action of their Church, and this claim has been consistently made, irrespective of State Establishment and Endowment. Prior to the Revolution Settlement of 1690, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland was disestablished and disendowed and re-established and re-endowed many times, and in these years of trouble—during the Reign of the Stuart Dynasty—the people of Scotland shed the blood of their best and noblest sons, as also did England, in vidication of this great principle. I wish now to show the bearing of these remarks upon the Bill before the House. At the Revolution Settlement of 1690 a new order of things was established in Scotland. The Presbyterian Church then entered into a compact with the State, securing, as she believed, by Statute her Presbyterian form of Church government, and also this fundamental principle of her spiritual independence. The Bill now under review has reference to this compact, and proposes to declare that the constitution of the present Established Church of Scotland, as established in 1690, admitted the absolute spiritual independence of that Church. The very fact that this measure has been brought forward by the Gentlemen who promote it—for it has never been asked for by the people of Scotland—admits that the spiritual independence of the present Established Church of Scotland has been denied. After the Settlement of 1690, a very few years only were required to prove that the Church was mistaken in believing that she had secured her distinctive principle of spiritual independence by the constitution then presented to her. The State would not, could not, allow that the Church, which it had established and endowed with national funds, should assert independence and become, as the State viewed the case, a *regnum in regno.* Accordingly, in 1712, Church patronage was reinstituted, and thereupon began a struggle with the State in vindication of the Church's distinctive principle, which led to the Secessions of 1733, 1769, and to the great Disruption of 1843. I wish the House to mark that the legal decisions of 1842, which led to that last and supreme event, settled once and for all the constitutional relation of the present Established Church to the State in view of the Compact of 1690, and the purpose of this Bill is to neutralize these legal decisions, and also, as I shall show, to negative the finding of this House in 1843. The law in 1842 was laid down in carefully considered decisions, pronounced over and over again, and confirmed in each case by the House of Lords, to this effect—

> "That whereas the Church enjoyed certain privileges and functions which were purely ecclesiastical, yet, inasmuch as statute bestowed these, the Church, as an establishment, was the creature of statute, and that therefore it was for the Supreme Court of Law to interpret the statute on which its functions rest."

Well, baffled in every Court of Law in the Kingdom, the Church, as a last resource, approached this House in January, 1843, and presented her well-known Claim of Right—a document which the Bill before the House has everything to do with, but which, for reasons best known to the promoters, it prefers to ignore. The House of Commons, on the Motion of the Prime Minister of the day—that great and conscientious statesman, Sir Robert Peel—refused even to entertain the Church's claim, as being entirely out of the question. On that occasion Sir Robert Peel used these words—

> "There is a complete distinction between a Church that is voluntary and independent and one that is established by the State. Take the case of the Roman Catholics, or any of the Protestant Dissenters in this country, who are not

connected with the State by way of establishments; their right, so far as voluntary jurisdiction is concerned, is quite supreme, and we do not attempt to interfere with it. Those who choose to submit to it, in consequence of their connection with any such denomination, have a perfect right to do so; but if a Church choose to have the advantage of an establishment, and to hold those privileges which the law confers —that Church, whether it be the Church of Rome, or the Church of England, or the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, must conform to the law."—(3 *Hansard,* [67] 502-3.)

The House emphatically affirmed this view of the case in 1843, and the question now before the House is—Will it stultify that decision by consenting to read this Bill a second time? And, further, there is also this other question—Will it consent to legislation for neutralizing these legal decisions of 1842 at the request of the Gentlemen who are the promoters of this Bill? I do not believe the House will do anything of the kind. At this stage I might well leave the case in the confident expectation that the House will reject the Bill; but, in common fairness and justice, something more has to be said about this measure. As we all know, the result of the decision of the Law Courts in 1842, and of this House, was the Disruption of the Church of Scotland; 500 ministers resigned their livings, their churches, and their comfortable homes, suffering the loss of all things for conscience sake, and for the vindication of this principle of spiritual independence which they believed concerned, on the one hand, the honour of their great King and Head, and, on the other, the spiritual, moral, and intellectual well-being of their countrymen. If I may be allowed a personal allusion, I would say that it is my proudest thought that it was my lot to be a sharer in that great event. My father was one of that band of noble Christian patriots, and as one of a large family it was my honour to share with him in the deprivations of that time. I can therefore speak from experience on this subject, and I cordially recognize the eloquent terms in which the hon. and learned Gentleman and others have referred to that great event. Well, at this time of day, the Bill before the House proposes that the State should now yield to the present Established Church the entire ground of contest as between the civil authorities and the Church in 1843. It declares, in effect, that the State and the party in the Church of Scotland who acquiesced in its contention in 1843 were wrong, and that the party who now form the Free Church were legally and constitutionally right. The natural sequence from this admission surely is that the Bill should provide some material restitution for the wrong done to the Free Church party in 1843.

Lord FRANCIS HERVEY (Bury St. Edmunds): I rise to Order. It seems to me that the hon. Gentleman is not in Order. The 145th Standing Order says that a Member is not to read his speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is an undoubted Rule of this House, and has been repeatedly acted upon, that a Member is not entitled to read his speech, though he may refer to his notes.

Mr. BEITH: I was only following the example of hon. Gentlemen who preceded me. The statement I have to make is not an easy one, and cannot well be spoken offhand, and I was anxious to state my view in the best way I could; but I will endeavour to offend as little as possible. I have said that the Bill admits that the party who formed the Free Church were right, and that the State, in accepting the legal decisions of 1842, was wrong, and that the natural sequence of these admissions was that the Bill should provide some restitution to those who suffered the wrong in 1843. But nothing of the kind is even hinted at in this Bill. The Bill ignores the very existence of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches. Its promoters have not even consulted with these Churches, and I would like the House to note that fact. The Bill has been framed and brought before the country by no one knows who, except the hon. and learned Gentleman who has brought it before the House. The privileges conceded by it are bestowed upon a Church which ignored the principle of spiritual independence in 1843, and which thereby entered upon the livings, the churches, and the homes of the 500 protesting ministers. But the Bill does more. It proposes to award to the Established Church the civil function which has hitherto been exclusively exercised by the Supreme Law Court in Scotland. It places the entire parochial arrangements of Scotland at the absolute disposal of the present Established Church, which represents the minority of the nation. That is a power never before vested in the Church of Scotland, even in its best days. It has always been exercised by the Court of Session as the representative of the entire nation. Now, the question comes to be—What is the reason for this marvellous and spontaneous legislation? The nation has never asked for this measure; neither, we are assured, does the Church require it. The reason for bringing forward this measure is not far to seek. This Bill has been designed and was promoted in pursuance of a policy initiated in 1874 by the Party opposite. Its object is to strengthen and give permanence to the Established Church of Scotland at the expense of the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church, both of which exist in vindication of the great principle of spiritual independence, which the Established Church found it convenient in 1843 to ignore. Money has been liberally supplied by Gentlemen representing the Party opposite, and every house in Scotland has been canvassed and called upon by emissaries paid by funds forthcoming for the purpose, and the signatures of children and women and of every person who could sign has been put to Petitions to be carried to this House. I will not pursue that matter; but these Petitions and their meaning are well understood in Scotland. The policy of 1874, which sought to bring back the people of Scotland into communion with the Established Church by rescinding the Patronage Act of 1712, has proved a failure. It was believed that the Act of 1712 had caused the Disruption of 1843, and also the Secessions of 1733 and 1769; whereas that Act only afforded to the Courts of Law, under certain conditions, opportunity to interfere with what the Church believed to be her spiritual independence. The Bill now before the House proposes to crown this policy of 1874 by yielding to the present Established Church the entire ground of contention as between the State and the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland since the Reformation; and if it passes into law, the Church of Scotland will not only be in possession of the entire national endowments, but it will become possessed of absolute and uncontrolled ecclesiastical power in the Kingdom of Scotland. Those of us who have had to fight the battle of the Liberal cause in the last General Election can form a very good idea of what all this would mean. Upon the non established sections of the Church—the Free and United Presbyterian Churches—the Bill will perpetuate a manifest injustice, and for that reason it will of necessity infallibly fail to attain and accomplish the object and end for which it has been brought forward by its promoters. The following facts respecting churches in Scotland may interest the House:—We have in Scotland 3,700 Protestant churches; this means a church and a minister for every 1,000 men, women, and children of the Protestant population. It is calculated that one in five was about the number that could attend church at any one given time, on the assumption that the whole population were church-goers, which, of course, is not the case, nor anything like the case. We have, therefore, in Scotland a Protestant church and a minister for every 200 of the population capable of attending church at any one time. Of these 3,700 churches, 600 are claimed by other denominations than the Presbyterians. The remaining 3,100 constitute the old Presbyterian Church of Scotland. All of these churches hold the same doctrines, have the same form of worship, and claim the same ancestry. The entire National Church endowments, with the Church buildings and land, are in the exclusive possession of 1,000 of these churches, and the remaining 2,100 have been erected and are maintained exclusively by voluntary effort. Five hundred of these voluntary churches are attached to the Established Church; rather more than 1,000 of them represent the Free Church, and about 600 the United Presbyterian Church. It may interest the House to know that these two last-named sections of the old Presbyterian Church of Scotland supply religious ordinances in every corner of the country where population exists, and also in many parts of the heathen world, at a cost exceeding £1,000,000 sterling per annum. Between them these two Churches alone have raised and spent for the good of Scotland and of the world, during the last 42 years, the vast sum of £27,565,311; and, besides, they have had to pay their share of about £2,000,000, raised by local rates, for building and repairing Established churches and manses during these years. This Bill actually proposes to disfranchise those Churches, which carry on this vast Christian work at their own expense, and to place the exclusive and uncontrolled ecclesiastical power in Scotland into the hands of the present Established Church. I admit that, in doing this injustice, the Bill professes to do it in order that good might come. It professes to aim at the re-union and reconstruction of the old Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The people of Scotland are naturally much dissatisfied with the waste of men and money induced by the rivalry of the Established and non-Established Churches in the country. Reconstruction, and concentration of the old Presbyterian Church is much desired; but the method which this Bill proposes will never secure that end. There is but one way whereby a cordial reunion and co-operation among the Churches in Scotland can be arrived at, and that is by legislation providing for equality in the eye of the law in all Christian denominations. The Bill before the House can only aggravate the existing evils, and lead to "confusion worse confounded;" and therefore for this reason, certainly not the least of the others I have given, I trust the House will not read this Bill a second time.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities) said, he had listened to the speeches of hon. Gentlemen in the hope of getting some instruction as to the Bill, and he had also waited with some patience to hear an expression of opinion from someone on the Treasury Bench on so important a measure. He should have imagined that, on a matter really connected with the future of the Church of Scotland, they might have expected to get some leading, if not some light, from Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench. No fewer than 10 hon. Members representing Scotch constituencies sat on that Bench, and he thought he was safe in saying that no one of those hon. Members succeeded in getting into the position which gave him the opportunity of sitting upon the Treasury Bench, without his mind and soul being very much exercised during the Elections upon all questions relating to the Church Establishment in Scotland. He doubted not but that these hon. and right hon. Gentlemen had firmly and distinctly made up their minds as to the course they were prepared to take; but it would be well that we should hear their declarations in that House. The hon. and learned Member who moved the second reading of the Bill considered it a most important measure for the purpose of sustaining the Church of Scotland, and he was inclined to think the hon. Gentleman below the Gangway who had spoken against it objected to it on exactly the same ground. Perhaps their surprise was not justified at the silence of the hon. and right hon. Members on the Treasury Bench when they considered the history of the Liberal Party, especially as connected with their great Chief, upon the question of the Established Church of Scotland. The whole tendency of their utterances at the General Election was that this great question, which affected Scotland more deeply than other questions which could possibly come before the House during the present generation, was a question on which they were to get no light or leading from the Leaders of the Liberal Party. It was to be left to be fought out in a parochial fashion, by means of resolutions and Petitions and majorities here and there. Then, as he understood, the Leaders of the Liberal Party would be found ready to deal with the question. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) announced that as the great and grand policy of the Liberal Party a good many years ago; the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister since adopted it as being the right policy, and it was quite evident that those who followed him in other matters were prepared to follow him in that. He was inclined to think, however, that there was another reason for the silence on the Treasury Bench, and that was that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench were extremely anxious that there should be no risk of the debate not resulting in a division, and, therefore, they were unwilling to occupy the time of the House in making speeches. Although that was the position they might take up, it would be wrong in others to follow their example. It would be well for hon. Members, many of whom knew not very much about Scotland, and still less about Scottish ecclesiastical matters —an observation which, he feared, must apply to several of the hon. Gentlemen who represented Scottish constituencies, and who had a seat on the Treasury

Bench—that a word should be said for the purpose of letting them know how the case really stood in Scotland; because if any hon. Member thought the case of the Church of Scotland could be fairly and honestly dealt with on the same footing as the Church of Ireland was dealt with, they were very much mistaken indeed. None of the arguments that were used against the Church of Ireland applied to the Church of Scotland. The leading arguments against the Irish Church were that its doctrines were alien to those held by the great mass of the people, and that those doctrines of a minority had failed to convert the majority. The Church of Scotland did not profess a doctrine alien to the mass of the people, nor was it the Church of the minority. It was admitted on all hands that the doctrines of the Church of Scotland were exactly the same as those of other great Presbyterian Churches whose object had been for years, and evidently still was, to destroy the Church of Scotland if they could. But there was another fact probably unknown to the hon. Members of the House. He thought it necessary to state it, because he had reason to be aware it was not generally known, that the position of the Church of Scotland towards the State was totally different from the position held by the Church of England towards the State. In England, the Sovereign was the Head of the Church; in Scotland, on the contrary, not only was the Sovereign in no sense the Head of the Church, but upon the occasion of every General Assembly Her Majesty's Representative heard the declaration that the Church had one Head, and one Head only. That statement was accepted by Her Majesty's Representative. The Church of Scotland, in its doctrines, agreed with the great mass of the people. Who were the people who differed? Principally and mainly the Roman Catholics and the members of the Episcopalian Church of Scotland. But the only declaration they had had from the greatest ecclesiastical authorities in Great Britain upon Disestablishment had declared dead against it. As regarded the Episcopal Church of Scotland, no one would say that the people who accepted the ministration of the Episcopal Church of Scotland desired that the Church of Scotland should be disestablished and disendowed. That being so, he ventured to say, after listening to the speech directed against it, that they were the very strongest arguments which could be used in its favour. Take, in the first place, the views expressed by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), who moved the Amendment to the second reading. What did he say? That the recognized mouthpiece of the Free Church of Scotland did not reject this Bill, but condemned it. That sounded very strong, and as if they were going to come forward immediately with some very powerful reason and argument to justify such a statement. What was the reasoning, and what was the argument? The reasoning, evidently, was that the Bill was not merely a wrong, but something worse, which those who expressed themselves in that way thought so bad that they would abstain from characterizing it. Let him say, in the first place, that anything more vague than that could hardly be conceived; in the second place, that anything more general than that could hardly be conceived; and, in the third place, that anything more abusive than that with reference to a Church could hardly be conceived. There was hardly from beginning to end one trace of reasoning or argument. But the hon. Gentleman the Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. Mason), who spoke afterwards, gave expression to that which the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) said he and his Friends would abstain from characterizing.

Dr. CAMERON said, he did not say anything of the sort. The observation in question he quoted from the Report of the Committee of the Free Church, and he did not express any opinion of his own.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he presumed the hon. Gentleman, in quoting from a Committee of the Free Church, thought he was quoting the best possible argument he could get, else why did he quote this expression?

Dr. CAMERON: For the purpose of showing the attitude of the Free Church on the question.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD said, he presumed the hon. Gentleman had great respect for the opinion of the Free Church Committee, and for their powers of reasoning and argument. [Dr. Cameron: Hear, hear!] Their argument was that the Bill was something more than a wrong which they abstained from characterizing. The hon. Member for Lanarkshire went further, and used an expression which the hon. Gentleman's Committee did not choose to use. He said it was a Bill which was characterized by meanness. He should like, again, to have had some reasoning upon that matter. It was admitted on all hands that this Bill was declaratory. It declared a thing which already existed, for the purpose of convincing the minds of those people who, from historical traditions, were in doubt as to the actual position of the Church. And now they were told that a Bill which only did that was a meanness. He thought such argument as that very plainly indicated the weakness of the case of the Mover of the Amendment, and brought out very clearly that the object and intention of the Amendment was to keep up a wrong impression in the minds of many of the people of Scotland in order to prevent them coming back to the Church of Scotland. It was said there were principles which went beyond those which were stated by the hon. Member for the Inverness Burghs, and which were not embodied or expressed in this Bill, for informing the minds of the people of Scotland. But was that an argument against the second reading of this Bill? He ventured to submit that it was not, and that if these were principles which the Free Church and the other Churches in Scotland required to have declared in order to place them in a position to enter into union with the Church of Scotland, these principles could be very easily stated in this House, and means could be taken after the Bill was read a second time to have them embodied in it. When hon. Gentlemen came down to this House and told them this was a proposal which was characterized by wrong, by injustice, and by things which they abstained from characterizing, and by meanness, what was the position in which they placed themselves? When they found that more than 1,000 office-bearers of the Church which they professed to represent had sent a Petition to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, asking him to give his support to this Bill, he ventured to say that never in the history of this country – certainly never in the ecclesiastical history of this country — was such an anomaly found as hon. Members coming there to make such statements as they had made on behalf of that very Church for the purpose of defeating a Bill which so large a number of the members of that Church supported, and supported emphatically, on the ground that they wished to see the people united in a common Christianity, and the ecclesiastical strife which had so long broken the peace in their country smoothed away.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Trevelyan) (Hawick, &c.) said: My right hon. Friend always does business in a very pleasant manner across the Table; and I will therefore gratify, at the earliest possible moment, his wish to know what we upon this Bench think of this Bill. He says that the Members of the Government have very little knowledge of the religious state of Scotland. I should think that in a country which, like Scotland, so thoroughly knows its own religious conditions, a Government who could draw nine or ten Members from the Representatives of Scotland must be pretty well aware of the main outlines of the religious situation in that country. My right hon. Friend says that he hopes we have made up our minds firmly and clearly. At the last General Election I felt very clearly, and if every a man spoke clearly I did, and I shall speak very clearly to-night; only, unlike my right hon. Friend, I will speak entirely on matters within the four corners of the Bill. I approach this subject with very great diffidence, because it is a matter relating to Scottish Law and Scottish Ecclesiastical Law on which I do not pretend to be an authority. This Bill has been brought in by an hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Finlay) who, I hope, on a somewhat short acquaintance, will allow me to call him my hon. and learned Friend. He is a lawyer of eminence, and it is well known that he is interested in religious matters; and to-day he gave the House a very good taste of his quality as an orator. The first appearance of the Bill is enough to frighten away any layman. Upon examining it, I find one difficulty of the greatest importance. The Preamble of the Bill professes to relate to all the Presbyterians of Scotland—that is to say, to about 80 per cent of the entire Scottish people. But when you look closely at the Bill you find that, instead of relating to all the

Presbyterians of Scotland, it relates only to one religious body, and that religious body is the Established Church of Scotland. The provisions of the Bill are mainly and confessedly two. The first are the Declaratory Clauses. They declare that the Courts of the Church of Scotland are to have the sole and exclusive right of regulating and deciding on spiritual matters, and that the jurisdiction of the Civil Court is saved and reserved in everything that relates to civil matters and to the civil consequences of spiritual decisions. Then there is an enacting clause of considerable importance, providing that after the passing of this Act the powers which now rest in the Civil Court of forming and detaching new parishes shall pass to the Spiritual Courts. It is in the Declaratory Clauses that the real importance of the Bill lies. Now, the first point to be observed—and I am glad to say it is a point which throughout this debate has been pretty generally touched upon—is that this is a measure which applies solely to the Established Church, but for which it is hardly too much to say that the Established Church has never asked—and there I wish to put myself, I think, in agreement with the House—I mean that it is an object for which the Established Church has made no general demand, and especially no demand of any long standing. Churches and religious bodies often lie under great grievances, and they make demands on Parliament to relieve them, and often Parliament is not in a hurry to relieve them; but in this case you have a Church which not only has never felt its grievance, and never for its own sake has asked to be relieved of it, but through its authorized channels has expressed itself perfectly satisfied with the state of things as they are now. Ten or 11 years ago this question was mooted in the General Assembly of the Established Church; and on that occasion the Procurator of the Church, Mr. Lee—now Lord Lee—urged that the Assembly Committee should be instructed not to suffer any enactment to pass which would seem to imply that the Church desired any enactment from the Legislature with regard to its jurisdiction or its authority, either in the way of reservation or enactment. On a subsequent day there was a proposal to have a Declaratory Bill of this nature, and that proposal was withdrawn, having been received with complete coldness on the part of almost everybody concerned. In an authoritative spirit on that occasion, the Procurator of the Church said—

> "Within the province of the Church, every decision that the Courts have pronounced, including the decision on the Veto Act, recognized that the Church is supreme. There had never been any doubt thrown upon that subject, and he trusted they would not begin to throw doubt upon it now."

That was to say, that this Established Church, for which this Bill was ostensibly being proposed, held that its position was quite clear, and that it had everything in the essence which was proposed to be declared by this Bill. Parliament, eager as it is to do business, has not time to waste upon bodies who had no grievance which they wished redressed. The position of the Church of Scotland is so clear that it does not want defining, and it is so good that it does not want amending. I think my hon. and learned Friend will agree with me that, since the Disruption of 1843, there have only been a very few cases, and these small or even trumpery cases, which have been brought before the Civil Courts; that in all these cases, small as they were, they were not too small for the Civil Courts to be able to declare over and over again the great principle of the independence of the Church Courts in spiritual things, while they laid down certainly that in civil matters the Civil Courts were authoritative. That was the state of things. I will not quote, but I have before me some of these very important decisions of the Courts. But I aver, and I do not think anyone here will deny, that that is the state of affairs with regard to the Courts and the Established Church; and I boldly affirm that this Bill, if it passes, will not alter in one whit or tittle the real, practical position of the Church of Scotland. Knowing that to be the case, that Church has not only never, up to the very eve of the presentation of this Bill to Parliament, asked for this Bill, but on those occasions when they have had anything to say with regard to such proposals it has vigorously protested against them. Well, why is this measure brought forward? As to the reason, there is no doubt and no concealment whatever. The Claim of Right—the instrument on which was grounded that noble act of self-sacrifice which has been referred to from various parts of the House with such different motives and objects in the course of this debate—the Charter of the Claim of Right was not that of the Established Church to which this Bill applied, but of the Free Church, to which this Bill ostensibly does not apply. That Claim of Right contained some very important statements with regard to the spiritual independence of the Church — statements which likewise admit the civil rights of the Courts so far as those civil rights go. Here, again, at this period, when I am anxious to make a short speech, I shall not read those important passages of the Claim of Right. Let any hon. Member compare the 1st, 2nd, and 5th clauses of this Bill, and he will see the bearing of the measure on the ecclesiastical condition of Scotland, when he compares these clauses with the well-known extracts from the Claim of Right. The object of this Bill is very clearly put forward in the Preamble, so far as the motives of my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Finlay) are concerned, as the union of the Presbyterians in Scotland, but very incorrectly, as I hope to be able to prove in the few words I shall say. The object of this Bill is to efface the distinction between the Established Church and the Free Church, and to draw, not the Free Church, but parts of the Free Church, into the ancient fold of the Established Church. It is with reference to the Free Church and not the Established Church that this legislation, as it appears upon the face of the Bill, is proposed, and it is for us to see what the Free Church say about it. It is them that it affects, and I do not hesitate to say that the great majority of the Free Church—the enormous majority of their ministers, and the great majority of their laity—protest against it energetically and emphatically. It is not very easy to arrive at any absolute conclusion as to the opinions of a religious body when the Assembly of that religious body is not entirely representative. But there is a very large representative element indeed in the Assembly of the Free Church; and in the Assembly of the Free Church, by a majority of 405, I think, to 67, the principle of Disestablishment was maintained. The Assembly has not had any opportunity of considering this Bill; but the Commission of the Assembly has had that opportunity, and in the Commission of the Assembly, by a majority of more than four to one—by 67 to 14—an extremely strong Resolution against the Bill was passed, and its terms constitute as strong a condemnation as could be passed. Now, it must be remembered that if 405 to 67 in the Assembly voted for Disestablishment, it is quite certain that every one of those men who voted for Disestablishment would vote against this Bill; and if you took the question of this Bill to the Assembly you would find that the proportion of those who voted against the Bill of my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Finlay) would be even greater than those who voted against Disestablishment. For my own part, I do not care to refer too much to Petitions and to meetings of laymen and office-bearers, though we can show very important meetings of laymen and office bearers against the Bill. I prefer to look at what one gathers to be the feeling of Scotland at the General Election; and I am bound to say I would rather appeal to the Representatives of Scotland in this House as proper representatives of what the feelings of Scotland are than to any number of Petitions whatsoever; and I trust that we may go to a division to-day and show on which side the majority, and, I think, the great majority, of those hon. Members will be found. That is the view of the Free Church. They say, and they say with reason, that this measure is devised and intended to bring about a profound change in their most important organization; and they say that if you are to set about making a union of Churches, this is not the way to go about it. Hon. Gentlemen must recollect that the interests involved in this question are enormous. There are over 1,100 Free Church ministers; there are all their missionaries and school officers; there are a number of young men who are training for the ministry. There is a yearly income of £625,000. Their settled funds come to the enormous value of £884,000. They have, besides, all their manses, their Assembly rooms, and their Colleges, which alone, I am informed, come to the value of about £3,000,000. All this enormous mass of material interests, and all these careers, and all this great history of theirs—which is a very great history, if not a long history—and remember that, although many people call the history of the Free Church a very short history, the Free Church itself would say it was a very long history, dating back to the fathers of the Reformation—all this is at stake; and I really appeal to hon. Members opposite who have not hitherto committed themselves to this Bill, if you do seek to bring about a union between these Churches, if you do seek to deal with these immense interests, you ought to deal with them very openly, and at the same time very delicately, and in a way in which these interests will not suffer. Either this Bill will fail, and no great number of the Free Church congregations will come over to the Established Church, or this great organization will suffer, and many people will be ruined—people of a class whom, I am sure, the House of Commons would as little like to see in an evil plight as any class of men in the country. If we are to have any scheme at all, we ought to have a scheme by which this vast collection of resources and men—not much less vast than those of the Established Church—should be amalgamated with the Establishment on broad and intelligible grounds. The hon. and learned Gentleman ventured upon a surgical metaphor—and I am bound to say that he is the only person whom I have heard in the House of Commons venture upon a surgical metaphor, and bring himself out of it not only with credit, but with something like glory—and he said we ought not to have a heroic remedy for a small thorn. What we want is not so much a heroic remedy; we want a just remedy—a remedy which will commend itself to the people who are chiefly affected by the legislation which you ask us to adopt. Now, Sir, there is another thing which strikes me about this Bill very much. Here, again, I must refer to the eloquence of the hon. and learned Member. I have heard many descriptions of the Disruption, but I never heard a better one than that given by the hon. and learned Member. But I must say I think that if he applied that description of the Disruption for the purposes of his Bill, he was using a rhetorical weapon which is more ingenious than fair. What are we doing by this Bill? We acknowledge that in the great debate between the Established and Free Churches the Free Church was right on every point; and, acknowledging that, we bring in a Bill which declares and acknowledges this, and then punishes the successors of these men — and punishes many of these men themselves, for I am glad to say that some of the heroes of that great movement are still alive—by withdrawing from them every member of their body who can be induced to think that the difference between the one Church and the other consists in a Declaratory Act of Parliament. The class of argument which we have been hearing this afternoon was directed in great abundance against the Patronage Bill in 1874; but every one of these arguments tells with much greater effect here. The Patronage Bill was a genuine measure on one of its sides to broaden and widen the Church. There was a great deal to be said about the reflective action of that measure, and the unjust character of that action upon the Disestablished Churches; but the measure was one which was of genuine benefit to the Church. It enabled the Church to do that which the other Churches are anxious to do, and which, again, a number of other Churches can do—to see that the ministers are ministers who are trusted and beloved and admired by the people. It was a great boon and advantage to the people of the Established Church; but this is another matter. This is a Bill which gives no solid advantage to the Church at all which it had not got before—a Bill against which everything can be said which was said against the Patronage Bill—and, I must say, strictly speaking, that I do not think the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) at all removed that impression from my mind—a Bill for which there is almost nothing to be said on its own merits. There is one most serious consideration, and that is, the effect which this Bill will have upon the relations of the Scottish Churches. The Preamble states that it is for the purpose of the re-union of the Presbyterian Churches. Well, I think it would have a very different operation. It is impossible for anyone who, like myself, and many of those who sit around me, have known Scotland socially and politically for the last 18 or 20 years, not to see that whether or not the Established Church has grown in favour and popularity—and to a great extent it has grown, and most deservedly, in favour and popularity—on the other hand, there is a much more intense feeling in favour of Disestablishment in the quarters where that feeling previously existed. I must say my experience is that the Disestablishment feeling has grown up very much in the course of the last 12 years. I do not deny, at the same time, that the feeling of loyalty towards the Church has grown very greatly likewise. Nothing has contributed so much to make Disestablishment a burning question in Scotland—and I speak with the experience of a Scottish Member when I say that I heard little of Scottish Disestablishment during the first eight years I was a Scottish Member, and I have heard a great deal about it during the last 10—nothing has contributed so much to make Disestablishment a burning question as those occasions on which the Established Church has taken the aggressive. The Patronage Act, for which there was so very much to say in itself, because it was regarded as an invasion of the Nonconformist Churches, put these Churches on their defence, and made Disestablishment a reality; and this Bill, for which there is so little or nothing to say—and I think little or nothing has been said, except that it might weaken some of the Free Churches—brings it into a very disagreeable prominence. I must remind some hon. Members who are anxious for guidance in this matter that many of my Colleagues took a different course from what I did at the General Election, and in answer to requisitions from Presbyteries and other Established Bodies, stated that they would not vote—this was the case with many, both inside and outside the Government—for a Disestablishment Bill during the present year—[*Cries of* "Parliament!"]—during the present Parliament.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): It is the same thing.

Mr. TREVELYAN: I did not catch the aside; but, putting it aside as a word of evil omen, I would say that hon. Gentlemen who gave that pledge to their supporters, or their opponents—as was often, I suspect, the case in the end—on the Established Church would do well to remember that if this truce has been proclaimed—a truce which might, like that in the Middle Ages, be called "a truce of God"—it must be a truce kept by both sides; and if the Established Church arms itself, or rather arms such a doughty champion as my hon. and learned Friend, and sends him down into the arena, every one of those hon. Gentlemen who promised that they would not vote for Disestablishment in the present Parliament is under something like a moral obligation to vote against the second reading of this Bill. Again, if we were to legislate for the purpose of dealing with the religious differences of Scotland, how can we expect any solid or permanent success if we ignore the United Presbyterian and the great non-Presbyterian denominations in Scotland? This Bill takes no account of them at all. Now, it is one thing to leave the Established Church alone, but it is another thing to ask those Churches, which contain, I think, something like 1,000,000 of population between them, to help a Bill for the purpose of broadening and extending the Established Church at the expense of the Disestablished Churches. This Bill offers nothing whatever to that great part of the population who, being Scotsmen, have absolutely no part and parcel in any of the religious endowments or the religious privileges in Scotland. It makes no offer to the Free Church itself as a Church, but only endeavours to steal away—["No, no!"] I beg your pardon; I recall the word in a moment—it only endeavours to tempt away certain individual members of that Church to join this Established Church, which has all the endowments of Scotland at its command. Besides the declaratory clauses of the Bill, there is the 4th clause—a clause which takes from the Court of Session the powers which it has used long and wisely for the administration of the affairs of what is called the State Church. It takes from the Court of Session the powers of disjoining and afterwards of creating a *quoad sacra* parish. Now, these are powers of very great extent in Scotland. There are 325 *quoad sacra* parishes, and if ever there was a civil process, it was the process of composing one of these parishes. The process of the Court of Session is set in motion by the heritors—that is to say, by ratepaying, property-holding citizens. If there is any objection, that objection is put forward by these heritors. No reference whatever is made to the Church Courts—they have no *locus standi* whatever. The Presbytery is only appealed to as an act of grace for its opinions occasionally by the Court of Session. The civil processes which the Court of Session have to make out are very important. They have on occasions to separate glebes; they have to reserve the interests of the existing minister; they have to ascertain whether the stipend is sufficient, and whether it is adequately secured.

SIR ARCHIBALD ORR-EWING (Dumbarton) was understood to take exception to the word "stipend."

MR. TREVELYAN: I used "stipend," for it is a term used in the Bill. I said that it is the duty of the Court of Session to ascertain, before it detaches the *quoad sacra* parish from the civil parish, whether the stipend or endowment, or whatever it is, is sufficient, and that it should be adequately secured, so as the future minister should have sufficient income. I know very well that teinds are not divided. To deliver over from the custody of the State this responsibility to a Church which enjoys all the State privileges and all the State emoluments, which no other religious Body enjoys in Scotland, is an operation that I hope Parliament will never consent to. It is an operation which we should never dream of doing in England, which we never did in Ireland until we disendowed and disestablished the Church in Ireland, and it is an operation which I earnestly trust Parliament will never allow, because it will set up an *imperium in imperio*—it will establish a body which has religious privileges and religious independence, and I must say I consider that to be something not only inexpedient, but something almost unconstitutional. In conclusion—to use a common House of Commons' phrase, which is generally laughed at—either this Bill is for the purpose of rendering the Church independent, or it is not. If it is intended to make the Church independent, I object to it on that ground. There is only one manner in which a Church ought ever to become independent. A celebrated Scottish Judge on a very famous occasion used these words—

> "A Church may maintain its independence if it pleases, but if it accepts adoption by the State, it must accept it according to the conditions on which the State is willing to grant it."

To give an Established Church real and genuine independence is what I trust the State will never consent to. But if, on the other hand, this Bill does not give the Church any independence which it has not got already, then the effect of it can only be to deal indirectly and incidentally, as I think, oppressively and vexatiously, with the great and important religious Bodies that are no part of the Church at all; and on these grounds—grounds which I fear have been only too amply stated already in the debate, and that, I trust, having been so stated, we shall not hear stated at any great length again. Speaking as a Scottish Member, and not as a Member of the Government, I earnestly hope that anyone whom my personal opinions can influence will join with me in opposing the second reading of this Bill.

MR. J. P. B. ROBERTSON (Bute): I shall only stand between the House and the division for a very few minutes. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) began his speech by saying that this subject raised very grave political considerations; but at the end of his speech he had failed to disclose what those grave political considerations were. But the plain references to Disestablishment made by the right hon. Gentleman and the ominous intervention of the hon. Member for the College Division of Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) are sufficient to rouse those Scottish Representatives who are opposed to Disestablishment to be most active in their support of the Bill of the hon. and learned Member for the Inverness Burghs (Mr. Finlay). This question was discussed at the General Election in such a way as to leave no doubt in the minds of many Scottish Representatives as to the feeling of the Scottish people on the subject. It is the experience of many Scottish Representatives that, while there was a keen feeling in favour of the maintenance of the Established Church, there was coupled with it a very great anxiety that the benefit of the Established Church should be extended to all who adhered to the ancient principles of that Church. One question which the House has to determine is this—the hon. and learned Member for Inverness asks the House to declare that certain rights belong to the Church of Scotland. Do those rights now belong to the Church, or do they not? The speech of the right hon. Gentleman had left the answer *in ambiguo;* but the words of the proposed enactment are merely an echo of the ancient Scottish Statutes which confirmed the constitution of the Scottish Church. The Bill asserts, with no more emphasis than do those Statutes, the lofty origin of the Church's jurisdiction in matters spiritual, and it places an unmistakable fence round the Church Courts from the Civil Courts. If that is an *imperium in imperio,* it is one which has existed in Scotland for nearly three centuries; and these are principles which excite a feeling of attachment and enthusiasm among the poorest of the Scottish people, especially in the Highlands, and are an indication of character and principle which should be welcomed and cherished by the Legislature. But the right hon. Gentleman has stated two objections to this Bill on which I wish to say one word. He has asked the House to refuse to interfere to amend the constitution of a Body which claims to be already perfect. That, I venture to think, is a complete fallacy. The Church of Scotland has asserted that she possesses the principles which are ascribed to her in the Bill of the hon. and learned Member. But when the right hon. Gentleman selects a speech of a member of the General Assembly in 1874 he forgets to add that the question then before the General Assembly was merely whether it was necessary to couple with the doing away of patronage such a declaration as is now proposed. The experience of the last 12 years is surely not to be thrown away, and the House is asked now to consider whether that declaration ought not to be made. What we found upon is this—that the prejudices of 40 years ago, and the conscientious convictions which were then wounded, do require that the State should assert in explicit terms that it recognizes that complete spiritual independence which is the claim of the Scottish Church. The other objection of the right hon. Gentleman is one which I am bound to say ascribes to the Dissenting Bodies motives less noble than I should gladly believe them to be guided by. I understand his contention to be that because a wrong was done in 1843, and because a Dissenting Body has been set up in consequence of that grievance, you will for ever continue the evil and never amend it. This, as the hon. and learned Member for Inverness puts it, is to assert that the Dissenting Bodies have a vested interest in the evils of the Established Church, and that because Dissent takes place in consequence of those evils that the evils should not be amended. I protest most strongly against that doctrine. It is really to establish this utterly unbearable position—that Parliament, while recognizing the existence of an Established Church, will maintain in perpetuity everything which renders its continued existence grievous. I should like to remind hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway that that was not the view taken by the great men who founded the Free Church in 1843—they contemplated the very thing which is now possible—namely, the removal of the grievance of which they complained. These are the noble words with which they concluded their Declaration of Right. They asked their people to—

> "Unite in supplication to Almighty God that He would give strength to His Church to endure the loss of the temporal benefits of the Establishment, and that in His own good time He would restore to them those benefits the fruits of the struggles and the sufferings of their forefathers in times past, and thereafter give them grace to employ them more effectually than hitherto they had done for the manifestation of His glory."

That was the spirit in which those men looked forward to their own sacrifices and to the removal of the grievances which led to those sacrifices; and I am bound to say that a greater sign of the degeneracy of the Free Church could not possibly be found than in the altered attitude they have now taken up. Among my own constituents I have friends and adherents who pressed this question upon my consideration during the course of my electoral contest; and I speak with the most profound conviction when I say that there is no object which these noble-minded people, both within and without the Established Church, more heartily desire than that what has been to them for the last 40 years merely a sacred and cherished memory should be restored and revived in the ecclesiastical organization of Scotland.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 177; Noes 202: Majority 25.

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Baily, L. R.
Baird, J.
Balfour, G. W.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Bective, Earl of
Bethell, Commander
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Brinton, J.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Clarke, E.
Coddington, W.
Cohen, L. L.
Compton, F.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cross, H. S.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
Dawson, R.
Denison, W. B.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hon. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Egerton, hn. A. J. F.
Evelyn, W. J.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Feilden, Lt-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, rt. hn. Sir J.
Field, Captain E.
Finch, G. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Green, E.
Gregory, G. B.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Haslett, J. H.
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hickman, A.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Holmes, rt. hon. H.
Hope, right hon. A. J. B. B.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hutton, J. F.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewis, C. E.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, J. M.
Macnaghten, E.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
M'Lagan, P.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
March, Earl of
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Morgan, hon. F.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Pearce, W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Percy, Lord A. M.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Ritchie, C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Maj. E. J.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Selwin - Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Sidebottom, W.
Sitwell, Sir G. R.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanley, rt. hn. Col. Sir F.
Stewart, M. J.
Sturrock, P.
Talbot, J. G.
Tennant, Sir C.
Tipping, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tottenham, A. L.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Valentine, C. J.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Webster, Sir R. E.
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Yorke, J. R.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Anstruther, Sir R.
Finlay, R. B.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Agnew, W.
Allen, W. S.
Armitage, B.
Asher, A.
Ashton, T. G.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Beith, G.
Bennett, J.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Blades, J. H.
Blaine, A.
Blake, J. A.
Bolton, T. H.
Borlase, W. C.
Boyd-Kinnear, J.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, right hon. J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brocklehurst, W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buckley, A.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, H.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chamberlain, R.
Chance, P. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Cobbold, F. T.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Colman, J. J.
Cook, E. R.
Cook, W.
Coote, T.
Corbett, A. C.
Cowen, J.
Cox, J. R.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Crilly, D.
Crompton, C.
Crossley, E.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Davies, R.
Deasy, J.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dixon, G.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Esslemont, P.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R.
Finlayson, J.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Foljambe, C. G. S.

Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, T. P.
Glyn, hon. P. C.
Gower, G. G. L.
Gray, E. D.
Grenfell, W. H.
Grey, Sir E.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Haldane, R. B.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hartington, Marq. of
Havelock - Allan, Sir H. M.
Hayden, L. P.
Henry, M.
Hingley, B.
Holden, A.
Holden, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacks, W.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
James, C. H.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir U. J.
Kelly, B.
Kenny, M. J.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leicester, J.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
Maclean, F. W.
M'Culloch, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
Mappin, F. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Mason, S.
Menzies, R. S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, A.
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
Otter, F.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Peacock, R.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A. E.
Pease, H. F.
Picton, J. A.
Pilkington, G. A.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Potter, T. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Pugh, D.
Pulley, J.
Quilter, W. C.
Ramsay, J.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, H. G.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robertson, H.
Robinson, T
Roe, T.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Russell, E. R.
Ruston, J.
Salis-Schwabe, Col. G.
Saunders, W.
Sellar, A. C.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shirley, W. S.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Spensley, H.
Spicer, H.
Stack, J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Thomas, A.
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G.O.
Tuite J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watson, T.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
West, Colonel W. C.
Westlake, J.
Wiggin, H.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. C.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, J. (Ednbrgh.)
Woodhead, J.
Yeo, A. F.

TELLERS.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Cameron, C.

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

With reference to this Division, on the following day, Mr. Preston Bruce, and Sir Robert Anstruther, the Tellers for the Ayes in the Division on the Second Reading of the Church of Scotland Bill, came to the Table and acquainted the House that they had erroneously reported to the House the number of the Ayes as 177, instead of 179, which was the proper number corresponding with the Division List.

Ordered, That the Clerk do correct the said error in the Journal of this House by stating the number of the Ayes as 179, instead of 177.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS (THEATRES, &c.) BILL.

(*Mr. Rider Cook, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg.*)

[BILL 44.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. E. R. COOK (West Ham, N.) in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he wished, in the first place, to state the reasons which had induced the Metropolitan Board of Works to introduce this Bill. It might be in the recollection of the House that in 1877 a Committee was appointed, at the instance of the then hon. Member who sat for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), to inquire into the working of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. In their Report attention was drawn to the need which existed for supervision of the theatres and music-halls of the Metropolis, and a recommendation was made by that Committee that powers should be given to the Metropolitan Board of Works to examine the structures of those buildings, and that they should have power to insist upon such alterations as seemed good and necessary to them in the interest of the safety of the public and those who frequented those buildings. Those recommendations had been embodied in the Metropolitan Buildings Act, 1878, and had since been carried out by the Metropolitan Board of Works. Under the powers given in that Act, the Board had examined and taken careful plans of the theatres and music-halls of London. They had examined 41 theatres, with the result that two of them had been found so unsafe for public use that when the Board made their requisitions these theatres had been voluntarily closed by the owners. Two had been closed on account of the representations made by the Board to the Lord Chamberlain, 10 had been practically reconstructed, and 27 altered in accordance with the requirements of the Board. These 41 theatres between them had only 42 staircases, being only one staircase to each of them, and the works carried out included the formation of new staircases and the total or partial reconstruction of others to the number of 42, and the formation of new exits and the total or partial reconstruction of others to the number of 57. The Board had in addition, under the powers given to them, examined 39 music-halls, 25 of which had been altered in accordance with the requisitions of the Board, and in the case of 14 alterations were now in progress. In the 25 music-halls in which alterations had been completed there had been only 36 staircases and 31 exits. The nature of the alterations required by the Board in the interests of the public had been as follows:—In the first place, it was required that the stage should as far as possible be separated from the auditorium, so that in the event of the inflammable scenery catching fire the audience might have time to get safely out before the fire reached that part of the building. The second point was the safety of the staircases, a great many of which had been simply death-traps in a case of panic. Such staircases had been thoroughly reconstructed, and as far as possible it was provided that two streams of people should never meet upon the same staircase. The third point was the multiplication of exits, so that in the event of panic or fire the audience might clearly see their way out of the building. It was a necessity, also, that the doors should be free to open outwards. Another question was the widening of the gangways inside the house, so that when necessary people should get to the exits easily. He wished to point out that the requisitions which the Board had made had dealt with the structure only, and had dealt principally and almost entirely with the auditorium part of the house, and not with the working of the machinery about the stage. The Board of Works had been advised that when these alterations had been made, in accordance with their requisition, their powers ceased; and it was, at all events, a contested point whether they had power to go into the house to see whether the improvements were being maintained or continued. The Lord Chamberlain had had a great deal of anxiety as to theatres being kept in the efficient state in which the Board had placed them, and that anxiety had been accentuated by the disaster at the Ring Theatre in Vienna in 1881, where 900 persons had perished, and by that at the Victoria Hall in Sunderland, where 186 little children had been crushed to death or suffocated. The Lord Chamberlain had, therefore, communicated with the Metropolitan Board of Works, and asked them to certify to him that the theatres were in a proper state to be used by the public before he gave his annual licence. He would especially call attention to this fact, because it showed that the Board were not seeking additional powers on their own account. They had been urged to do so not only by the Lord Chamberlain, but also by the Home Office. The Bill was not brought forward by reason of any ambition on the part of the Metropolitan Board to obtain fresh powers. The Board had been asked by the responsible licensing authority to obtain these powers, and the result was the present Bill. The Lord Chamberlain desired to call in to his assistance and to have the advice of those who had inspected a theatre during its construction in order that they might see that all arrangements for the safety of the public were still in an efficient state. The safety of theatres depended not only on their being put in good condition once, but upon that good condition being maintained. That was the principle of the Bill. The Board was to have power to see that doors were kept available, that gangways were kept clear, and that exits were used, so that everything might be ready in case of accident, otherwise the panic or fire might occur when the gangways were blocked or the doors locked. He had been told that if managers were to make any profits, it was utterly impossible for these gangways to be kept free at Christmas time. The Board of Works now had the authority of the Home Office as well as of the Lord Chamberlain in seeking powers to enable them to provide that improvements initiated for the public benefit were carried out. The main feature of the Bill was to provide for continual supervision of the structure of theatres, and especially of the auditorium, and the mode of doing that was by requiring an inspection to be made by the Board and a certificate to be given before the Lord Chamberlain granted his licence. Thus they would have some assurance that these places were kept in a proper state, whilst the Lord Chamberlain would still be in a position to exercise the same control he did now. The Metropolitan Board had no wish whatever to interfere with the functions either of the Lord Chamberlain or of the Home Office; they simply desired to place their services at the disposal of both Departments, in order to insure that the precautions necessary in the interests of public safety were carried out. Clause 9 seemed to be the clause which provoked the greatest amount of opposition. By this the Board were to be empowered to authorize persons to inspect the buildings at any time. He could not understand why so much opposition should be made to this, because the clause in this particular simply repeated the language of other Acts of Parliaments under which the Board had in no way exceeded their powers or used them improperly. The Board simply desired to have the power to appoint an officer whose duty it should be to inspect the buildings, reporting to them. As far as he could make out, there was no objection to the merits of the Bill, with one exception only. The great objection seemed to be to the authority which was to carry out the provisions. Mr. Irving had distinctly said that he did not object to the Bill, but only to the authority which would carry it out.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the Clock, further Proceedings stood adjourned till *To-morrow.*

SCINDE, PUNJAUB, AND DELHI RAILWAY COMPANY BILL [ANNUITIES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to confirm the creation of the Annuity of five hundred and seventy-one thousand eight hundred and twenty-eight pounds fourteen shillings, charged on and payable out of the Revenues of India, in lieu of the sum of money amounting to fourteen millions nine thousand one hundred and twenty-four pounds eight shillings and three pence, agreed upon for the purchase by the Secretary of State in Council of India of the undertaking of the Scinde, Punjaub, and Delhi Railway Company.

Resolution to be reported upon *Monday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

Resolution [16th March] *reported,* and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Henry H. Fowler.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time.

MOTIONS.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT (1854) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Bill to amend "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Colonel Dawnay, and Mr. Morgan Howard.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 146.]

LAND TRANSFER (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Boyd-Kinnear, Bill to simplify the Transfer of Land in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Boyd-Kinnear, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Mason, and Mr. M'Laren.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 144.]

COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF LAND COMPENSATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. M'Laren, Bill to amend the Law of Compensation for Land acquired by Compulsory Purchase, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Joseph Bolton, and Mr. Jesse Collings.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 145.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 18*th March,* 1886.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland)* (36).
Committee—Lunacy Acts Amendment (12-37).

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 12.) COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Lord Chancellor*).

The Earl of SELBORNE said, that it had been his duty last year to pay great attention to this Bill. It was unnecessary to remind their Lordships of the great services rendered by the late Lord Shaftesbury in connection with this subject. Lord Shaftesbury's life had been an illustrious one from beginning to end, and his memory was not likely soon to pass away. Although that noble Lord was no longer among them, he hoped the views which he had expressed on this subject would still have weight with their Lordships. There were two points in the Bill to which he wished specially to call attention. The first was the initial treatment of the lunatic, especially of the curable lunatic. Experience had abundantly shown that a very large proportion of lunatics were curable, and it was most important at the early stages not to offer impediments to the efficient treatment of the patient. It was for this reason that Lord Shaftesbury was exceedingly reluctant to acquiesce in the securities which he had himself thought necessary against abuse of the Lunacy Law, and even in any form of application to a magistrate. So strongly did the late noble Lord feel on the question of introducing the magistrate's interference that he sent in, for that reason only, his resignation of the office of Lunacy Commissioner. That resignation he was induced for the time to withdraw, but without waiving the objection which he entertained to that part of the Bill. He (the Earl of Selborne), on his own part, had desired to meet that objection by introducing into that part of the Bill every reasonable safeguard against the evils which Lord Shaftesbury apprehended; and he could not now willingly agree to any diminution of those safeguards. There was an Amendment on the Paper which proposed that it should be the *primâ facie* duty of the magistrate to see the lunatic, so that every lunatic would practically be in the position of one so found by inquisition. As the Bill stood the magistrate could, if he thought proper, examine the lunatic; but no duty to do so was cast upon him. He greatly feared that the Amendment would lead to those delays which it was so desirable to avoid, and which might often be injurious to the patient. Where the magistrate was a stipendiary or a County Court Judge the delay might be serious. Lord Shaftesbury's evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1877 was to the effect that most persons were extremely indisposed to come to the conclusion that their relatives were lunatics; and, even when they did come to that conclusion, after calling in medical advice, they were liable to be deterred by the fear of publicity from taking with promptitude proper measures. If the Amendment were accepted this indisposition to act would be encouraged, especially as there would be a greater tendency to publicity in the proceedings. All unnecessary publicity was earnestly to be deprecated. The other question to which he desired now to call attention was that of private asylums. This was a point of great importance to the public, and also one in which large private interests were concerned. He thought that, on this subject, there would be much danger in going too fast or too far. The late Lord Shaftesbury gave evidence about it before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1877. Being asked as to the advisability of placing everybody under public care, Lord Shaftesbury said that he saw great advantage in having public asylums as the basis of the system. At the same time, he said he should be sorry to see an enactment which prohibited licensed houses altogether, as he believed there were a great many persons who would always prefer to send their relatives to licensed houses rather than public asylums. Lord Shaftesbury's idea was that if public asylums were established as the basis of the lunacy system, all the inferior licensed houses would be eliminated and the better sort only would remain. These latter he then expressed himself to be desirous to retain; and to the merits of some of them he bore very emphatic testimony; saying particularly of that of Dr. Newington, at Ticehurst, that its discontinuance would be a great public loss. With those opinions he concurred, and he trusted that his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack would reconsider those Amendments of which he had given Notice, which aimed at the early suppression of existing licensed houses. Apart from the points urged by Lord Shaftesbury in opposition to the abolition of all these establishments, it might be all very well if they had institutions tried and approved to take their place. There would for an indefinite, and probably for a long time, be nothing of the kind. They would only have the large public asylums; and as there were scarcely any of these establishments with fewer than 2,000 patients, it was, at least, a serious question whether they were not far too large to satisfactorily deal with the patients now in them. The late Lord Shaftesbury had given it as his decided opinion that 300 patients were all that one medical superintendent could properly attend to. In these great public establishments, as now constituted, much more power than was desirable was necessarily in the hands of attendants and servants, who, if they had not the motive of profit, might have other motives—such as that of their own ease—to abuse it, and had not the same motive for tenderness towards the patients which would generally actuate the proprietors of well-managed licensed houses. These great establishments were hardly fit for any but chronic patients. With respect to the present licensed houses, it was proposed, by his noble and learned Friend's Amendment, that the licences should continue during the lives of the present holders only. When that life was gone, however many patients there were in the asylum, it must be closed. That would be a great hardship, both on the patients and their friends, and on the families of those who had carried on these asylums. He believed that private asylums were, at the present time, as necessary as public asylums; because, while the great public asylums were the best suited for the care of patients who could not be cured, private licensed houses were much more suitable for those who could be. He hoped that their Lordships would not assent to the proposal to abolish existing private asylums as fast as the lives of the present proprietors fell in, without awarding compensation. The proprietors of private lunatic asylums were aware that under the existing law their licences would not be renewed in the event of their establishments not being carried on in a way which satisfied the Commissioners. But, subject to that condition, they had actually been invited by law to invest their fortunes in these asylums; and, therefore, it would be most unjust to deprive them of the right of transferring their interest to others for a pecuniary consideration unless they were to be compensated for the loss that they would thereby sustain. The result of the legislation now proposed would be to convert a permanent into a mere life interest. With this exception, he was entirely of the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, that it was most desirable to put an end to the pecuniary interest of any person in keeping any other individual in confinement. The process of substituting public asylums for private ones should be gradual, and no hasty or rash experiment in that direction ought to be tried. Much required to be done to make in those public asylums such arrangements as would be indispensable to enable them to provide, in a proper and satisfactory manner, for the treatment and comfort of that class of patients who were now accommodated in licensed houses. The Bill gave power for those arrangements to be made; and it must depend upon their practical success whether, in the result, they would be fit altogether to supply the wants now met by the licensed houses, or not. It was going quite far enough to say, as he had himself proposed last year, that the number of licensed houses should not, in the meantime, be increased.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, he could assure the noble and learned Earl who had just sat down, and with whom he agreed upon many points, that no unjust or rash experiments in the direction he had indicated would be entered upon. He confessed, however, that he was somewhat more impressed by the evil of the system under which it was possible for a person to be improperly incarcerated as a lunatic for the direct pecuniary interest of another than the noble and learned Earl appeared to be. He was inclined to think that in attempting to effect any real reform in our Lunacy Laws the first thing was to get rid of such a pecuniary interest. When we had established a system under which it would be impossible to detain a man in confinement in a lunatic asylum after he had become sane, we might well afford to get rid of some of the restrictions and difficulties which now existed in the way of obtaining the confinement of those who were actually lunatics. It must not be forgotten how much the visitor of the lunatic asylum was dependent upon the honesty and the good faith of the proprietor of the establishment. At the same time, he was quite ready to admit that it was impossible to put an end to the existing system suddenly. The only difference between himself and the noble and learned Earl upon that point was one of time. It was a remarkable fact that out of the innumerable letters which he had received upon the subject the only one that complained of the proposal to extinguish the private lunatic asylums had been sent by those pecuniarily interested in their maintenance. He quite agreed that great weight should be given to the opinions of the late Lord Shaftesbury upon this question; but he was not sure that it would be possible to abolish those ayslums which that noble Lord desired to see extinguished without putting an end to many of those which he desired should be permitted to exist. He thought, further, that it was quite possible that the noble Lord who had presided over the Commission so long, and had rendered such good services, might, perhaps, have had a tendency to think that in the case of private asylums they could be secured against anything wrong being done if they were only visited from time to time by the Commissioners or their agents. Even some of the persons employed by the Commissioners were not themselves satisfied that that was a sufficient safeguard. He had desired, therefore, to introduce into the Bill provisions which would lead to the ultimate extinction of private asylums; but he was not wedded to the particular form of those provisions. If it was thought that they went too far, he was content that such a limitation should be put on them as might be deemed desirable. All he was very anxious for was that they should endeavour to provide, as soon as well might be, for the ultimate extinction of those asylums for which the proprietors had a pecuniary interest in retaining the patients. He had prepared an Amendment that would enable the Commissioners, in regard to all private asylums, to transfer the licence in the case of death or resignation of the existing proprietor for a certain number of years. That would give time to enable accommodation to be obtained for patients elsewhere before the asylums ceased to exist; and, perhaps, a period of three years would be sufficient for the purpose. He mentioned that altogether apart from any claim to compensation. Then there was the case of persons who had expended considerable sums upon asylums for the reception of patients. It had been urged strongly—and he felt the force of the appeal—that in the case of those asylums considerable loss might be incurred from the difficulty of turning them to other purposes. He could not help thinking that many of those asylums would find their way into the hands of public authorities, and that well-managed private asylums would become well-managed public asylums. But he would suggest that it might be sufficient in the case of asylums where money had been expended, and where, consequently, loss would occur through their ceasing to exist, that a power should be given to continue those asylums, and to transfer them to other fit persons for a certain number of years. He could not admit, however, that there was a vested interest in a man to keep a lunatic asylum by himself and his heirs for ever. That was rather going beyond what one was bound to recognize in vested interests. In regard to the alternative of compensation, there would be considerable difficulty in determining the rate of compensation, and out of what fund it should come. Then, as to the case of private patients they might have in the case of a single patient the same danger in respect to undue detention which they had in regard to paying patients in private asylums; and, therefore, they required for a single patient the same protection as was applicable to all other cases. He should be quite willing to allow private patients, who, as a rule, were well-to-do persons, to be detained by order of a Judge in Lunacy to be obtained in Chambers. He could not go the whole length with his noble and learned Friend with respect to the case of a single patient; but he was ready to make it more easy than the Bill, as it stood, did to continue the care of a single patient under the charge of a medical man. In regard to interference with vested interests, he was only following in the footsteps of his noble and learned Friend because in the Bill of last year there was a provision that at the end of five years no pauper lunatics should be received in any licensed house.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, that pauper lunatics were in the custody of the State.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had received the same representation in respect to pauper lunatics as in respect to other lunatics. If he had erred, he had erred in company with his noble and learned Friend; and he certainly did not wish to interfere with private interests beyond what was reasonably demanded by the public interests. The licence from year to year was not a licence to the house, but to the individual to keep patients in the house. He entirely agreed with his noble and learned Friend as to the expediency of securing promptitude of treatment for lunatic patients. Then, if they were to have the examination before a magistrate or a County Court Judge, he wanted that examination to be a reality, and not a sham; and he had a considerable fear that a magistrate might say that the certificate was all in order, that there was an end of the matter, and that he could do nothing more. He should consider it extremely unfortunate if such a result ensued. But he agreed with his noble and learned Friend that there were many instances in which it was very undesirable that a magistrate should be compelled to see or should see a patient. He wanted the magistrate to have it as one of his duties to consider whether the documents were enough, or whether he really ought not to see the patient or other person; and probably the clause of the Bill might be so modified as to effect that object. He would only be too happy to receive any suggestions which their Lordships might be good enough to make for the improvement of the measure. So far as the ultimate extinction of private asylums was concerned, whatever modifications their Lordships might think just and expedient he would be glad to carefully consider, and if possible assent to.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, it seemed to him that this question of pecuniary interest was pressed somewhat too far, as medical men were actuated by other motives, at least as strong, acting in another direction. There might be cases in other professions where the desire of lucre prevailed; but they were the exceptions, and not the rule, in those honourable occupations. In his opinion the relatives of a lunatic had, or ought to have, an enormous responsibility in respect not only of his care, but also of his cure—a responsibility which was just as great as that of parents in the care of children who were dependent upon them. By this Bill, however, the danger seemed to be that the State was taking out of the hands of the parents and other relatives the responsibility which ought properly to devolve upon them for the care of the lunatic. Were these persons to have no choice as to the place in which they should put their relatives? Were they to hand them over to the custody of the State, and to deprive themselves altogether of any charge which they naturally owed to their relatives? It seemed to him to be a new doctrine that these helpless creatures, who were dependent upon relatives, should be deprived of the choice of a place where they were to be detained, especially when they had property of their own, or their relations were able and bound to maintain them. It was well known that there was a good deal more disinclination among persons to speak of diseases of the mind than there was to speak of ailments affecting the body. There was a certain sense of what might be called shame, or reticence, with respect to ailments affecting the mind. People did not like it to be known that there was any deficiency in this respect; but yet by this Bill they were going to provide that there should be no place of resort for lunatics that was not public in its character, where no step could be taken without public inquiry and public inspection. If the State was to have this entire control of everyone who was weak in intellect or dangerous to himself or others, notwithstanding the competency of his relatives to keep him in their own charge, he wished to know why it was provided by a clause of the Bill that the Secretary of State was not to call upon the State to build asylums for the maintenance of patients, but to compel the county to provide the means without, so far as he could see, any means being provided to recoup them for the expense? If the State was going to undertake this responsibility, it seemed just that the State should meet the expense. He could name lunatic asylums where patients received an amount of care almost amounting to luxury, and it would be inflicting the greatest possible injury to society if these places were to be put an end to. In the neighbourhood of some of these asylums there were as many as from 200 to 300 persons employed in connection with them; and if this measure was carried out as it at present stood these persons might be dismissed from their employment, thereby inflicting a large amount of hardship. Not only would they affect the position of the lunatics, but a great deal of injury would be caused to a body of persons who would not be fully compensated for the wrong they suffered. He did not think that the remedies proposed in regard to private asylums went far enough in the way of compensation or of protection, nor was adequate provision made in case any of them were brought to an end. Neither was it necessary for the lunatics to be placed in the charge of the State, and the responsibility taken away from their relatives; but if the State insisted upon doing so it ought to bear the expense.

LORD GRIMTHORPE said, he wished to refer their Lordships to the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons in 1877-8 on this subject, besides the evidence in it of Lord Shaftesbury which his noble and learned Friend opposite had quoted. They reported that the few complaints made against private asylums had been satisfactorily answered; that there had been a great improvement in them; and that the jealousy with which the treatment of lunatics was watched at the present day was a great security against any recurrence of the horrible cruelties practised in former times. The evidence was taken nine years ago; but had anything occurred since that time to call for such legislation as this? Were their Lordships, on theoretical grounds, to say that they disbelieved the summary of the evidence taken at great length by that Committee? All the sentimental and imaginative reasons existed as much then as they did now; but the Committee of that day said there was no occasion to do anything of the kind now suggested. Property of any kind was never taken from individuals by the State except on grounds of public justice or public necessity. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack said that the licences of private asylums were only during good behaviour. Yes; but, as the Bill stood, they would be terminated by wants entirely independent of good behaviour. In cases where houses of this kind had been in the hands of persons for a long series of years, and on which large sums of money had been expended, it seemed to him to be a strange proposition that this property should be confiscated by the State, without the least pretence of evidence of any necessity for so doing, and in the face of such evidence and such a Report as he had quoted. Mention had been made of the large number of letters received regarding lunatic asylums, of which not one was of anything more than bare opinion. He had himself received a letter from an old lady, who was now a voluntary boarder in a well-known private lunatic asylum. Although she had been cured she preferred to remain there, because she had no nicer place to live in. She received more home comforts for her money there than she could get anywhere else; and she protested most strongly against being turned out, because if that were done she would have to betake herself to some lonely lodgings and be in danger of a relapse. She saw her doctor every day, and was very much attached to him. This was one instance out of several cases within his own knowledge. He used to go and visit a clergyman every year at Buxton, who was an inmate of a lunatic asylum. This gentleman was just in that mental condition in which it might be said that for half-an-hour he was quite sane, and in the succeeding half-hour just the reverse. He took an interest in everything that was going on around him, and in all the news of his family, and talked rationally about it; and always said that he was very comfortable. He read the newspapers. If they were to turn this gentleman out he would protest just as strongly as in the other case. He asked, therefore, why they should embark on a policy destroying all those interests in private asylums, which had been in some families for generations, whenever the present proprietor happened to die, and turning all the patients into the streets, or into some huge county institution where they would not be half so comfortable, or so well attended to? Perhaps some noble Lords had the case of Mrs. Weldon in their minds while considering this matter. But Mrs. Weldon's was no case against private lunatic asylums rather than public ones. Her complaint was that she had been sent somewhere; that some people, for a good or a bad reason, wished to get her out of the way. Another recent trial about a man named Hillman actually was about sending him to a public asylum without proper examination by Justices. As far as he had read, there was not a single charge of misconduct against any private lunatic asylum. That being so, it was not at all a proper thing to ruin above half-a-million's worth of property, now or 15 years hence, when the improvements that were continually going on might have made private asylums even better than they were now, when no charge was made against them. If it were considered desirable, let there be another inquiry, to be followed, if necessary, by further legislation; but there was plenty for this Bill to do without burdening it with clauses for which at present there did not seem to be sufficient justification.

THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH said, that circumstances had led to his having some acquaintance with the management of more than one private lunatic asylum; and he wished to say a word or two in the interests, not of the owners or managers, but of the public and of the patients. He quite agreed with the observations of the last speaker. By a private asylum he understood one not only under private management, but one in which individuals could have privacy as regarded the time and manner of their admission, without the risk of their being exposed to the contemptuous gaze of the public. He had more than once met in society persons who had been a short time inmates of a private lunatic asylum; but if they had been inmates of a public asylum, and they had been exposed to publicity, the fact of that publicity would have been to them a cause of life-long suffering. It seemed to be important, in the interests of humanity, that there should not be a needless publication of infirmities which many—rightly or wrongly — considered a disgrace to their families. The desire to obtain publicity might involve the danger of inflicting injury; and the question was whether it was necessary to go so far in trying to prevent abuse. Another disadvantage in the abolition of private asylums was the loss of individualizing care. In small asylums an amount of attention could be given to individual cases which was not possible in large asylums, where patients had to be dealt with more in masses. The diminution of this individual treatment would be a loss to the cause of science as regarded the method of dealing with the insane. It was said that practitioners might keep people too long in the asylums; but there was also the danger of practitioners being too anxious to get patients out too soon. When a hospital was crowded there was a natural anxiety for vacant beds, and the same motive might operate less favourably in the management of large public asylums if it led to individual cases being dealt with in a perfunctory way. Again, if poor and rich patients were treated together there might be a danger that rich patients might receive more care and attention than the poor. For these reasons he felt hesitation in adopting as a fixed principle that we were, sooner or later, to abolish private asylums. A Justice of the Peace might be a good judge of a poacher; but it by no means followed that he would be an equally good judge of a lunatic; and it certainly seemed desirable that a Justice of the Peace should be assisted by a medical expert in exercising the discretion which the Bill would cast upon him.

LORD ASHBOURNE said, that the Bill was a valuable one; but, unless some modification were made in it with respect to private lunatic asylums, the Bill might be jeopardized. The Bill must be looked at not only from the standpoint of those who were directly interested in such asylums, but also from the standpoint of rich and solvent lunatics, and also from the standpoint of the ratepayers, who were asked to provide, at the public expense, habitations for those who had been housed in private asylums, and who had been so housed in a way which commended itself to the lunatics themselves, when they were capable of exercising a choice, and in other cases to their families and friends. There might have been abuses, and it was well to legislate against their recurrence; but was it necessary to say that private asylums must be got rid of altogether? It must be possible to devise machinery that would prevent abuse. It was not at all clear that it would be agreeable to the relatives and friends of the insane, who had to decide for them where they should be sent, that they should in every case be deprived of the chance of sending them to private asylums. Was there likely to be any benefit derived if there was to be no private enterprize in the matter? If private asylums were abolished, either lunatics would not be sent anywhere, but stay at home; or they would be sent to places for the reception of single patients; or they would be sent to public institutions partly inhabited by pauper lunatics; or, again, they might be sent altogether out of the jurisdiction to one of the numerous foreign establishments. There was another important consideration which had not been dealt with. Was it reasonable to impose additional burdens on the already overladen taxpayer to provide accommodation for those who could afford to provide for themselves? He would be glad to know what were the intentions of the Government with respect to Ireland? He hoped it was either intended to apply the Bill to Ireland or such parts of it as would be desirable, or that a Bill was being prepared for Ireland in the Irish Office.

EARL BEAUCHAMP said, he was willing to admit that the Bill was bristled with difficulties; but he regretted very much that the objections raised in this debate, which were objections of principle, had not been raised on the second reading of the Bill.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that he had omitted to state that he had consulted with the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) who dealt with Irish questions, and with the Irish Law Officers, and they did not think it practicable to extend the Bill to Ireland; but the Irish Office would make provision for Ireland in this matter.

Motion *agreed to:* House in Committee accordingly.

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Urgency Orders).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he proposed to amend the 2nd rule, which provided that no person should be received under an urgency order unless the medical practitioner who signed the certificate had personally examined the patient not more than three days previously to the reception of such person. He considered the time too long, and would move the substitution of 24 hours.

Amendment *moved,* in page 6, line 22, leave out ("three clear days") and insert ("twenty-four hours.") — (*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he was willing to make it two days, instead of three.

Amendment *amended,* and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had done his best to meet the views suggested on the second reading as to the protection which should be given to those issuing certificates under the Bill. Undoubtedly the fear of responsibility would lead, without such protection, many persons to refrain from giving such certificates when their doing so was in the highest degree desirable, and when it would be extremely beneficial to the patients themselves. Such persons ought to be freed from responsibility, if they acted in good faith and with reasonable care. Frequently many of the actions were brought upon absolutely frivolous grounds, and the medical men were, consequently, put to considerable expense and annoyance in defending them. He, therefore, proposed to amend the clause by giving summary power to stay actions which were brought against medical men for having given such certificates where it could be shown that there was no ground for the allegation that they had acted with want of reasonable care and of good faith. He thought that such a provision would satisfy medical practitioners, who had been alarmed by the costly proceedings which had been taken against some of them in recent years.

Amendment *moved,* in page 7, after Section 4, insert the following new section:—

(Protection as to person signing orders and certificates.)

"(1.) A person who before the commencement of this Act has signed or done any act with a view to sign an order for the reception of a person as a lunatic, or a medical certificate that a person is of unsound mind, and a person who in the manner required by this Act presents a petition for any such order, or sign or does any act with a view to sign an urgency order, or any such medical certificate as aforesaid, shall not be liable to any civil or criminal proceedings if such person has acted in good faith and with reasonable care.

"(2.) If any proceedings are taken against any person for signing or doing any act with a view to sign any such order or certificate, or presenting any such petition as in the preceding sub-section mentioned, on the ground that such person did not act in good faith or with reasonable care, such proceedings may, upon summary application to a judge of the High Court, be stayed if the judge is satisfied that there is no reasonable ground for alleging want of good faith or reasonable care.—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, the cases of which they had heard so much lately and other circumstances had created a deal of apprehension in the minds of persons issuing certificates; and there appeared to be a grave fear that, unless adequate protection was afforded, considerable difficulty would be experienced in getting the necessary certificates. He had, therefore, much pleasure in supporting the Amendment, which, he trusted, would tend to allay the alarm which had been created in the minds of medical practitioners.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clauses 5 to 25, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 26 (Amendments as to single patients).

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the clause, coupled with Clauses 43 and 44, raised very important questions, as to which much had been said that night; and he did not think they could usefully discuss them at the present moment. He admitted that considerable modifications would have to be made in that part of the Bill; and he was most anxious, if possible, to hit upon some such modification as they were all likely to agree to. Therefore he proposed to postpone all the clauses that were of a controversial nature until a later date, and to proceed now only with those clauses which were not of a controversial character.

Clause *postponed* accordingly.

Clauses 27 to 33, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 34 (Institutions for idiots and imbeciles); and Clause 35 (Licensed houses for idiots).

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that as these clauses dealt with idiotcy and imbeciles he proposed to strike them out of the Bill, and keep them quite apart from the subject of lunacy. He would introduce another measure, embodying the provisions relating to idiotcy and imbeciles,

Clauses *struck out* accordingly.

Clauses 36 to 42, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clauses 43 and 44 *postponed.*

Clauses 45 to 69, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 70 (Abuse of female lunatic).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN proposed an Amendment, to make it felony for a man to carnally know an insane person.

Amendment *moved,*

In page 41, line 2, after ("patient,") insert ("he shall be guilty of felony, and shall be liable at the discretion of the court to be kept in penal servitude for life, or for any period not less than five years, or to be imprisoned for any period not exceeding two years with or without hard labour; and if any such person shall attempt to have carnal knowledge of, or be guilty of any indecent assault or other indecent behaviour upon or towards any such female patient.")—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he approved the object of the Amendment; but he thought the case was provided for by the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and he must ask for time to look into the matter.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

Schedule *agreed to.*

The Report of the Amendments to be received *To-morrow;* and Bill to be *printed,* as amended. (No. 37.)

House adjourned at a quarter before
Eight o'clock, till To-morrow,
a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 18th March, 1886.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Town Holdings, *nominated.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—NAVY ESTIMATES; CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Postponed Resolution [March 11] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee* — Deficiencies, £38,715, 2*s.* 1*d.*; £8,256,018.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal (No. 2)* [147]; Post Office Sites * [148].

Second Reading—Consolidated Fund. (No 1).*

Committee — Compensation for Damages [120] —R.P.

Committee—Report—Third Reading—Marriages Validity * [137], and *passed.*

Considered as amended—Re-comm.—Committee—Report—Considered as amended—Trees (Ireland) [30].

Third Reading—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order * [119], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

SCOTLAND—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN KIRKWALL.

MR. MACDONALD CAMERON (Wick, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate for Scotland, Whether his attention has been called to a report of *The Orkney Herald* of the 23rd December last, of a case tried before Sheriff Thoms and Sheriffs Substitute Mellis and Mackenzie, in which seven men named Thomas Garrioch Tait, Robert Sinclair, James Mainland, James Cuff, Robert Dearness, John Wylie, and Robert Bremnar, were convicted of rioting; that the only evidence against Sinclair, as shown by the report alluded to, was that he was seen in the crowd, and only one witness saw a flour-bag coming from the point at which Sinclair stood, but could not swear that Sinclair threw it; is it the case that the Fiscal said he did not consider that there was evidence against the panel Robert Sinclair, and that he was prepared to desert the diet against him, but, in the face of this, the Sheriff passed one of the heaviest sentences on Sinclair; is it true that the Provost of Kirkwall had used threats against the postmaster of that town for supporting the present Member; and, will he cause an inquiry to be made into this case and furnish the House with copies of the evidence, and also into the general administration of justice in Kirkwall?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) (Clackmannan, &c.): My attention has been called to this Report, and I have also seen the papers in the case. I cannot say that the evidence against Sinclair appears to have been confined solely to the point put in the Question; and what the Fiscal, in addressing the jury, is reported to have said, is—

> "He had very seriously considered whether it would not have been consistent with his duty to withdraw the charges against Sinclair, but had felt that the proper course was to leave him in the hands of the Court."

In passing sentence the Sheriff said that, as regarded Sinclair—

> "He thought his position, influence, and the fact that he did not use it on the side of order, was an aggravation."

I am informed that it is not true that the Provost of Kirkwall has used threats against the Postmaster of that town for supporting the present Member. I have to-day received statements signed by the Provost and the postmaster to this effect. I find that my hon. Friend who puts the Question had a correspondence with the Home Office, and I understand also an interview respecting the matter at the time, and that on the 5th of January an answer was sent to him to the effect that there was no ground for interference. I see no doubt as to the propriety of the conclusion thus arrived at by our Predecessors in Office.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—HIRING OF CARS.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is he aware that it is the custom at Bawnboy, county Cavan, for the police to insist on having receipts which purport to represent actual payments from persons from whom the police hire cars on public, although the actual payment does not take place for months after; and, whether he will take means to have the irregularity remedied?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, he understood that this practice had prevailed at the place mentioned. It was explained that the police did not insist on having receipts, and that the interval before payment seldom exceeded a few days. However, the practice was clearly irregular, and would be at once put a stop to.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE CAVAN GRAND JURY.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that only fifteen grand jurors were sworn at last Cavan Assizes; whether less than twelve of these voted in favour of finding a true bill against two emergency men, Robert Bell and George Buggy, who were charged with setting fire to a byre at Clonloskan; and, whether, under these circumstances, any further legal proceedings will be taken against Bell and Buggy?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have no means of knowing; and, of course, the hon. Gentleman will see that it is scarcely proper for me to inquire whether there was any division amongst the members of the Grand Jury regarding this case. The Bill was ignored, and there must have been, of course, a legal majority. I am informed that, though there were very suspicious circumstances connected with the case, there was no direct evidence against the accused; and it is not intended to take any further proceedings unless new evidence should be disclosed.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — USE OF SCHOOLROOMS FOR POLITICAL MEETINGS.

MR. HERBERT GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he has the power to compel the managers of schools in receipt of Parliamentary Grants to place the rooms of such schools at the disposal of Parliamentary candidates, on convenient occasions, for the purpose of holding political meetings; and, if so, whether he will put such powers in force?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): The Education Department has no power to compel managers to place the schools at the disposal of Parliamentary candidates. This rests at their own discretion, provided that they do not transgress Section 20 of the Corrupt Practices Act, 1883, which prohibits them from hiring the school, and that they do not contravene clauses which are sometimes in the trust deeds of the school.

WESTMINSTER HALL (RESTORATION).

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If the time has arrived when the public may be safely re-admitted to view Westminster Hall, under proper restrictions, and the privilege of drilling therein on certain evenings be re-accorded to the Queen's Westminsters, the London Scottish, the London Irish, and other Metropolitan regiments of Volunteers which, until January 1885, had enjoyed it for a quarter of a century, and whose efficiency has only been maintained with the greatest difficulty, owing to no place being provided by the Government in lieu thereof?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): In reply to the hon. Member I may remind him that it was decided in December last by my Predecessor that it was not advisable as yet to relax the existing restrictions with regard to the use of Westminster Hall. I do not feel justified in departing from that decision, at least for the present.

COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—FACILITIES FOR LIGHTKEEPERS ATTENDING DIVINE SERVICE.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If, in order to permit lightkeepers off the Irish Coast to attend Divine Service, he will direct that at stations where there are two trips per week ashore one of them shall be on Sanday; that the privilege of keeping a small boat, as enjoyed till November last, for forty years, shall be allowed to lighthouse keepers; and, when he will be able to state what additional stations will be made relieving stations?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): In fulfilment of the promise I made to the hon. Member the week before last, I have asked the Lighthouse Authorities of England, Scotland, and Ireland for detailed information as to the facilities in their respective services for attending Divine Service, and for the education of children. When I receive this information, the collection of which must necessarily take time, as it will be given in respect of each station, I will consider, in conjunction with the Lighthouse Boards, what can be done with the view to the solution of the question which the hon. Member has raised. The Board of Trade have no direct authority over the Lighthouse Boards, but only exercise a financial control over their expenditure.

ARMS' LICENCES (IRELAND)—CASE OF PATRICK M'GINN.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Patrick M'Ginn, of Carr, was convicted at the Petty Sessions held at Clogher, county Tyrone, on March 9th, of being drunk while in possession of loaded firearms; whether he had a licence for arms under section 4 of "The Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881," and whether he is a person qualified under the Act to hold a licence; whether the Justices, or either of them, who signed the certificate for the licence reside within the Petty Sessions District for which it was issued; whether it is a fact that Justices residing within that Petty Sessions had previously refused to sign a certificate; when were the Justices who signed the certificate appointed to the Commission of the Peace; and, whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland has been drawn to their action in this matter?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have received a telegram from Dublin that at the last moment it was found necessary to make some further inquiries into this case, and I will ask the hon. Member to be good enough to put the Question again.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) — THE BELTURBET RAILWAY—BRIDGE OVER THE BALLINAMORE CANAL.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) (for Mr. JORDAN) (Clare, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether on a light line of Railway, now being made from Belturbet, county Cavan, Ireland, to Dromod, a bridge spans the Ballinamore Canal at that town; whether, in view of the possible completion of the Canal, the Railway bridge is at so low a level as to make it impossible for steam tugs or barges to pass under the arch at high water; whether the engineer of the Board of Works inspected the line, and was a party to this arrangement; and, whether, before the completion of the bridge, the Government will take steps to protect the Canal traffic which may arise between Limerick and Belfast?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.) (who replied) said: The railway is now being constructed between Belturbet, and, in consequence, a bridge is being built spanning the Canal. Only the buttresses of the bridge have been constructed as yet, and the bridge might be raised to any height required for navigation purposes. The engineer of the Board of Works has made all the observations; but he was not certain that the Board had any power, as the Canal navigation was vested in Trustees, and not the Board. The Ballinamore Canal had never been used for navigation purposes, and the works had been for many years abandoned by the Navigation Trustees.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT—WEIGHTS AND SCALES.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If any and what arrangements have been made under "The Coal Mines Regulation Act," 35 and 36 Vic. c. 76, s. 19, to insure a systematic and periodical examination of the weights and scales used at collieries in South West Lancashire, by which the wages payable to any person employed in such mines are calculated according to the weight of coal gotten by such person; how frequently have such inspections been made, and what arrangements exist for the men employed at a mine to have the weights and scales examined at other times when they deem it necessary; and, has the Government Inspector of Mines any instructions to see that due effect is given to this section of the Act?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State for the Home Department has asked me to answer this Question. The Inspectors of Weights and Measures appointed by Local Authorities have power to inspect all weights and scales within their jurisdiction which are used on any premises for purposes of trade. It is the duty of the Local Authorities to make proper arrangements for inspection, and the responsibility rests exclusively with them. The Government Inspectors of Mines are under the direction of the Home Department; but I understand they have no power to exercise the authority of Inspectors of Weights and Measures.

PAVING CONTRACTS—DUBLIN CORPORATION.

MR. JONES-PARRY (Carnarvon, &c.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the second loan of £100,000, which the Local Government Board has sanctioned for the purpose of enabling the Corporation to repave the city of Dublin, Whether he is aware that the city of Dublin is making an application for an alteration in the terms of that loan, viz. that the work shall not be let by public competition, but that the Corporation may do it themselves, without any competition at all; and, further, that the period shall be extended for six years, to enable Mr. Parnell's quarry to be extended and make the supply, as appears from the proceedings of the Dublin Corporation as detailed in the Irish papers; whether he is aware that the Dublin Corporation are already paying Mr. Parnell 24*s.* per ton, when another purely Irish firm offered to supply the same stones at 22*s.* per ton, entirely to the satisfaction of their engineer in quality, viz. the Ballintoy Quarries, Antrim; whether he is aware that Mr. Parnell afterwards got the stone altered in shape, and apparently is now supplying stone, which can be supplied 2*s.* per ton less, at the same price as he got in his first tender; whether he is aware that in the county, the boroughs of which I have the honour to represent, the sett-making trade is a standing industry, and is in a very depressed condition; and, whether he is aware that they have stones enough ready to do the work in one year, and at a lower price than Mr. Parnell offers—namely, at Mr. Parnell's original size, at 23*s.* per ton, and for the larger size at 20*s.* per ton?

Mr. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the application of the Dublin Corporation to the Local Government Board requests permission to use setts of Irish manufacture and material when they can be obtained of equal workmanship and quality to the Welsh; whether he is aware that, prior to the opening of quarries in Ireland, the Welsh quarry-owners possessed a monopoly of the supply to Dublin, and that their prices charged to the Corporation during a long series of years varied from 30*s.* to 25*s.* per ton, and never came so low as 24*s.* until their monopoly was broken by the opening of quarries in Ireland; whether the most recent quotations by the Welsh quarry-owners to the Dublin Corporation, in response to advertisement for public tender, amounted to 27*s.* per ton against 24*s.* by Mr. Parnell; whether he is aware that the difference between the price of 22*s.* and 24*s* per ton given by the Corporation to the Ballintoy and Arklow quarries respectively is due to a difference between the specific gravities of the two stones, which makes the latter more economical for use; and, whether the only orders yet given by the Corporation on account of the new loan have been shared equally between Arklow and Ballintoy quarries?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Speaking for the Local Government Board, I have to say that their sanction to the loan of £100,000 to the Corporation of Dublin for repaving was not given with any condition as to how the work was to be carried out. It rests entirely with the Corporation to decide this, and there is nothing in the Act under which the loan was made requiring them to let such works by public competition. So far as the action of the Corporation is called in question I should not have thought it my duty to make any inquiries; but I have been voluntarily informed by the Town Clerk that tenders were invited last autumn by public advertisements, and the lowest quotations were from Ballintoy at 22*s.*, and Arklow at 24*s.*, which, owing to a greater specific gravity in the former stone, were reported by the City Engineer to be about equal. Three Welsh firms tendered at uniform quotations. of 27*s.* per ton. The supplies now required are being ordered from Arklow and Ballintoy. The Town Clerk observes that it would be unusual and unbusinesslike to take amended offers after prices were disclosed, even if the firms in Wales were now ready to make them as suggested in the Question of the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—CONSOLIDATION.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government are taking any steps to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Irish Prisons as to the further consolidation of Prisons in Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I understand that the comprehensive scheme of the Prisons Board for the consolidation of the Irish prisons will be laid before the Government in a few days. In the meantime, with the view of facilitating the arrangements, orders have been passed for closing altogether the prison at Lifford; Mullingar Prison has been reduced to the *status* of a minor prison; Downpatrick Prison has been closed wholly as a local prison, and reserved exclusively for convicts; and Naas has been closed as a civil prison, and will be handed over to the Military Authorities for their purposes.

CRIMINAL LAW—PROSECUTION FOR LIBEL (CAPE COLONY).

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to the recent prosecution for criminal libel of the Reverend John G. Don, Presbyterian Minister in King William's Town, South Africa; whether he is aware that the alleged libel consisted in Mr. Don having publicly protested against the unwarranted action of the Premier and Attorney General of Cape Colony in preventing the trial for manslaughter of a Dutch farmer who had shot dead an inoffensive Kaffir, while the latter was searching for his master's horse; and, whether, in view of the action against Mr. Don having resulted in an acquittal, and full justification of his conduct in protecting the rights and lives of the Native races, Her Majesty's Government will take steps to see that the costs of his defence, amounting to about five hundred pounds, are defrayed out of the public revenue of the Cape Colony?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): My attention has been called to the recent prosecution in the Cape Colony of the Rev. J. G. Don for criminal libel. I have read a paper which the hon. Member has been good enough to send me, headed, Mr. Don's "Triumphant Vindication of Kaffir Life and Rights in South Africa," and purporting to give an account of the trial; but it is only just to Mr. Upington, the Premier and Attorney General of the Cape Colony, to state that he emphatically denies having, either directly or indirectly, interfered in the case of Pelzer, the Dutch farmer referred to in the Question; the fact being that, in declining to prosecute, the Solicitor General, who is not a political officer. acted quite independently and on his own judgment. With regard to the last Question, the hon. Member must surely have forgotten that the Cape Colony is a self-governing Colony, and that whatever may have been the merits or the result of the trial to which he refers, Her Majesty's Government have no power to interfere with the administration of justice by the Courts of that Colony, or to see that the costs of any proceedings in such Courts shall be defrayed out of its public Revenue.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART (SCOTLAND) — SIR DAVID BAXTER'S BEQUEST TO DUNDEE.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that a bequest, now amounting to more than £25,000, left many years ago by the late Sir David Baxter, to maintain a Mechanics' Institute in Dundee, has not yet been applied to that purpose, although such an Institute is greatly needed; and, whether he can do anything to induce the Trustees to apply the money forthwith to the purposes for which it was intended?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): I know something about Sir David Baxter's bequest for a Mechanics' Institute in Dundee; in fact, I have in my possession a most interesting Report addressed to his Trustees, who have unlimited powers in the matter, by gentlemen whom they several months ago requested to advise them and draw up a scheme. The Report is confidential, but, no doubt, will be published soon.

TENURE REMOVAL (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will, on behalf of the Government, adopt the Tenure Removal (Scotland) Bill, introduced by the honourable Member for Dundee, or introduce a measure dealing with the same subject?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) (Clackmannan, &c.) said, he knew this was a matter on which there was a good deal of feeling in Scotland. He should be very glad to propose a measure dealing with it; but while he found that there was a unanimity of opinion in favour of a uniform term there was a great deal of difference as to the particular days that would be chosen. He would be glad to confer with hon. Members from Scotland, and to endeavour to settle that question.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND)—REGISTRATION OF FISHING BOATS.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether he will, in the Crofters' Bill, or by a separate Bill, provide for the registration of fishing boats in such manner as will enable their owners to give valid mortgages on them?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Trevelyan) (Hawick, &c.): The matter which the hon. Member refers to is one of great moment to the interests of the fishermen, and through them tc the country at large; and the Government are carefully considering whether they should not introduce a Bill to apply to the whole of Scotland. With a register of fishing boats, in so many cases of considerable tonnage, giving as good security for a mortgage as small merchant ships, it is time the question should be carefully considered.

IRELAND—THE BELFAST CORPORATION—SALARY OF THE TOWN CLERK.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to certain proceedings alleged to have taken place at Belfast; and, if not, will he cause inquiry to be made into the merits of the case, viz.: that Mr. Samuel Black was in the year 1878, with the approval (pursuant to the statute) of the Lord Lieutenant, appointed by the Corporation of Belfast to the joint office of town clerk and solicitor of the Corporation at a salary of £2,000 sterling per year; that the said town clerk afterwards claimed payment from the Corporation of the moneys paid by him to his Dublin agent, in addition to his salary, and the Corporation did pay same; that the matter was brought before the Local Government Board, on behalf of the ratepayers, who directed their auditor to disallow such payment, which the auditor accordingly did; that the Corporation brought the matter before the Court of Queen's Bench by certiorari, and, after two days' argument by counsel on behalf of the Corporation and the Local Government Board, the Court pronounced judgment on the 23rd February 1881, declaring the said payments to be illegal, as they were included in the salary paid to the town clerk, and that the auditor was quite right in surcharging the same on the members of the Corporation; that, notwithstanding the said judgment of the said Court of Queen's Bench, the Corporation at their meeting, on the 1st January 1886, passed the following Resolution, "That the town clerk's outlay shall include his Dublin agent's allowance for doing the work of the Corporation;" and, if these allegations are substantially correct, will he, as official head of the said Board, state what action the Board will adopt for the purpose of supporting the judgment of Her Majesty's Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland, and the authority of the Local Government Board?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have no information as to the Corporation having adopted the Resolution on the 1st January, 1886, mentioned in the Question. Subject to the fact that the salary was fixed at £1,750, and not £2,000, I believe the statements of the hon. Member are substantially correct. I am advised that if the Corporation has by any resolution sanctioned a payment which the Court of Queen's Bench declared to be illegal, it will be the duty of the Auditor of the Local Government Board, at his audit, to surcharge them.

SHIPWRECK ON THE COAST OF NORWAY—CASE OF ELIZABETH MOUAT.

Mr. LYELL (Orkney and Shetland) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have already expressed to the Government of Norway their appreciation of the bravery and humanity shown by the fishermen and others at Lepsöe, in rescuing the woman Elizabeth Mouat, who was lately wrecked on their shores in the *Columbine;* and, whether the Government are prepared to make some substantial acknowledgment of the services rendered to one of Her Majesty's subjects under circumstances so eminently deserving of recognition?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): Her Majesty's Minister accredited to Sweden and Norway was instructed on the 10th instant to express the gratitude of Her Majesty's Government for the services so humanely rendered to Elizabeth Mouat on the occasion in question; and the Board of Trade has been consulted as to what steps can be taken to reward these services, either by an acknowledgment in the shape of some benefit of a permanent nature to the community of Lepsoe, or by gifts to those concerned in the rescue.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883—DUTIES OF OFFICIALS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Who is responsible for the performance of the duties of Trustees under section 121 of the Bankruptcy Act of 1883; what control the Inspector General in Bankruptcy has in the London District; and, whether it is the fact that the majority of the officers at the Chief Official Receiver's Office are under twenty-one years of age, and have had no previous experience of bankruptcy business?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): The Official Receivers, when acting as Trustees under Section 121 of the Bankruptcy Act, are responsible for the performance of their duties. The Official Trustees act under the direction of the Board of Trade. The control of the Inspector General in Bankruptcy does not at present extend to the London district, except for the purpose of audit. I am informed by the Chief Official Receiver that only 18 per cent of his staff are under 21 years of age, including boy copyists, and that of those over age all the officers and clerks who are entrusted with important or responsible duties (43 in number) have been selected by him for their knowledge of law and accounts, and for their experience in bankruptcy administration.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that under Section 121 of the Act there were Trustees other than the Official Receivers who might be appointed, and who superseded the Official Receivers. It was with regard to such Trustees that he had asked the Question which he would renew.

EDUCATION (IRELAND)—IRISH NATIONAL TEACHERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the case of Mr. Buchanan, principal teacher of the Carnone National School, No. 4036, county Donegal, and into the circumstances under which, after nearly 40 years' service, he was compelled to resign on the 1st December last, just before the revised pension scheme came into operation; and, whether, if he finds that Mr. Buchanan has been hardly dealt with, he will move the Lord Lieutenant to allow him a pension calculated under the new scheme?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed by the Education Office that in August, 1885, Mr. Buchanan, the principal teacher of the Carnone National School, gave his manager three months' notice of his resignation owing to failing health, and in the following November he resigned. The manager thereupon applied for a pension for him, and obtained it on the 1st of December. In this state of facts I do not see how a case could be made out to bring the pension under the new rules, which did not come into effect until January, 1886; but if the hon. Member can satisfy the Treasury of the fairness of the claim I make no objection to his doing so.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the right hon. Gentleman would inquire whether the statements with regard to this dismissed officer were substantially correct; and whether he was not compelled to resign at the date mentioned against his will?

MR. JOHN MORLEY, in reply, said, he should assume that the facts supplied to him were correct, and the hon. Member was scarcely justified in saying that the man was dismissed, when the information was that he resigned.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED ATTACK UPON REV. W. P. KEARNEY, DROGHEDA.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, As to whether official information had reached him concerning a most savage attack having been made upon the Reverend William P. Kearney one of the curates of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Chapel, Drogheda, by a band of ruffians, accompanied by a number of the prostitutes of that town, and that the Reverend gentleman only escaped with his life by taking refuge in the house of a Protestant named Gardiner, who, at his own risk, protected him from further molestation; and, as the consequences may be very serious, the Reverend gentleman being since confined to bed, wholly unfit to attend to any duty, and if the above be correct, what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take in order to bring the perpetrators of this assault to justice?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am sure the hon. Gentleman will be glad to know that he has been misinformed. The Inspector of Police has called on the Rev. Mr. Kearney, who states that the whole affair is a fabrication, and that there is no truth in any portion of it.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — WOODFORD, CO. GALWAY.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it be true that Sir Henry Burke took out sixty ejectment decrees against his tenants in Woodford parish at the January Quarter Sessions; and, if so, were these decrees legal instruments, though not signed by the solicitor, Mr. O'Farrell, or in Mr. O'Farrell's presence, whose name was on the decrees; whether it is true that Mrs. Lewis took out twenty civil bill decrees against her tenants in the same locality, though they had actually paid the hanging gale some time previously; is it a fact that the Marquess of Clanricarde has acted in a similar manner and has served writs on his tenants, and sold some of their farms by auction in the town of Galway; is it true that the trustees or managers of the estates of the Earl of Westmeath served processes of ejectment on all the poorer tenants around Woodford, though not proceeding to eject the tenants, owing to an informality in the mode of procedure; has Lord Dunsandle and other landlords in South Galway acted in a similar manner; and, if so, will the Government interfere?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that Sir Henry Burke obtained 45 decrees against his tenants in Woodford parish, and that they were all signed by Mr. O'Farrell personally. Mrs. Lewis is stated to have obtained 19 decrees, and there were no hanging gales, except in the case of three. I am also informed that Lord Clanricarde sold four farms, but that in three instances the tenants have been reinstated on payment of costs. I am not aware how many writs have been served by him. According to the information before me, neither Lord Westmeath's trustees nor Lord Dunsandle have taken the proceedings mentioned in the hon. Member's Question.

EGYPT — ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—REPORT OF JUDGE WEST.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government will lay upon the Table of the House the Reports of Judge West on the Administration of Justice in Egypt?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The Report to which the hon. Member refers has not yet reached Her Majesty's Government; but Sir Evelyn Baring will, no doubt, forward a copy of it. It will then be examined with a view to determine whether it should be laid upon the Table.

INLAND REVENUE—LICENCE DUTY ON PUBLIC-HOUSES.

MR. M'LAREN (Stafford) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the practice of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to charge Licence Duty on public houses according to the Poor Law valuation in each place, or according to any other valuation, and whether their practice varies in this respect in different places; and, whether any difference is made in cases where the owner of the licence is owner of the licensed premises?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby), in reply, said, that it was not the practice of the Inland Revenue to charge Licence Duty according to the Poor Law valuation, but on the basis of the assessment to the Inhabited House Duty, where the premises were over £20 in annual value; where that was not the case, Schedule D of the Income Tax was taken as the basis. No difference was made in cases where the owner of the licence was owner of the licensed premises.

STATE OF IRELAND—LAWLESSNESS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) (for Colonel WARING) (Down, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, at the spring assizes held at Tralee on 10th March 1886, Mr. O'Driscoll, baronial high constable for Iveragh, asked leave of the Grand Jury to resign his office, on the ground that a portion of his barony—namely, the parish of Glanbeigh, was in so lawless a condition that he found himself unable to collect the county cess; whether it is a fact that he has visited certain lands three times with a view to making seizures, but found on the first and second occasions that all the cattle had been driven off on his approach; and, on the third, whether, having made seizures, he was compelled to abandon them by a mob of upwards of one hundred people; whether the police, though present, were powerless to protect him in the execution of his duty; whether the Grand Jury accepted Mr. O'Driscoll's resignation; and, whether they apprehend the gravest difficulty in inducing any one to accept the responsibility of undertaking the office of high constable of the barony of Iveragh?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that Mr. O'Driscoll has resigned his post, and that the Grand Jury have accepted his resignation. The facts as to the attempted seizures are as stated. The police were quite able to protect Mr. O'Driscoll, and, as a matter of fact, did so. The failure of the seizure on the third occasion was due to the fact that there was not a sufficient number of drovers for the cattle, and it is not the duty of the police to act in that capacity. The County Inspector gives it as his personal opinion that, owing to the difficulty of getting money in that part of Kerry, which he describes as wretched and impoverished, he fancies no person would care to take the situation in question.

RAILWAYS AND PUBLIC WORKS, INDIA.

MR. FELL PEASE (York, N.R., Cleveland) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the intention of the Government, within the present year, to encourage and expedite the construction, whether by the State or by public Companies, of Railways and other Works in India, which have been recommended in the interests of that Empire, and would be securities against famine, while in this Country they might have the effect of encouraging the iron, steel, and other industries?

MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will lay upon the Table of the House, a Return, showing the extent of Railways in India which has been sanctioned since the Report of the Committee on East Indian Railways of 18th July 1884, giving the names of the sanctioned Railways, the mileage, the estimated cost, the time to be occupied in construction, and whether they were included in Schedules A and B of the Report; and, if he can say whether it is the intention of the Government to take advantage of the extremely low prices now ruling for Railway material, and push forward the extension of Railways in India at a more rapid rate?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The annual Report on Railways in India for the year 1885-6, which will be presented as usual this Session, will give the desired information; but if the hon. Member for North Leeds (Mr. Jackson) desires any part of the information immediately, perhaps he will confer with me, and I shall be happy, as far as possible, to meet his wishes. In the opinion of the Secretary of State in Council, the numerous railways and other public works now in course of construction, which include the Frontier Lines, should be further advanced towards completion before fresh obligations are incurred. I may add for the information of the House that the Budget Estimate for the current year included a capital expenditure of about £8,250,000 on Indian Railways. The Indian Midland Railway Company, with a capital of £3,000,000, has also been formed, and the Southern Mahratta Company have raised £600,000 for a new railway. These two sums were not included in the Estimate.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (THE SUB-COMMISSIONERS)—SITTINGS AT AUGHNACLOY.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the sittings of the Land Sub-Commissioners at Aughnacloy in February last were abandoned; where and when the next sittings will be held; and, what arrangements will be made to obviate the possibility of a fresh disappointment to litigants?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The sittings at Aughnacloy were abandoned because the sittings at the preceding town, Dungannon, were unexpectedly protracted, in consequence of the terribly bad weather at the time. The sittings at Dungannon, therefore, overlapped the proposed sittings at Aughnacloy. The Land Commissioners state that as they have only one Sub-Commission for the whole of Ulster, it will not be possible to return to Tyrone before September next. I appreciate the hon. Member's point as to the possibility of a hardship to the tenants; but that is owing to the policy of Parliament in allowing the fair rent to date, not from the time of application, but from the date of hearing.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Would it not be possible for the Land Commissioners to order that the judicial rent should date from the day of hearing originally set down in cases where the delay was not caused by any default on the part of the tenant?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I cannot answer that Question off-hand; but I am of opinion that it could not be done, as it is beyond the Act of Parliament.

COAL STATISTICS, 1885.

MR. M'LAREN (Stafford) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he can now state the amount of the output of coal in Great Britain in 1885, as compared with 1884; and also in which of our coalfields the official statistics show the largest decreases for the past year?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): The statistics of the output of coal in Great Britain in 1885 are in the hands of the printers. I will see that my hon. Friend is furnished with a copy as soon as they are ready.

THE LONDON PARKS—GROUND RENTS AND REVENUES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the amount of the ground rents and of any other source of revenue now paid into the Consolidated Fund in connection with the London parks?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The ground rents and other revenues received in connection with the Royal Parks in London, including Battersea and Victoria Parks, are under the control partly of the First Commissioner of Works, partly of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. The sums received by the Office of Works amount to £1,480, and are paid into the Exchequer as extra receipts. The sums received by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests are derived from property situate within or around certain of the Parks. They are not paid into the Consolidated Fund, but are accounted for as part of the land revenue of the Crown. The particulars for each Park are as follows:—Regent's Park.—For properties within the road known as the Outer Circle, £2,084 18*s.* 4*d.*; for properties outside that circle, £14,826 2*s.* 3*d.* Victoria Park. This Park was purchased under the Acts 4 & 5 *Vict.*, c. 27, and 5 *Vict.*, c. 20. By these Acts the Commissioners were empowered to lease or sell any part of the Park not exceeding in the whole one-fourth. The rental received by the land revenue for the portion leased amounted last year to £3,150 14*s.* Hyde, Green, and St. James's Parks.—Some small pieces of land which anciently formed parts of the Parks or the freeboards of the Parks are let by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests; but as the lettings include houses which were not any part of the Parks, the rental of the land which anciently formed a part of the Parks or the freeboards of the Parks cannot be separately stated. These pieces of land were inclosed from the open parts of the Parks about the end of the last century. The gross total of the figures I have stated amounts to £21,542.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—OPERATION OF THE ACT.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state to the House how far the facilities afforded by "The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883," have been made use of in the extension of tramways, emigration, or the purchase of lands in Ireland, and what moneys have been advanced by the Government; and, if he could lay upon the Table of the House a Return up to the present time?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I do not think it would be convenient for me to attempt, within the limits of an answer to a Question, to state the operations which have taken place under this very important Act; but if the hon. Member will formulate a Return asking for the information he seeks, I will be very glad to see how far his wishes in the matter may be met.

ARMY (IRELAND)—CASUALTY TO A SOLDIER IN BELFAST.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether on the morning of the 1st of January last, Patrick Aherne, a private in the Fusiliers, stationed at Belfast, was found at an early hour lying in the barrack square in a state of insensibility; whether his teeth had been kicked out, his lip split in two, his ribs broken, and his skull fractured; whether he was carried to the Barrack Hospital, and left there with his wounds undressed and unattended to, until inquiries were made, two days after the occurrence, by Head Constable Tilson and another police officer; whether these officials were informed that nothing unusual had taken place in the barracks, and whether they learned only on the 5th or 6th of the same month, from the undertaker's man, that a soldier (Aherne) had died from the effects of violence; whether it is a fact that no inquest was held, that the dying man's depositions were not taken, and that the civil authority was not called in; and, whether the resident magistrates failed to perform their duty in not causing an investigation to be held, and what account they give of the case, and their course in reference to it?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Owing to some discrepancies in the information which I have received I shall have to make further inquiries, and I will ask the hon. Member kindly to put down his Question again for Tuesday.

IRISH FISHERY COMMISSIONERS—CONTRACTS FOR PIERS, &c.

MR. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a contract has been entered into for the construction of the fishery pier at Portstewart, county Derry; and, whether, in view of the distress which exists in some parts of Ireland, steps are being taken to obtain contracts as soon as possible for the works recommended by the Fishery Commissioners?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to answer this Question. A contract has been entered into for the works at Portstewart. Of 57 works recommended by the Fishery Commissioners, and sanctioned, five are already completed, 44 are in course of construction, and the remaining eight are in forward condition for the earliest possible commencement.

NAVY (ORDNANCE)—RETURN OF GUNS UNDER CONSTRUCTION FOR NEW SHIPS OF WAR.

MR. RUSTON (Lincoln) asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, If he can state when he will be prepared to lay upon the Table of the House his promised Return of the guns which are being prepared wherewith to arm the war ships now being built; and, whether in this Return he will give,—1st. The size of the guns; 2nd. The ships (by name) for which they are intended; 3rd. Where each gun is being constructed?

THE CIVIL LORD (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): I hope to lay the Return of the guns, which are being prepared for the war ships now being built, on the Table in a day or two. It will give the number and size of the guns and where they are being constructed; but the Admiralty do not consider that it is desirable, in the interests of the Service, to give the names of the ships for which the guns are intended.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—HALL MARKING OF FOREIGN MANUFACTURED GOLD AND SILVER WATCH CASES.

Mr. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he can furnish the House with the number of gold and silver (separately) watch cases that were hall-marked by the Goldsmiths' Company in 1884 and in 1885, distinguishing those of Foreign manufacture from those of British make; if he is aware that the Foreign made cases, when so marked, are exported abroad, where they are fitted with watch movements, and then brought back to this Country, selling here as English made watches, by reason of bearing the British Goldsmiths' Hall-mark, thus unfairly and seriously injuring an important but struggling British industry; and, whether he will take such steps as may be necessary to stop the marking of the Foreign manufactured cases with the British Hall mark, reserving the benefit of that mark solely for British productions?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside): As to the first part of the hon. Member's Question, I will communicate with the Goldsmiths' Company, and furnish such information as they are able to give. As to the second part, I have no information beyond that contained in the evidence given to the Hall-Marking Committee of 1878 and 1879, which went to show that about 10 per cent of silver watch cases were of foreign origin. I am aware that the law with respect to the hall-marking of silver plate is not in a satisfactory condition; but it must be remembered that the hall-mark is in its essence a test of quality and not a statement of origin. It is doubtful whether any such limitation as is suggested would effect the object which the hon. Member has in view. The question raised is one of misrepresentation of place of origin; and, as such, it shall have my consideration when dealing with that subject in connection with the Merchandise Marks Act.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE BARROW DRAINAGE AND ARDGLASS HARBOUR.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Reports on Ardglass Harbour, presented 18th February last, and Arklow Harbour, presented 4th March, will be in the hands of Members; whether he has observed that over five months have elapsed since the inspection of these harbours was made by the engineers for the purpose of reporting, and that the Reports are only a page and a-half each in length; and, whether he will take any notice of the apparently needless delay in the matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): With reference to these two questions, I have to state that I am informed by the Stationery Office that the Report on the Ardglass Harbour will be in the hands of Members to-morrow, and the Report of the Barrow Drainage Commission will be in the hands of Members on Monday next.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—PRISON WARDERS.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the recommendation contained in the Report of the Royal Commission on Prisons in Ireland, as to an increase in the wages of warders, has not been carried out, such recommendation being as follows:

> "It therefore seems clear to us that a necessity for higher remuneration is created as well for the reasons above stated as by the fact of an improvement in the general rates of pay and wages in Ireland."

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have already stated that the Report of the Royal Commission on Prisons recommended the abolition of a considerable number of prisons and bridewells and the formation of a consolidated scheme. This is now in progress, and is expected to be before the Government shortly; but, pending its final settlement, the Treasury have declined to sanction increases of salaries generally, on the ground that new interests and claims would be thereby created on the part of many whose services it might be found necessary to dispense with under a consolidation scheme.

NAVY—ARMAMENT—THE HOTCHKISS GUN.

Mr. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is a fact that the Hotchkiss quick firing guns, supplied for use in the Navy, were made at the Hotchkiss factory in France; if it is a fact that, although the body of the gun was made and supplied by an English firm, the gun was finished in France; and, whether in future contracts for machine or quick firing guns, for use in the Army or Navy, it will be stipulated that the guns shall be manufactured and finished in this Country?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): It is a fact that of the Hotchkiss quick-firing guns for naval use the six-pounders were made at the Hotchkiss factory in France, and I believe that the steel forgings for these guns were supplied by an English firm. Subsequently, it has been found that Mr. Hotchkiss was able to arrange for the manufacture in England of his three-pounder guns of the same type, and a number of these are under order. In future contracts for guns of this description careful consideration will be given to the point whether it is practicable, without undue delay, to obtain the weapons in this country.

BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) COURTS—LOCAL COURT AT BELFAST.

MR. JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the strongly expressed desire of merchants in the North of Ireland, he will take the necessary steps to establish a local Court of Bankruptcy in Belfast?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am aware of the strong desire which exists in Belfast for the establishment of a local Court of Bankruptcy, a desire which appears to me to be perfectly reasonable. I find that successive Governments have introduced Bills for the establishment of such a Court. I need not enumerate all the occasions on which such Bills were introduced. In 1883, when the English Bankruptcy Bill of my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board was before a Grand Committee, clauses were proposed by the Irish Government for extending that Bill to Ireland, and for establishing local Courts of Bankruptcy in that country; but in consequence of those clauses the passing of the whole Bill was put in peril, and the clauses had to be withdrawn. Since 1883 the Irish Government have not attempted to deal with the matter; and, having regard to the facts which I have recounted, I am afraid that it would be useless for me to promise to bring in any Bill on the subject at present.

THE ROYAL LIVER FRIENDLY SOCIETY—THE REPORT.

MR. HUTTON (Manchester, N.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will lay upon the Table the evidence taken in the recent inquiry into the affairs of the Royal Liver Friendly Society, and the Report of the Inspector (Mr. Lyulph Stanley)?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.) said, the Report of Mr. Stanley was now in type, and he hoped would be laid on the Table tomorrow or Monday. As the evidence was very voluminous, and it would cost a considerable sum to print it, the view he took was that he would lay the Report on the Table; and if hon. Members thought it desirable that the evidence should be printed he would raise no difficulty in the matter.

VACCINATION ACT—REPEAL OF COMPULSORY VACCINATION.

MR. THOMAS ROBINSON (Gloucester) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, having regard to the large and increasing number of people who conscientiously object to have their children vaccinated, he will bring in a Bill this Session to repeal the Compulsory Clauses of the Vaccination Act?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.), in reply, said, he could not undertake to bring in a Bill this Session to repeal the compulsory clauses of the Vaccination Act; but he understood that his hon. Friend the hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) had a Motion on the Paper with reference to the Vaccination Act, which, when it was reached, would afford an opportunity for discussing the whole subject.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — SERGEANTS MAJOR OF VOLUNTEERS.

MR. ALEXANDER HALL (Oxford) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will consider the case of the Sergeant Majors of Volunteer Regiments, who, although performing the duties of Sergeant Majors, are only classed as "Acting Sergeant Majors;" and, whether they do not, in this respect, differ to their disadvantage from the Sergeant Majors of Militia, and from the position which they had originally occupied?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): The acting Sergeant Major of Volunteers does not receive the same pay or pension as a Sergeant Major of Militia; but the duties do not correspond. The acting Sergeant Major of a Volunteer battalion is only one of the Sergeant Instructors appointed to act as Sergeant Major and receiving 6*d.* a-day for the duty. I may add that the case was very fully considered by the right hon. Member for Blackpool (Sir Frederick Stanley), when Secretary of State for War; and his view was confirmed two years later by my right hon. Friend the present Home Secretary. I am not disposed to re-open the question.

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—COALING STATIONS.

MR. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will state the amounts which have been expended out of the Votes for the current year, and out of the Vote of Credit, for the defences of the coaling stations, of the commercial ports, and of the military ports respectively?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): It is calculated that we have expended during the present financial year £46,458 on the fortification of coaling stations, besides £109,000, which, it is believed, has been paid in regard to the same stations by the Government of India and by the Colonial Governments at Singapore and Hong Kong—in all, £155,458. Beyond this amount, we have expended for coaling stations the following sums—namely, £13,000 for submarine mining buildings, £189,000 for armaments, and £60,000 for torpedo stores and boats—making a total for coaling stations of £417,458. As regards military ports, the expenditure has been limited to £28,000 for mining buildings; but on commercial ports there has been spent £26,000 for submarine mining buildings and £93,000 for torpedo stores and boats, together £119,000. The total expenditure on these defences has, therefore, amounted to £564,458. I wish to take this opportunity of explaining that when, on Monday, I informed the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool (Mr. Baden-Powell) that £50,000 was provided in the Estimates for the fortification works at coaling stations in the coming year, I confined myself to the terms of his Question, which regarded our Estimates only. But it is expected that a further amount of £120,000 will be spent during the year from India and Colonial funds.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—DESTITUTE RUSSIANS AT HULL.

MR. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to the case of certain destitute Russians who have become chargeable to the ratepayers of Hull; and, whether any arrangement exists with the Russian Government for the repatriation of such persons?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The case in question has been brought to the notice of the Foreign Office. No arrangement exists with the Russian Government for the repatriation of destitute Russian subjects. When the expediency of making arrangements for the reciprocal repatriation of paupers and lunatics was considered some years ago serious difficulties were found to stand in the way of such arrangements; but the subject is one which will receive the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—COMPENSATION TO INSPECTOR CONNAUGHTON.

MR. JAMES FLYNN (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the action of the County of Cork Grand Jury, on 12th instant, in awarding the sum of one thousand pounds to District Inspector Connaughton as compensation for injury sustained by him at Kingwilliamstown on 18th October last; whether he is aware that the assault upon Mr. Connaughton was committed by persons who had been engaged in a drunken row, and that (as appears from the sworn testimony of Serjeant Conderau, Government reporter) the occurrence was strongly denounced by the people at the time, and sternly reprobated by the Rev. Father M'Mahon, parish priest of the district; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will direct the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland to inquire if the Grand Jury have not exceeded their statutory authority in levying the sum upon the inoffensive taxpayers of the barony of Duhallow, who are already struggling under the burden of heavy rates and taxes?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): On the occasion in question Inspector Connaughton sustained a fracture of the arm, and he is still unfit for duty. It is a fact that the outrage was denounced by the Rev. Mr. M'Mahon and others at a meeting of the National League held that day. I am advised that the matter of compensation was entirely within the discretion of the Grand Jury, and that it was legally competent for them to act as they did. It is a question whether it would not have been possible to traverse the amount before the Judge of Assizes; but the time for that has now passed.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE CLOGHER JUSTICES.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there are any, and, if so, how many, Catholics among the justices of the Clogher Petty Sessions district; will the police make arrangements to ascertain how many of these justices are members of the Orange Society; is it a fact that they have used their position as justices to arm the Orangemen of the district and to refuse certificates for licences to Nationalists, who are constantly subject to attacks by armed Orangemen; and, whether the state of Clogher Petty Sessions district will be brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that there is one Catholic magistrate, and the Resident Magistrate is also a Catholic. The Government do not think it would be proper for them to direct an inquiry into the suggestion contained in the second part of the Question. No complaint has been made to the Government as to the granting or withholding of certificates for arms' licences in this district, and the Government are not aware of any failure of duty in this respect. The hon. Member is, I suspect, aware that the issue of the licences is a matter with which the Resident Magistrate has to deal, and that gentleman is not aware of any such attacks by armed Orangemen being constantly made as alleged. I feel sure that the Lord Chancellor will be quite ready to deal with any representations from this district on the lines I have indicated in answer to a Question a few days ago.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: I will call attention to this matter on the discussion of the Estimates.

PROPOSED DAY OF HUMILIATION.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If, in consideration of the widespread destitution throughout the United Kingdom, and the hardships endured by the people, he will advise Her Most Gracious Majesty to be pleased to appoint a day of humiliation and prayer as a National Appeal to Almighty God?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I have carefully considered the hon. Member's Question. There is undoubtedly much distress in the country, which is greatly to be lamented; but in order to warrant the appointment of days of this kind, which ought necessarily to be rare and separated by intervals from one another—for otherwise they would lose much of their peculiar character—the circumstances of the case should present certain particular characteristics, which we do not think that the description of distress now prevailing does present.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—THE COMMITTEE.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What was the intention of the Government with reference to the fifth Order on the Paper for the consideration of the Message from the Lords respecting the appointment of a Committee in regard to the Government of India? The Notice, as it now stood, might raise questions of great difficulty, and he hoped it was not the intention of the Government to take it to-night.

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, he was in hopes, from what he had heard, that the whole matter had been arranged; but if there was a difficulty remaining they should not be inclined to take the Order to-night.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) said, he would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to postpone the Question for a day or two.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE said, there was no hurry which would justify him in resisting that request.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government had received information to the effect that a horrible famine was raging in the Soudan; and, whether it was true that persons who attempted to smuggle food for the starving Natives through the English lines were severely punished if caught?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.), in reply, said, that he had received no recent information agreeing with the allegations of the hon. Member. The hon. Member was aware of the circumstances of the blockade, as only a few days ago he had answered a Question of his upon the subject. He had no further information.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE INSANITARY CONDITION OF THIS HOUSE.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury a Question of which I have not been able to give him Notice, but of the character of which he has probably been already apprised by his olfactory organ. It is whether his attention has been directed to the extremely disagreeable odours perceptible in the House this evening; and, whether arrangements cannot at once be made for a thorough inspection of the sanitary condition of the House by some competent authority?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I have not had the opportunity of making the observation this evening; but I have on previous evenings, and I have already mentioned the matter to Mr. Speaker, with reference to a thorough examination into the drains of the House. Mr. Speaker has suggested that the Committee which sat last Session should be re-appointed, and I will confer with the Works Department with reference to the appointment of that Committee.

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2.) BILL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked, What course the Government proposed to take in regard to the Crofters Bill, which was the third Order for the evening?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.) said, the Bill would not be taken after 10 o'clock.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £2,902,900, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT) (Oldham): In rising, Mr. Courtney, to make a general Statement with respect to the Navy Estimates, I wish, in the first place, to thank hon. Members for the kind consideration which they extended to me on Monday night, when I was unavoidably absent, and when the noble and gallant Lord opposite the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) initiated a very interesting discussion with so much ability. I have also to thank the hon. Member for Banff (Mr. R. W. Duff) for having supplied my place at so short a notice; and I have, further, to congratulate him upon the knowledge and ability which he displayed. I feel that I stand here to-night in an unusual position, because in the past year there has taken place that which, I believe, never took place before. We have had three successive Boards of Admiralty within the last 10 months. We have had three successive First Lords, and three successive Parliamentary

Representatives of the Admiralty in this House. In addition to that, we have, also, at the present time a larger number of new officers representing the various Departments—and very important Departments—of the Admiralty than ever represented them at one time before. I allude first to the gentleman who holds the important position of Accountant General, who was appointed by the Earl of Northbrook, a gentleman of great experience, who, I trust, will bring that experience to bear on the financial affairs of the Admiralty; and then we have two other important appointments made by the noble Lord opposite the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton)—I mean those of Controller and the Director of Naval Construction. They are also gentlemen of great ability and high reputation; and from them I expect that great strength will be given to the Board of Admiralty. We have also had two other appointments to very important positions in the Dockyard Department; and there have been other appointments in connection with the Dockyards, such as those of the Civil Assistants to the Superintendents at Portsmouth, Chatham, and Devonport. We all know that new brooms sweep clean, and, therefore, we expect a great number of reforms and changes from these gentlemen. I am sure that there is room in many ways for great reforms and changes; and particularly for reforms in the Dockyards. The first reform of which the Committee already have knowledge is the improved form of the Estimates in the hands of hon. Members to-night. This improved form is due to the unwearied labour and great ability of Admiral Graham, Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, and the Director of Naval Construction. The information contained in the Estimates now before the Committee and the country is greater than has ever been given in any previous year; and I think that anyone who will carefully look at that information will find the great advantage it affords to them if they desire to thoroughly understand the Estimates. You have information given to you, not only as to the cost of each particular ship in course of construction, but also information as to the cost of the year up to March, 1885; the original estimated cost for the year 1885-6, with corrections where necessary; of the condition of the work at the present time, and the proposed expenditure for 1886-7, together with the number of men to be employed. But that is not all; you have, in addition to that, further information given to you as to the estimated expenditure on each ship to be completed, and the original and corrected date for completion. It might have been thought that all that information is sufficient for hon. Members; but it is not all the information that is given. You have, in addition, information which has never been given before with respect to propelling machinery, gun mountings, torpedo carriages and gear, and guns chargeable to the Army Vote. All this information is given for the first time; and you are able to see what will be the total cost of every particular ship in the course of construction. All that is a great advantage; for, in my opinion, it is far better to give to hon. Members and the country every information about the expenditure in the year on shipbuilding, or any other subject, than to try to keep it back in any way. There is another important change in these Estimates; and it is one which was recommended first by the Earl of Northbrook in a Minute before he left the Admiralty, and carried out by the noble Lord opposite the late First Lord. I refer to the important change which has so long been a matter of dispute and discussion in the House with reference to the "Parliamentary ton," or tonnage measurement, as it appeared in the Estimates. I congratulate the noble Lord on having been able to carry out that great change. I remember, in a discussion which took place last year, my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), who has, year after year, called attention to this disputed question, made use of these words, that—

> "The promise to build a certain tonnage has never been fulfilled by any Government."

That form of promise has always been a cause of dispute in the House between one side and the other. Happily for myself, however, I have to make no such promise of any particular amount of tonnage to be built in the year; and it is a still more happy escape for hon. Members that they will no longer be troubled by the annual battle of the unfortunate "ton." Expenditure will for the future be the measure of the progress made in shipbuilding. I now come to the consideration of the Estimates which have been presented to Parliament for the ensuing year; and in making a short explanatory statement respecting them, I wish to remind the Committee of the very short period during which my noble Friend the present First Lord (the Marquess of Ripon) and the Board have been in Office, and of the consequent great pressure and haste with which, naturally, we have been compelled to consider and determine the preparation of the Estimates. I do not think the Committee can expect a perfect policy to be prepared in four or five weeks; nor do I think it would be advisable to attempt to prepare a policy in so short a time. But the policy of the present Board is a loyal adhesion to the policy followed and the expenditure undertaken by the Earl of Northbrook, and the further expenditure commenced by the noble Lord opposite. We do not stand either by a Liberal or a Conservative policy; but we follow the policy of both Parties; and therefore I think I am able to say that our policy is a national policy. Well, then, we have also carried out in good faith the promises made to Parliament and to the country in the years 1884 and 1885; but we have, at the same time, a firm determination to curtail all expenditure which can be properly curtailed without injury to the Naval Service. The result of all is a net Estimate, which you have now in your hands, amounting to £12,993,100, or an increase of £606,600 over the grant of 1885-6, and of £298,200 over last year's grant, *plus* the Supplementary Estimates. No doubt, this sum of £12,993,100 is too small a sum to please many of our Naval Friends who sit opposite; while, at the same time, it is too large a sum for some—I will not say many—of our economical Friends who sit on the Benches on this side of the House, and who wish to see a more economical administration of our finances. Therefore I feel that on the present occasion I have to stand, as it were, between two fires, and have to be prepared to receive an attack from both sides. I appear here to-night in two capacities. As Secretary to the Admiralty, I desire to carry out and maintain to the fullest extent the efficiency of the Navy; but I also appear here as an economist, and in that capacity I venture to hope that the explanation I have to give will be one which may disarm the opposition of both Parties. Though I admit our Estimates are high—too high for our economical Friends—and, omitting Votes of Credit, that they are higher than those of any year since the Crimean War, I think I may say that their amount has been rendered necessary owing to the large liabilities incurred in carrying out the shipbuilding programme of the last two Boards—the Earl of Northbrook's and that of the noble Lord opposite. The Earl of Northbrook's scheme for additional ships caused a liability on the Navy Votes of £3,500,000. The late Board, presided over by the noble Lord opposite, during the short time—seven months—they were in Office, commenced 11 additional ships, five of which were in the 1885-6 programme, but not ordered; no designs had been prepared, nor had they been commenced. I do not mean, by saying that the noble Lord commenced 11 additional ships, to throw any imputation upon him of having commenced building unnecessary ships. Of these 11 ships, five belonged, as it were, to the Earl of Northbrook's Administration, and six to that of the noble Lord opposite. But if I include — and I think I ought to include it in the amount of liability the noble Lord's programme entailed upon us—I shall have to add the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*, because, although they had been suggested by the Earl of Northbrook, the designs were completed in the time of the noble Lord opposite; and I may say that the vessels already commenced created a further liability on the Navy Votes of £2,600,000. Then, again, we have a liability thrown upon us this year in respect of the non-completion of the 40 torpedo boats commenced out of the Vote of Credit last year, which amounts to £223,600. Unfortunately, those boats cannot be completed before the end of March, and the Vote of Credit does not run over into the new financial year, so that our total liability, taken from the programme of the two late Boards, and our liability under the Vote of Credit, amounts to no less a sum than £6,323,600, to be paid during the next few years. Of that sum, £3,828,000 has to be paid for our shipbuilding in 1886-7. I should have thought that those who are in favour of getting work out of hand would have been prepared to agree with the principle that you should complete what you have got in hand before you put additional ships on the stocks. I may be asked by some hon. Members—"Why do you not, instead of throwing this money over three years, throw it over five?" All I can say is, that I do not approve of a slow and dawdling system; and a return to such a policy would be, I believe, as wasteful, extravagant, and expensive as a rapid policy is economical. I think I can show hon. Members that it is a bad system, by referring to one or two ships whose construction has been thrown over a number of years, and how much the additional cost has been as compared with that of vessels built rapidly. There are two ships called the *Agamemnon* and the *Ajax*. The *Agamemnon* was proposed to be finished in seven years; but she was not really finished for nine. Well, Sir, what has been the consequence? The consequence is that the amount of money spent upon her for labour has been £185,522. The original Estimate was £140,000, so that it has been exceeded by no less a sum than £45,000, no doubt in consequence of a variety of reasons, some of them probably the alterations which were carried out during the construction of the ship. The *Ajax* is a similar case. It appears also to have taken nine years in construction, and the cost for labour was £188,894. The original Estimate was £162,000. In that case the excess was not so great, but still it was considerable. I hope I may be allowed to refer, for a few moments, to a list of vessels which I hold in my hand. I have named the *Agamemnon* and the *Ajax*. I now come to the *Inflexible*. The *Inflexible* took nine years to build, and the cost over the original Estimate was £102,400 for labour. Now I will come to some vessels which are to be built more rapidly. First, the *Camperdown*. She was proposed to be built in six years, and she will really be completed in six years, without any increase in the original Estimate. The original estimated cost of labour on hull was £196,000, and it is expected she will really be completed for £196,000. In the same way the *Hero* was fixed to be finished in six years, and she will be built within that time without any increase in the original Estimate. The *Téméraire* was to be built in four years, and she was completed in four years, without any addition to the Estimate of £140,000. Then, again, the *Rodney* was to be completed in six years, and she will be completed in that time without any increase of cost. I think that shows that the more rapid system is the more economical system, and I trust that the system inaugurated last year for the more rapid completion of vessels will be the one which will be followed by the Board of Admiralty in future. What does the opposite system really mean? It means that we have a large capital lying idle for a great number of years. During the time that the *Agamemnon* and *Ajax* were being constructed, an amount of capital was lying idle which would have produced at 5 per cent something like £50,000 or £60,000 a-year. Therefore, on the ground of economy, I would myself press forward this new system of rapidity of execution. Another argument I would use to hon. Members in this House who are strongly in favour of economy is this—that I consider that a liberal provision for the Naval Service, carried out steadily and systematically from year to year, is far more economical than a policy which first blows hot and then blows cold. In the latter case, when a panic arises, we are led into very hasty and extravagant expenditure, and many Members consider that the money spent last year in taking up ships hastily from the Mercantile Service was so much money thrown into the sea. I think the noble Lord opposite used that expression. I do not go quite so far as that, but I will go with hon. Gentlemen to this extent—that it would be better, and would be more economical, to provide as many ships as we want than to spend money in that extravagant way. Having addressed a few words to hon. Members who are in favour of economy, I should now like to appeal to those who are in favour of increased Estimates, and ask them to consider how much has been done for the Navy during the last two years. In 1885-6 the Naval Estimates of the year amounted to £12,694,900, or an increase of more than £1,500,000 over the previous year. Well, in addition to that, out of the Vote of Credit there was spent on contract shipbuilding work no less a sum than £1,014,000; on Dockyard wages £98,000; and on purchase of naval stores nearly £450,000; so that you not only had this increase of £1,500,000 in favour of larger expenditure, but also another £1,500,000 of money taken out of the Vote of Credit for shipbuilding purposes. I will invite hon. Members now to look with me into the naval expenditure of the country for a number of years past, and it will be found, as I have already pointed out, that the proposed expenditure this year is really higher than it has ever been in any year since the Crimean War. If you take the expenditure for the last 12 years, leaving out Votes of Credit, of course, and dividing it into two periods of six years, I find that in the first period, from 1874-5 to 1879-80, there was an aggregate sum of £66,802,000 spent on the Navy. These were the years when a Conservative Government was in Office, and I find that the average was £11,133,000 per annum. I find also that the gross Estimates this year are £2,500,000—£1,859,000 more than the average expenditure of each of those six years when a Conservative Government was in Office. I will now take the six years of a Liberal Government, and I find that the aggregate sum was £69,030,000 during the six years 1880-1 to 1885-6, or an average of £11,505,000, and less than this year's gross Estimate by over £2,000,000. When I mention Conservative and Liberal Governments, I do not do so for any Party purpose, but I merely do it because it may be useful to hon. Members who want larger Estimates to know what their Friends did for them during the period they were in Office. Then I will ask hon. Members to look at the provision for new construction, and the large number of ships now in progress. There are at the present time in progress 103 different ships—19 armoured ships, four protected ships, 26 unprotected, and 54 torpedo boats. In addition, I would say that the total estimated expenditure for the large number of new vessels which are now being constructed amounts to the very considerable sum of £13,155,000. I do not suppose that at any previous time in our history has there been so large a liability for the work of shipbuilding during the time of construction; and in addition to this sum we have to pay a further sum of £1,138,000 for guns for the ships which, though charged to Army Votes, has to come out of the taxpayers' pockets, and is practically for the purposes of the Navy. The Dockyard Vote this year for the labour on new ships is £693,990, against £605,330 last year, an increase of nearly £90,000; and the Contract Vote for hulls and propelling machinery for new ships this year is £1,720,000, against £1,530,000 last year. During the year seven torpedo cruisers, five gun vessels, and one large armour-clad vessel, the *Benbow*, will be completed by contractors. I think, then, with this work going on, I may safely appeal to hon. Members to wait a little to get all this work out of hand before we set to work to provide some of those new ships said to be by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and which I believe and agree are, so much wanted for the Navy. Now, what are the reasons why we have made no proposals for new ships? My noble Friend—if he will allow me to call him so—the late First Lord (Lord George Hamilton) said that they had left a programme for new ships amounting to something like £1,000,000 of money. I quite agree that they did leave such a programme, but it was the programme of the Board of Admiralty, and I do not know that it was a programme which had been passed by the Treasury or by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In that programme, which the noble Lord desired to add to the expenditure for 1886-7, there was a certain number of gunboats and corvettes to be nearly completed in the course of that year, and the remainder in the following year. I quite admit that it is not desirable to go on patching up and repairing these old gunboats. I doubt whether it is economical to do so. Therefore, I should have been very glad if we could have seen our way this year to make provision for additional gunboats to replace these old, useless, and obsolete vessels; and I still hope, before the end of the year, we may be able to do something in that direction. The First Lord of the Admiralty desires to do so; and were he able to be here himself I know that he would say so. But I think I may fairly appeal to the Committee to support the plan we have adopted. My noble Friend thinks, and his Board thinks, that they ought to have time to mature their future policy. And I think there is no desire, either on one side of the House or the other, to call upon the Admiralty to enter into a large expenditure for iron-clads. But our attention must be turned at once, and I have no doubt that the present Board of Admiralty will turn their attention at once, to the question of what description of vessel is to be the vessel of the future. We are fully alive to the importance of determining, after adequate consideration, the general lines of a policy, to be steadily followed as circumstances and means may permit. It is pretty generally admitted by the members of both the late and present Boards that, when the large armoured ships now building are completed, we may pause for a time at least in the building of vessels of that description, and so may at once turn our attention to other classes of ships—to fast cruisers, to a development of torpedo craft of all kinds—torpedo boats, torpedo catchers, and torpedo depôt ships—and to provide for the waste of the Navy in respect of gunboats, so far as required to replace old obsolete ships. The question of gunboats was referred to by several speakers on Monday night. If the Estimates are maintained at their present rate in 1887-8, combined with a decreasing liability for ships near completion, there will be nearly £1,000,000 which can be devoted to all these objects without the slightest interference with the shipbuilding already in operation. Therefore, I think I am justified in asking that we should be allowed time to consider what is to be the vessel of the future; that we should be allowed time to consider our programme; and that we should come forward, if we should be in a position to do so next year, with a definite proposal for additional ships in the direction which has been suggested by the noble Lord the late First Lord and the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), and other speakers. Having said enough, I hope, on that question, I should like just to show what was done as to shipbuilding by the late Board of Admiralty in the Estimates of 1885-6. Why, Sir, the late Board of Admiralty—that presided over by the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton), who, no doubt, will be able to offer some explanatory statement much better than mine — provided in the Estimates for 1885-6 for the commencement of five ships of which the designs were "not decided upon"—namely, two armour-clads, to be built, one at Portsmouth and one at Pembroke; one torpedo ram to be built at Chatham, designed, not ordered; one new vessel to be built at Sheerness, and one new *Scout* to be built at Devonport. Up to the Earl of Northbrook's retirement, however, no order had been given for the construction of these ships; and in the case of the vessels to be built at Portsmouth and Pembroke, the designs had not even been decided upon. The late Board, having decided upon the designs, ordered the construction of 11 ships, six of which are not in the Estimates. They were two armour-clads — the *Trafalgar* at Portsmouth and the *Nile* at Pembroke; two belted cruisers, 18 knots, the *Immortalité*, to be built at Chatham, and the *Aurora* at Pembroke, the *Immortalité* being substituted for the torpedo ram contemplated by the Earl of Northbrook, who left a Minute expressing his preference for that class over a large armour-clad; two *Scouts*, 16 to 17 knots, the *Racoon* and the *Serpent*, to be built at Devonport; one gun vessel, the *Buzzard*, to be built at Sheerness, 15 knots; three torpedo gunboats, one called the *Grasshopper*, to be built at Sheerness, and the *Sandfly* and *Spider* at Devonport; and in addition to these there was one other gunboat, the *Rattlesnake*, 19 knots, to be built by contract by Messrs. Laird, of the same character as the *Grasshopper*, and to be ready about August next. These four gunboats are of an entirely new type, and are intended for the destruction of the enemy's torpedo boats. They are 200 feet long, 23 feet wide, 450 tons displacement, with 2,700 indicated horse power, the speed being 19 knots. They will each of them carry 100 tons of coal, enough for 600 knots full speed, or 4,000 tons at 10 knots an hour. They have no rig except two light poles for signalling purposes. They are to be propelled by twin-screws, and they cost about £33,000 for hull and engines. In addition, four gunboats of the *Rattler* class were ordered after the change of Government to be constructed by contract, the money having been provided under the ordinary Estimates of 1885-6. I should now like to say a few words about the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*. Of course, they are two of the most important vessels that will ever be put on the stocks in this country. They certainly will be the largest armour-clads yet constructed for the English Navy. Therefore, when we are about to commence the construction of such important vessels, I think it is desirable that I should say a few words to the Committee in order to show them what the vessels themselves will consist of. If hon. Members are already in possession of the information I will save them the trouble of listening to a repetition of it; but I am not aware that any account has, as yet, been given to the House. They surpass in displacement all foreign armour-clad ships except four vessels now being constructed for the Italian Iron-clad Navy. This being so, I think it is desirable that I should say something as to their dimensions. Their dimensions are — length, 345 feet; breadth, 73 feet; displacement, 11,940 tons; and indicated horse-power, 12,000. The estimated speed will be about 16½ knots. There will be an armoured citadel about 190 feet long in the central position of the ship, and at each end of the citadel a turret. Each turret will contain two 68-ton breech-loading guns. Between the turrets and above the citadel there will be a central box battery, lightly armoured, which will contain eight 5-inch breech-loading guns, and on the spar deck covering this battery the boats will be stowed and a number of quick-firing machine guns mounted. The guns will be loaded, and the turrets worked, by hydraulic power. In addition, each ship will have a powerful torpedo armament, and will also be fitted for ramming. They will be capable of carrying 1,200 tons of coal in the bunkers, and will have no rig. The armour belt at the waterline extends to about 230 feet amidships, and before and abaft the belt a strong steel deck, three inches thick, protects the vitals. The armour on the belt will be 20 inches, on the sides of the citadel 16 to 18 inches, and on the turret 18 inches. In addition to this there will be an inner armour of about two inches, which will also be worked behind the teak backing. Now we come to the cost, which is very large indeed—so large that I am almost afraid to mention it. But when I look at what some other ships have cost in the British Navy, which are not so powerful and which can never be so protective as these vessels, I do not know that the sum is very excessive. The cost of each vessel will amount, with the guns, to no less a sum than £919,134, which is approaching £1,000,000. [An hon. MEMBER: Both?] No; each. The hull will cost £686,000, the propelling machinery, £97,000, and the gun mountings, £79,794; making a total on the Navy Votes of £862,794. The guns will cost £56,340. Well, now, hon. Members may think that a large sum. I admit that it is a large sum; but we have expended these large sums previously on other vessels not so large as this, but still, for the size of the vessels, very considerable sums. Take the *Inflexible*—she cost £809,600; the *Benbow*, which is a contract ship—and we have always been told that we can build cheaper by contract than in our own Yards—the *Benbow* is to cost £789,162; and the *Renown*, built by Sir William Armstrong, which is the same size as the *Benbow*, is to cost £789,995. Well, if we are to be a strong country—and it is often stated that we ought to be as strong, if not stronger, than any other Power—we must make up our minds to go in for this large expenditure. But I think I may safely say that these two large iron-clads will probably be the last iron-clads of this type that will ever be built in this or any other country. In France they are ceasing to go on with the construction of large iron-clads. Very little is now being done by the French Naval Authorities in the way of building, but they are completing certain iron-clads which are larger than anything we now have. These two large iron-clads, however, which are being built, and which were first suggested by the Earl of Northbrook and commenced by the noble Lord opposite, will be equal—I think superior—to any ship of the same character in the French Navy. And now let me say a word or two about the development of our torpedo flotilla. It has been said that we have been doing very little in the way of torpedoes. I dare say we were a little backward about the time the noble Lord alluded to the other night—namely, the time of the Russian scare. Perhaps we were not then so well prepared with torpedo boats and torpedoes as we ought to have been, and as I think we shall be if any difficulty of the kind occurs again. The development of a torpedo flotilla has been, and is, receiving the greatest attention of the Board of Admiralty. There are now several sea-going torpedo boats rapidly approaching completion. There are the torpedo cruiser *Scout* and her sister ship, the *Fearless*, both of which will be finished in 1886-7, as well as two or three of the improved *Scouts*, of which eight are building and will be finished this year. Then there is the torpedo gunboat of the *Rattlesnake* class, which is much smaller than the cruisers to which I first alluded, and which is to have a speed of 19 knots, as against 17 to 17½ knots in the other class of cruisers. There are 40 torpedo boats, all of which are 125 feet long, being 12 feet longer than the largest of those which were used with the Experimental Squadron at Bantry Bay last year, and so may have, it is hoped, better sea-keeping qualities than the vessels tried upon that occasion, though they cannot be expected to be really intended for sea service. Even if they were able to keep the sea for a day or two, it would be almost cruel to the crews to keep them on board for a great number of days. And now I come to show the Committee that we do not want to be in too great haste in deciding upon any additional torpedo boats until we have had experience of the vessels which are now in the course of completion and almost ready to be experimented upon. We want to find out which is the best and strongest type of swift vessel that can be used as a torpedo boat-catcher at the smallest cost. In addition to those I have named, there is a special torpedo vessel, of 150 feet in length, bought from Messrs. White, of Cowes, now being fitted for trial; and another, 135 feet long, with a guaranteed speed higher than any yet built for the Navy, has been ordered from Messrs. Yarrow. When these vessels of these various types and of various strength are completed, trials will be made with them and with the *Rattlesnake*, so as to ascertain whether a satisfactory type has been gained, and what type is best for general purposes. When that has been decided, we shall know what to do in regard to the torpedo boats of the future. Then it is said that we have no torpedoes. With regard to the arrangements for the purchase of torpedoes, I may say that there has been considerable difficulty in finding out where to obtain them; but we have 541 now ready for use, and still require 1,463 before we shall have sufficient for our purposes. We have made arrangements to obtain these additional torpedoes in the best way we can. Some of the additional torpedoes we are having made by a firm near Leeds, and we are getting them made at Woolwich Arsenal at the rate of 250 per annum, and we are also getting an additional number elsewhere, so that by the end of this year we hope we shall be short by only 300 or 400 of the torpedoes we shall require. It is not a very easy matter to get these additional torpedoes. We want as soon as possible to get them made in this country, and if firms will undertake the making of them, we shall very readily try to promote business with them. In addition to what I have said about torpedo boats, it is intended to have 32 first-class torpedo boats at the following Colonial Stations: — Hong Kong six, of which two have already been sent; Malta eight, of which four have already been sent; Gibraltar six, of which two have already been sent; Simon's Bay four, of which two have already been sent; while two have been sent to North America, and more than double that number will be sent as soon as they are ready. Therefore, I do not think we are open to the complaint that was made the other night that we are doing so very little in torpedoe boats and torpedoes. I do not say that we are perfect, or that we ever shall be perfect, because the torpedo boat and the torpedo itself are weapons of such a scientific nature that we shall see the greatest changes taking place even from month to month in their construction. I do not suppose that we have yet arrived at anything like perfection in that class of warfare. The noble Lord the late First Lord drew attention on Monday night to the want of ammunition for our guns. I do not think that things are quite as bad as the noble Lord stated. I find that considerable provision has been made for guns, not only in the Navy Estimates this year, but also in the Army Estimates. There are also considerable sums for gunpowder and other matters which the noble Lord alluded to. We have made provision for projectiles both for the guns on the ships and for the guns proposed for the ships, and we have also a certain amount in reserve. We have not perhaps got so much in reserve as we should like; but still we have done much more than the noble Lord gives us credit for. I trust that the armaments of the ships in the future will be carried out much more expeditiously than they have been in past years. There is no doubt that many ships have been kept waiting for their armaments; but I do not think that will be the case in the future. Now, with respect to the guns, and the large guns particularly. I will give some idea of our position and prospects. In April, 1880, there was not a single breech-loading gun available, and on the 1st of July, 1885, there was no 110-ton gun or 64-ton gun available. By the 31st of March, 1887, there will be three of the former and 14 of the latter. On July 1, 1885, there were only 11 43-ton guns ready; in March, 1887, there will be 17. In July, 1885, there were only 230 6-inch guns; in March, 1887, there will be 468. I may also add that in the Estimates this year provision is made for the first time for the armaments of the six ships of the *Narcissus* type laid down last Spring. We commenced to make provision for the armaments at the same time that we made provision for laying down the ships. Before I sit down I will just refer to what has been done during the last six or seven months by the late Board of Admiralty with respect to the reorganization of the Admiralty and the Dockyards. I think the country is indebted for the very courageous way in which the noble Lord the late First Lord and my hon. Friend who was Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie) carried out the work on this question. Of course, they had to do it at the risk of incurring much obloquy and complaint; but I believe they have been doing a real duty to their country. In the first place, immediately after the Committee, which was called Mr. Goschen's Committee, they instituted, on August 4, a Committee consisting of the Secretary to the Admiralty, Sir Reginald Welby, the Permanent Secretary to the Admiralty, and the Accountant General, to consider—

> "What alterations are necessary to ensure an effective control over the expenditure of the different Departments of the Admiralty."

I think that was a very necessary thing to do, whatever Government might have been in power. The late Government further extended the inquiry of the Committee they had appointed by requiring them to investigate the position of the Dockyards, and the expenditure upon labour and material, as well as the work done in the Dockyards. That Committee have been sitting and taking evidence, and I believe the result of the inquiry will be of the most useful character. The Committee reported in September, recommending that the position of Accountant General should be strengthened by making him assistant and deputy to the Parliamentary and Financial Secretary, which, by Order in Council, was carried out fully. By that means all estimates, liabilities, and expenditure come under his direct control. He has been provided with a deputy and two assistants, who are each in charge of a division. An Inspector of Yard Accounts has also been added for auditing and supervising the Yard Accounts, and of scrutinizing the expenditure upon shipbuilding and repairing. Also a Finance Committee has been appointed to meet fortnightly, consisting of the Financial Secretary, the Accountant General and his three deputies, and the Inspector of Yard Accounts as Secretary. Now, I believe myself that there is great room for reform and economy in the management of the Dockyards, and I am very glad indeed that the late Government approached the subject in the way they did. I believe the system they have laid down, which is only now just commencing, when it is brought into full operation, will be of the greatest use in reducing the expenditure of the country upon that portion of our naval expenditure. I believe that the country does not so much complain of the amount which you ask it to spend upon the Navy, as the question whether they get their money's worth for their money. It ought to be our duty to see that the country does get money's worth for the money it spends. I should like to say one word about the supervision of labour in the Dockyards. There is much in the evidence which shows that a very extensive amount of supineness and waste takes place there. I cannot admit that the Report, which refers to the workers in the Dockyards, can refer to the whole of them. No doubt there are idlers, and the sooner we get rid of the idlers the better. But I think we have a right to say to the workers in the Dockyards that if they want our sympathy and desire us to consider their grievances, and if they want us to give them a fair day's wage, we must have a fair day's work for the wage we give them. That, I trust, will be the principle adopted in dealing with the workers. I have now only to thank the Committee for the attention they have given me. I do not pretend to have made anything but a plain, unvarnished statement. I do not profess to know more than other hon. Members know, except a few secrets of the Admiralty; but I will give way to none in this House, whether he be a naval man or a civilian, in my desire to do as much as I can to promote the welfare of all classes of Her Majesty's Naval Service. At the same time, I do not wish to forget the strong claims which the taxpayers have upon us—that we should pay attention to the economical administration of the large funds which they entrust to our hands. While, I say, I am bound to consider these strong claims, I also consider the strong claims of our national responsibilities, and our anxiety and our desire in the future to maintain that supremacy at sea which England has always kept in past years, and which, I hope, she will occupy in future.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): I think it will be the unanimous feeling of the Committee that I should express our congratulations to the right hon. Gentleman on his restoration to health and on the business-like and lucid statement he has just made. The right hon. Member has only had a few weeks to prepare himself for one of the most complicated and intricate statements which a Member of Parliament can make; and on this occasion it was more difficult than usual owing to the great mass of the Estimates having been necessarily prepared before he accepted Office. But he has acquitted himself in a manner which has given universal satisfaction to all who heard him; for although he did not profess that his statement was in any way a pretentious one, yet for the amount of information it contained, and for lucidity of arrangement, it quite equalled almost any statement of the kind which in past years I have heard in this House. It is extremely satisfactory to the members of the late Board to find the right hon. Gentleman speaking with his well-known business capacity, expressing approval of the alterations we made for the purpose of maintaining adequate efficiency and control over the expenditure of the Admiralty, and also for the improved system of supervision of the business in the Dockyards; and I can assure him, so long as he endeavours to support those principles in so magnanimous a manner, he will have our cordial co-operation. The accounts this year are exceptionally difficult to explain, because, as the hon. Gentleman has pointed out, they are embarrassed by the inclusion of a very large sum for the additional expenditure which the Earl of Northbrook sanctioned last year, and also for a considerable sum which remains from the Vote of Credit passed only last year. But there is one point in connection with the subject to which the hon. Gentleman did not attach too much importance, and that is the improvement in their form. For the first time, the Committee has before it not only a clear statement of the past and the estimated expenditure of the future, but also an account of the liabilities which that expenditure will entail. When we went to the Admiralty we found that the mistake which had occurred in the accounts to so large an amount was entirely due to there being no accurate record of liabilities. In fact, the system was most defective. The Heads of the Departments checked their own expenditure, and it is to their accuracy that no blunders of important dimensions have occurred in the past. We therefore determined, not only in regard to current expenditure, but any expenditure which had reference to future years, that there should be a full and complete record of all liabilities which would be entailed, and the Estimates have been framed with the greatest success in carrying out that view. There is another alteration by which the old and inaccurate Returns of tonnage have been abolished, and, for the first time, an accurate Return is taken of the progress which the expenditure of the money will entail, and also an accurate account, not only of the sum spent in the initial expenses, but also of the material used in the Dockyards. The right hon. Gentleman has further expressed his approval of the Returns which had been practically completed when we left Office; and in order to make the Returns more thoroughly complete he has added a Return, perhaps more valuable than any of the others, which shows everything connected with the question of the guns, torpedo gear, and complicated machinery, and in which the respective share borne by the War

Office, as well as the Admiralty, is accurately stated. I very much regret that the right hon. Gentleman was not here the other night when the debate took place. From his remarks, he evidently did not understand the object with which I intervened in the debate and the purport of certain observations which I made. I quite agree with him that in the Estimates presented to the House the Board of Admiralty was perfectly right in laying down no new ships, because if they had extended the programme which they have given in the present Estimates, undoubtedly they would not be able to expedite the work. I know, and my hon. Friend who sits beside me knows, that the great difficulty any Board of Admiralty would have to face in the present year would be to find the ways and means to meet the enormous liability of the past two years; and I was certain that no Chancellor of the Exchequer would grant more than a certain sum out of the taxation for the naval purposes of this year. That being so, my proposal was that a portion of the expenditure which was abnormal and additional, and which formed part of the programme sanctioned by the Earl of Northbrook, should be taken out of the Estimates and should be converted into a Terminable Annuity to run over a certain number of years. I believe that that could have been done in five or six years, and at the end of that period you would not only have a large reduction in the naval expenditure, but the country would have had the satisfaction of knowing that the Navy was in the highest state of efficiency, and that the Fleet had been thoroughly renovated from top to bottom. And now, Sir, let me say a word as to the calculation by which I arrive at the opinion that a sum of about £2,000,000 sterling was necessary to thoroughly revivify the Fleet. I estimated its insufficiency at about £2,000,000 sterling, and I arrive at that figure in this way. The Earl of Northbrook left behind an Estimate that the sum which it was necessary to spend in shipbuilding was £3,100,000, and that it was to be spread in equal proportions, as far as possible, over the next five years. He estimated also that the amount for guns in the next five years would be £1,600,000, making in the aggregate an increased expenditure of £4,700,000. It is now estimated that during the past year we have reduced our liabilities of £4,700,000 by £1,700,000—namely, £1,000,000 for ships and £700,000 for gun. That leaves a liability on subsequent years on the extra expenditure, framed on the basis of the Earl of Northbrook's programme—an outstanding liability of £3,000,000 sterling. But certain investigations which were made during last year show that the sum the Earl of Northbrook proposed to expend in bringing the Fleet up to the requisite strength was insufficient; and I estimate that the amount to which it was insufficient was £2,000,000 sterling. I arrive at that figure in the following way:—I left behind me an Estimate of some small ships, which, in the opinion of naval men, were necessary to be built in the next two or three years, amounting to about £1,033,000. Then I estimated that for guns a sum of £500,000 more than was provided by the Earl of Northbrook would have to be spent, and I add to those sums about £350,000 as necessary to be spent during the next two or three years for the purpose of bringing up our torpedo boats and torpedoes to the necessary number. That made about £2,000,000, which, added to the £3,000,000 of liabilities under the Earl of Northbrook's programme, made £5,000,000 sterling. My wish was to take out of the Estimates for this the extraordinary expenditure, amounting to £1,800,000. Reducing the Estimates by that amount, I proposed in its place to substitute a Terminable Annuity for five years. My right hon. Friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was opposed to me, and my right hon. Friends near me shared, to a certain extent, his objection. Therefore, I will not raise that point again. Nevertheless, it is well that the Committee should understand what will be our position during the next three or four years. You will have most magnificent iron-clads, but they may be useless for the want of guns. You will have the finest belted cruisers any nation can possess, but with absence of sufficient amunition for guns. Further, you will have gunboats admitted to be the most obsolete of any Naval Power in Europe, and deficient also in torpedo gear. Surely, if we spend 9-10ths of the sum which is necessary to put our Fleet in a state of preparation, it is unwise to decline to spend the remaining 10 per cent that is requisite to render our Navy efficient from top to bottom. As regards the alteration we have effected in the Admiralty during the current year, it must be recollected that we came in as a Government just as the war rumours were over and the scare had subsided. Our relations with Russia became in consequence more amicable, and we found that there were a considerable number of iron-clads which figured in the list of effective ships which were altogether obsolete. Therefore, the first step we took was to place certain iron-clads in reserve and to replace them with five sea-going vessels. We had also the advantage of the Report of one of our ablest Admirals—Sir Geoffrey Hornby—the Admiral of the Evolutionary Squadron, which gave us most useful information as to the types of the vessels of the future. Therefore, having regard to the expenditure which had been sanctioned, and the expenditure which it was clear would have to be sanctioned, the late Board of Admiralty thought it their duty to take steps to insure an effective control over the expenditure which was imminent, so that the nation should get as good a return as possible for it. The right hon. Gentleman has alluded so kindly to what we have done that it is not necessary for me to enter into a recapitulation. But there is one point in particular in connection with this matter on which I wish to say a word in behalf of those who cannot defend themselves. Persistent attacks have been made during the last six months by different newspapers upon the permanent officials of the Admiralty; and it has been asserted over and over again that they were doing all that was in their power to impede and embarrass my hon. Friend and myself in carrying out the necessary reforms. I wish to say that all these statements are untrue. My hon. Friend and myself had, undoubtedly, to effect considerable alterations; but we were most loyally supported throughout by the permanent officials of the Department; and, indeed, unless we had secured their cordial co-operation we would never have been able to effect even so much as we have done. The investigation, however, that was set on foot made it perfectly clear that our system of Dockyard administration was most unsatisfactory. We came to the conclusion, in this investigation, that the materials supplied to the Dockyards were of the very best, that the workmen employed were the very pick of their class, and that, with regard to the constructive and engineering officers, there was no task that was not within the limit of their capacity. Therefore, if the system was defective, it was not from the want of hands and brains. The defects arose from too great centralization at the Admiralty, and too great isolation in the branches of the different departments of the Dockyards. As far as possible, we endeavoured to reverse these principles; and I believe we have laid down regulations which, while giving increased power to the local officers, will, at the same time, by an outside and independent audit, provide that sufficient control is kept over them. Perhaps, however, it will be a more suitable time to discuss this question when we get to the Dockyard Vote. There is one matter which I would ask the economically-minded Members of the Committee carefully to consider. About one-half of our naval expenditure is in connection with our manufacturing establishments. At the present there is a pressure being put upon the Government to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the whole expenditure of the Army and Navy. I trust that that question will not be considered by a Committee with so wide a Reference. I am perfectly satisfied that the inquiry would lead to no practical result. A Committee can be of no assistance in laying down the number of ships that there should be in commission or the number of men in the Army. That is alone the policy of the Government. But there is one point in regard to which an investigation would be of the greatest possible service, and that is the connection both of the Army and Navy with these manufacturing establishments. There is this great difficulty connected with these establishments—that it is the practice to vote an annual fixed sum for them. If any material is cheap at a particular time it is not possible to buy a quantity of it for use during another year; while, on the contrary, if the price of a material is high one year the Treasury would not thank the Board for returning the money, because they know that it would lead to the expenditure for the next year being larger. In the same way it is almost impossible to obtain sufficient sums to keep the plant of these establishments in proper order. No private manufacturing firms have such obsolete machinery as is to be found in Her Majesty's Dockyards. [An hon. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] An hon. Member cheers that; but I am afraid that he must be regarded as a special exponent of the system which entails this wasteful system. I have not the slightest doubt that if funds could be found for the production of fresh plant and machinery great economy in labour would be obtained; but this cannot be done under an annual Vote. There is another question which is to undergo the investigation of a Committee. A great deal of work is at present done by convict labour —convicts are employed in building basins, and in other work of a similar character. Of course, the object of the Home Office is to employ the convicts, and to give them full employment; but I am certain that the result is that in certain cases works are undertaken in order to employ these convicts, which are too large, and cannot be maintained afterwards on the sum annually voted for their maintenance. This has been the case, for instance, at Chatham; and the result is that a portion of the money which was required for the maintenance of the old and smaller Yards is appropriated to the extension of the larger Yard, by which process the larger the Yard becomes the smaller is the sum annually voted for its maintenance. Into all these things a Committee might, with great advantage, inquire, in order to see whether we could not have some more business-like way of managing the expenditure of these establishments. The right hon. Gentleman has mentioned at length the number of ships which the late Board of Admiralty laid down; and the Committee were, no doubt, somewhat surprised to hear the enormous cost of the two iron-clads we laid down. Now, to sanction the commencement of two iron-clads, each of which was to cost over £900,000, was a very serious responsibility; and we took all the pains we could to ascertain whether we should be justified in doing so. In the first place, we found that the Earl of Northbrook had intended to lay down two such vessels. What we had to consider was, first, the displacement; and the late Board of Admiralty—certainly my hon. Friend the late Secretary—had decided upon a displacement of 12,000 tons. The next question to consider was what type of vessel would give us the most powerful iron-clad. The other night we heard an able and technical speech from my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Holderness Division of the East Riding (Commander Bethell), in which he expressed his opinion that iron-clads are practically obsolete. It may be that these two vessels may be the last great iron-clads that will ever be built; but if we are to maintain our naval supremacy, I would ask my hon. and gallant Friend, and all those who think with him, whether we can maintain it at this time by opposing unarmoured to armoured vessels? Let the hon. and gallant Member go back to the origin of armour-clad vessels, and let him read the record of the performances of the *Merrimac* and the other earlier American iron-clads, which positively wrecked and destroyed all the wooden ships of the American Navy. We know that the guns are now far more accurate and penetrating than any artillery of that time; and I think it would be absolutely madness to abandon iron-clads unless other nations do the same. At the same time, it is our duty carefully to consider the question of expenditure. It is quite true that the cost of these two ships is very large, and that it will amount to the sum mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman; but it amounts only to £76 per ton, while in the case of the *Benbow*, which is far inferior, the cost per ton will be £78, and in the two ships which were laid down just before we came into Office—the *Renown* and the *Sanspareil*—the cost will be over £70 per ton. I do not think anyone will contend that either of these vessels is superior in strength to those which we have laid down. There is one point in connection with these gigantic iron-clads which we had very carefully to consider, and that was—what guns should be placed in them. I found that there was a strong opinion among almost all naval officers against the giant ordnance of modern days—that is to say, such guns as those of 110 tons. There is one great ground of objection against guns of this calibre, and that is, that not only is it more costly in accordance with its size, but owing to the large charge of powder the force of the discharge is so great that after a certain number of discharges the steel lining of the gun becomes practically worthless, and the gun has to be taken out of the ship and relined. In addition to that, the larger a gun is the longer it takes to load. Taking all these things into consideration, we thought that these iron-clads would be more effective with four 68-ton guns than they would be with two 110-ton guns. Now, Sir, the estimate which the right hon. Gentleman gave us of the number of ships which we added to the Earl of Northbrook's programme was in the main accurate. The only difference we made was to add one cruiser, two vessels of the *Scout* class, and three new gun vessels; and I am glad to find that the present First Lord of the Admiralty approves entirely of the type of the vessels, and intends to push on their construction. But there were certain facts brought to my knowledge, after I had been appointed to the Office which I held in the late Government, when I was first acquainted with the naval administration, and when I had less knowledge concerning the Navy—there were certain facts connected with the construction of these vessels which made me arrive at the conclusion that the Navy ought, as soon as possible, to be strengthened by an increase in the number of smaller and swifter vessels. Now, the improvements which have recently taken place in marine engines are peculiarly advantageous for the development of the strength of the Navy in this direction; and I will allude to two or three vessels which will abundantly prove this statement. There are two vessels of almost identical tonnage—the *Iris* and the *Mersey*—the engines of which are nearly of the same power. The *Iris* was laid down in 1877, and the *Mersey* in 1883; they are almost of the same displacement; the engines of the *Iris* weigh 1,020 tons, and she was intended to obtain a speed of 18 knots; the engines of the *Mersey* were only of 548 tons weight, or about one-half the weight of the engines of the *Iris*, and she was estimated to attain the same speed as the *Iris*. And what has resulted? It is that the *Mersey's* engines cost £54,000, and the engines of the *Iris*, £132,000. Again, in the case of the *Nile* and the *Inflexible*, an equally satisfactory comparison may be made. The engines of the *Inflexible* weigh 1,444 tons, and the engines of the *Nile* weigh 1,050 tons; in other words, the engines of the *Nile* are one-third less in weight and yet of nearly one-third greater power than those of the *Inflexible*. This improvement in the construction of marine engines enables the designer to place in vessels engines of greater power than was possible before, and the result of which is a high rate of speed on a small displacement; and it is quite clear that in future it will be possible for the Navy to have a number of these fast cruisers of a small displacement. These small cruisers could be made faster than any of the merchant liners, and I am strongly of opinion that it would be far wiser for the Admiralty to expend a larger sum in building these small and fast vessels than in subsidizing the Mercantile Marine, or hiring merchant vessels at a high price during a period of panic, and endeavouring to protect our marine abroad by chartering these merchant vessels at high rates. There are, I believe, only five vessels in the world which will steam 18 knots an hour, three of which belong to the Cunard Line. What seems to me the great objection to subsidizing the vessels of the Mercantile Marine is, that when you pay a retaining fee for a vessel which you suppose to be one of the fastest vessels afloat, you may have in a few years a vessel built that will steam faster; you will have prevented the owner selling his ship, and when the time comes at which he is free his ship will be of a very much reduced value. The only plan for the Admiralty appears to me to be that they should subsidize one or two Companies instead of individual vessels, and to be allowed, in virtue of such subsidy, to take such vessels as it thinks fit when it is necessary to do so for the Public Service. But, probably, other Companies and owners would strongly object to that proposal. There is another reason why I think that the Board of Admiralty will be obliged shortly to spend certain sums of money in building these small vessels. Many naval men maintain that it is necessary to keep a certain number of full-rigged vessels afloat for the purpose of training our officers and men. We arrived at the conclusion, and it is one in which I hope the present Board of the Admiralty will think we were right, that in classifying the ships of the Navy, the war vessels should be distinguished from those intended for training purposes, and we decided that all the smaller vessels should not be fully rigged, but built mainly with a view to speed, and that the training of the men should be carried on in the large corvettes. Then, Sir, we thought that, although the quality of the *personnel* of the Navy was good, one great source of weakness is the large number of non-combatant men which every iron-clad is obliged to carry, especially the number of stokers and engineers; and we endeavoured to counteract this by determining that the stokers should be trained in small-arm practice, so that in time of need their services would be of use. We also directed that the work of butchers and other trades on board ship should not be done by civilians, but by Marines. And we also carried out the intention which the Earl of Northbrook had announced of giving a capitation grant to Naval Volunteers, fully recognizing that if our ports are to be placed in an efficient state we must mainly rely on local effort. If that policy is adhered to, and the men attain to the efficiency required of them, I have no doubt that before many years have passed the Admiralty will consider the advisability of increasing the number of corps who may obtain the capitation grant. [Mr. HIBBERT: That is done.] I am glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that. Although we were in Office only a very short period, I had the good fortune to secure singularly able Colleagues; and if the changes which we effected, and which I am glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman opposite approves of, turn out to be beneficial, the main credit is due to them. I believe that the naval officers who are on the Board of Admiralty can safely be trusted to keep the *personnel* of the Navy up to the highest state of efficiency, and that it is the business of the civilian members to see that the material of the Navy is similarly maintained. The changes effected during the last 12 months may individually appear small; but I believe that in their totality they form the foundation of a policy which, if resolutely pursued and expanded as circumstances require, will, beyond all doubt, establish for us, at a moderate cost to the taxpayer, that naval supremacy on the sea which, in times of trouble and difficulty, would be so necessary to us as a self-sustained and independent nation.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY (Hastings): I desire to follow the noble Lord in congratulating the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty on the excellent statement which he made on introducing the Naval Estimates, and I wish also to congratulate the noble Lord on his speech, and upon his administration at the Admiralty during his tenure of Office as First Lord. The noble Lord, during that time, was assisted by able Colleagues, and by a body of naval officers who did their duty in a way which entitles them to the thanks of this House and the country. I will pass from that subject to say a few words on the Estimates before us. My right hon. Friend referred to the new features in the Estimates. The Appendix relating to the shipbuilding programme, gives, for the first time, a summary of the total expenditure proposed for labour, materials, and machinery on account of each ship in course of construction. I should like to urge for the consideration of the Admiralty the addition of one or two tables in future Estimates. It is highly desirable that we should have in an Appendix the total expenditure for the manning and maintenance of every ship in commission, whether at home or on foreign stations. These statistics are supplied in the French Estimates. We have, under the present system, no such information available for easy reference, and there ought to be no difficulty in furnishing it. The French Estimates give in an Appendix the total cost in separate colums of the hull, machinery, equipment, and armament of every completed ship in the French Navy. That information is brought together for the use of the Admiralty in their Blue List of ships, and I would suggest that the principal figures, under the headings I have mentioned, should be presented to Parliament together with the Estimates. I now pass to a subject more important than the forms in which the Naval Estimates are presented to the House. The essential we have to consider in Parliament is whether the Estimates make sufficient provision for the Navy. For manning the Navy, we are in a fairly satisfactory position. There can be no question as to the high efficiency of the *personnel* of the Naval Service; but we want a reserve of lieutenants, and a considerable reserve in the engine-room complement. I am glad that a capitation grant is to be given to the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers. That is a boon which we owe to the administration of the noble Lord opposite. The late Board of Admiralty, doubtless, acted upon the advice of that able officer, Admiral Hamilton, who was appointed by the Earl of Northbrook to deal with the preliminary arrangements for Coast defence when we were under the apprehension of a war with Russia. As regards the numbers of the Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers, I apprehend that no decision has yet been taken. I am glad to notice in the Public Press that the formation of a new brigade has been sanctioned on the Clyde. A new brigade should be established for service on the East Coast. I now turn to the question of ships. While I should have been glad if the additions to the Estimates which the noble Lord has recommended could have been made, the Estimates on the present liberal scale ought to place this country in a commanding position. The question is, do we, or do we not, get the best results for our vast expenditure? That is a question of the gravest importance from a political, naval, and administrative point of view, and I will endeavour to supply an answer. There is, doubtless, much room for improvement; but in justice to the officials concerned, and whose good name is at stake, I would ask that a comparison should be fairly made between the results obtained in this country and the results obtained elsewhere. I will deal first with the designs for our ships. On one point opinion is unanimous—high rate of speed is necessary in the construction of ships of war. In the case of armoured battle ships we raised the speed to nearly 17 knots. The armoured cruisers *Warspite* and *Impérieuse* steam 17·2 knots—a knot more than was promised. Let the Committee compare these figures with those obtained by the latest French ships, and it will be seen that the *Vauban*, the last iron-clad which has been tried, obtained a speed of 14·3 knots. In unarmoured construction a great improvement has been accomplished. The small gunboats, justly described in France by the term *poussière navale*, have been swept out of our programme, and fast and effective vessels have taken their place. The change does credit to our administration. Passing from the designing of ships to the practical question of construction — the public has been impatient at the delay in the completion of ships. Those delays have been caused not through maladministration in the Dockyards; they are the result of the difficulty of settling many complicated details of armament during a period of transition. Taking the iron-clads included in the French programme of construction for 1886, a comparison of the dates of the commencement of the ships and their present state of advancement, will show that the time occupied in building in England is a little more than half of the time occupied in the French Dockyards. If we make a similar comparison with reference to cost, while we acknowledge that our original Estimates have been exceeded, the excesses are not so formidable as in France and Italy. A Report on this subject was presented by the Committee of the French Chambers on the Estimates of 1882, and it was stated in that Report that the programme of construction adopted in 1882, and originally estimated to cost £16,000,000 sterling, would probably involve an expenditure of £40,000,000. Again, in Italy, the 10 years' programme of building for the period from 1877 to 1887 was originally estimated to cost £5,840,000, and in 1882 the excess over the original Estimates had already reached the formidable sum of £2,000,000 sterling. A similar comparison as to repairs will give results decidedly in favour of English administration. Statistics on this question form a prominent part of the Report of the Committee to the French Chambers in 1879. I will not trespass on the patience of the Committee by reading the details of the subject. I proceed to refer to certain reforms, which, in my judgment, are very much needed. I have alluded to the Committee of Inquiry appointed by the late Government with reference to Admiralty administration; their recommendations were referred to a Departmental Committee of which the Financial Secretary of the late Board was Chairman. The deliberations of that Committee have resulted in an extensive plan of reorganization. Dealing first with the Department of the Accountant General, I observe, with satisfaction, that it is not proposed to appoint a new permanent official to whom the Accountant General would be subordinate. That would have been distinctly a retograde step. What was wanted was to strengthen the responsibility of the Accountant General, and to secure a more strict recognition of the authority of that officer.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to refer, unless in a general way, to the organization of the Admiralty Department on this Vote. It would be improper to enter into detail. The hon. Gentleman can deal with that subject on Vote 3 and Vote 6.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): Upon the point of Order, Sir, may I ask whether it has not been the practice to discuss all questions on the first Estimate?

Sir JOHN GORST (Chatham): The statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty was, necessarily, a perfectly general one. He referred to the Dockyard management under the late Administration, which he very highly approves; but there was something said by the right hon. Gentleman to which I take extremely strong objection, and if the words of the Secretary to the Admiralty are to go to the country, and if we have to wait until Vote 6 is reached for an opportunity of contradicting his statement, we shall have to wait until the month of July or August.

Mr. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Sir, I believe it has always been the custom to discuss the policy of the Admiralty on the first Vote, and I venture to suggest that the changes to which the hon. Member for Hastings (Sir Thomas Brassey) was about to refer in connection with the administration of the Admiralty, as also the changes introduced in the Dockyard Department, is distinctly a matter of policy, and one of a most important and far-reaching character, and having been entered upon by the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty, I submit that it would be hardly correct to prevent discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: I understood the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, as has been remarked by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Sir John Gorst), to enter in a very general way into the question of reorganization in respect of the Admiralty and Dockyards, and it would, no doubt, be perfectly in Order for an hon. Member to enter into the question in the same general way. But to enter into detail would be improper, inasmuch as there are two Votes not yet reached to which the questions relate. The noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) asks me whether it is not the practice to discuss any question relating to the Admiralty on this Vote? I reply that it is right to discuss on this Vote all questions in connection with the Navy in a general way, but it would be a breach of Rule to enter into a specific question to which the Vote does not refer.

Mr. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Am I to understand, Mr. Courtney, that we shall be precluded from commenting upon reductions that have been made in the Votes which are now submitted, but which are subsequent to the one which is now before the Committee? Let us take, for instance, the Stores Vote. If it should be considered that a reduction has been made in that Vote, and that, in consequence, stores have been largely or are likely to be largely reduced, is that not one point which we may now fairly comment upon?

The CHAIRMAN: I should say not.

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY (Hastings): I bow, Sir, to your ruling, and will not enter any further into details with reference to the Report of the Committee to which I was referring. I may, however, say that the opening statement of the Representative of the Admiralty has generally been the occasion for a wide discussion; and it is extremely difficult, as you, Sir, recognize, to discriminate between what are observations on points of detail and what are observations of a general character. The office of Accountant General is undoubtedly one of great and general importance, and it is scarcely possible to say that any matters affecting the position of Accountant General in reference to the administration of the Navy are matters of detail, or belong to any particular Vote. I will proceed to make two suggestions to my right hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert), as the Representative of the Admiralty, with reference to economies in matters of expenditure, which depend upon the direct action of my right hon. Friend and his Colleagues. I particularly desire to call attention to the wisdom of resisting, and stoutly resisting, any proposals for costly alterations of ships upon which you do not reckon as effective vessels of war. As you look over the accounts of the past year you find that these expenditures have absorbed far too large a proportion of the resources placed at the disposal of the Admiralty. I also suggest, as another means to economy, that receiving ships and hulks which are not essentially required should gradually be replaced by permanent buildings. I ask my right hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) is it necessary to maintain as receiving ships such vessels as the *Urgent* at Port Royal, and the *Revenge* at Queenstown? How many ships have been commissioned and paid off, either at Jamaica or Queenstown, in recent years, and to what useful purpose is the crew maintained on board the *Urgent*, exposed, as they are, to be decimated by yellow fever? The *Urgent* and the *Revenge* are specimens of a large class which I think would disappear by a wise naval administration. Before I sit down I should like to refer to another question which I take to be of general importance, and as to which I placed a Notice on the Paper; but I should have been very sorry to interpose between the House and the statement which we expected to have been made to us on Monday last. It is in reference to the foreign squadrons. This subject was touched upon by the noble Lord the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), and with what he said I most cordially concur. The complaint which I wish to make with reference to our foreign squadrons is this—that we are spending a very large sum of money upon the maintenance of these squadrons, and that, constituted as they are now, they are quite incapable of affording sufficient protection for our commerce in the event of war. It is said that these squadrons are valuable for training; but I think that the training which is required for the Navy could be given to our officers and men in a better way. The change which I desire to recommend is the gradual substitution of a less number of vessels of greater individual power for ineffective gun vessels and gunboats. In addition, it is essential to have the means of more effectively reinforcing our squadrons in an emergency; and for this purpose I suggest that a powerful Reserve Squadron should be formed of our fastest steam cruisers, and kept always in commission. They should be partly manned; they should be exercised at sea, and form part of our Evolutionary Squadron, which I hope will be formed every year. The organization of the Reserve Squadron of cruisers should, in my judgment, resemble generally that of the First Reserve Squadron. In addition to the Reserve Squadron of cruisers, it is most desirable for the efficiency of the Navy that a certain number of ships should be kept together of a class which can cruise under sail. It is satisfactory to know that we have one such squadron at sea under the command of Commodore Fitzroy. I was glad to hear of the satisfactory Report from Commodore Fitzroy. I hope that this Atlantic Squadron will be a permanent institution of the Navy. It should, from time to time, visit the Cape, the South-East Coast of America, and the North American Stations. It should return home once in every six months to give to the men who have had their turn at sea a spell in harbour, and an opportunity of receiving instruction in gunnery, and to clear out the ordinary seamen who are waiting in our receiving ships. Another Flying Squadron should be organized for cruising in more distant waters. A voyage to the Antipodes can easily be performed in 18 months, and no training squadron should be kept away from the home ports for a longer period. I claim for the plan which I recommend that the occasional visits of a powerful squadron to foreign waters exercise a greater political influence than the constant presence of the small vessels on which the Flag of England is usually carried in foreign waters. I believe that the establishment of these training squadrons would be of great advantage for the training of the Navy. The changes which I desire to see introduced should be made gradually; and I hope that this very important subject of the strength of our foreign squadrons may be considered by a Committee upon which the Admiralty, the Foreign Office, and the Colonial Office will be represented. It only remains for me to thank the Committee for the patient attention they have given me.

SIR JOHN GORST (Chatham): I hope the Committee will forgive me if I venture to give to the discussion this evening a somewhat more critical turn than it has yet taken, because there are Members, such as myself, whose duty to their constituents obliges them to appear in the House rather as critics than as praisers of the administration of the Admiralty. I can, however, agree with former speakers in one respect, and that is in congratulating the right hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) on his recovery from his recent indisposition, and on his being able to appear before us and give us the extremely lucid and interesting statement he has made to-night. But when I say the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty I at once come to my first grievance. Why the Financial Secretary to the Admiralty? It does seem to me a most extraordinary thing that whenever certain Gentlemen who profess to be most desirous to bring questions of the Navy under the direct control of the House of Commons happen to be in Office we invariably have the affairs of the Navy intrusted, not to a Gentleman who sits here, and who is responsible to us, but to some Nobleman sitting "elsewhere." We cannot get at the First Lord of the Admiralty; many of us do not even know him by sight. We cannot question him, for he is entirely and absolutely beyond our control and reach. It is not for want of Gentlemen in this House competent to hold the Office that this peculiar arrangement always takes place. In the last Parliament we had a succession of Gentlemen—Predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert)—one almost exceeding the other in his ability to administer the affairs of the Navy. I am quite sure I speak the unanimous opinion of the Committee to-night when I say we should hail with satisfaction the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) as First Lord of the Admiralty—for as First Lord of the Admiralty he would be much more in his place in this House, conducting the Business of the Navy, than he is when he only occupies the Office of Financial Secretary. Now, Mr. Courtney, I should have liked to go to-night in some detail into the subject of the re-organization of the Dockyards and the Reports of the various Committees which have been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert); but, of course, in obedience to your ruling, I shall only make now the most general statements on the subject; but I give Notice that those general statements which I shall make I am perfectly ready to support by testimony, and by detailed argument, so soon as it shall please Her Majesty's Government to allow us to discuss Vote 6, the Dockyard Vote. I think you will not consider me out of Order if I parenthetically make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) to allow the Dockyard Vote to be presented to the Committee of Supply and to be discussed this year at a somewhat earlier period than the end of July or the beginning of August, which is usually the date, because there is this burning question upon which many Members of the House are so desirous of expressing their opinion. It has been very justly represented—I think by the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) or the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie)—that the institution of this Committee, and the alterations which have been made in consequence of the findings of the Committee in the management of the Dockyards, is a question of vital importance in the administration of our Navy. I am persuaded the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) and his Colleagues will see the propriety of giving Parliament a proper opportunity for the discussion of the Vote. I know the right hon. Gentleman himself cannot dispose of the time of the House; but I hope he will represent to those who can that there is a great question of policy involved in this matter which deserves to be seriously discussed by the House. Well, now, as I said, I will be perfectly general. May I begin by saying I utterly and totally deny that the evidence adduced before the Committee proved anything like a general amount of idleness and waste in the Royal Dockyards. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert), with that kindness and courtesy which always distinguishes his speeches, was good enough to say that he could not believe it was general. I am sure that the men who are employed in our Dockyards will thank the right hon. Member for the kindness with which he spoke of them. I will not enter into detail now; but when I do enter into detail I shall show that the Committee made a most sweeping and unfounded charge, which they are utterly unable to support by any evidence whatever—a charge not against an isolated person here and there, but against the whole of the workmen in the Dockyards as a class. When the proper time comes I will undertake to refute the accusation. But I want to say something more than this concerning the Report of the Committee. The evidence adduced before the Committee showed most distinctly that there was an enormous amount of waste of public money by reason of the extremely injudicious and bad organization established at the headquarters of the Admiralty in Whitehall. Why is it—and this is a perfectly general observation to make—that ships built in the Dockyards cost so much more than ships built by private contractors? When we were going into Committee of Supply we had it stated—and it was not contradicted—that the Admiralty are perpetually making alterations, and that those who are charged with the construction of the ships have to wait for the plans, have to wait for the details of the propelling machinery, and have to wait for the gun fittings; at every turn of the business they are waiting. While they are waiting for orders and instructions necessarily the men are kept idle, and they are thereby, as I believe the Committee says, demoralized. Well, but that is not all. The cheeseparing instincts of the Board of Admiralty, I suppose enhanced by the strictness of the Treasury control, is such that it has been notorious for years past that no adequate stores have been kept in the Dockyards for the purpose of building ships; and when the time comes that I can, without breach of Order, enter into detail, I will undertake to amuse the Committee of Supply by giving them the detailed account, supplied by the Chief Constructor at the Chatham Dockyard, of how the men employed in shipbuilding are kept idle while persons are running all over the town to get tenpenny nails or screws which are not kept in stock, and for the want of which the progress of the ships can no longer proceed. And further, when the time comes, I will attack the expedient, which the Admiralty seems to have devised, of sending to the Dockyards what are called civil assistants. A civil assistant is a superior kind of policeman. He has no authority, but appears to spend his time in prowling about the Dockyards trying to find somebody he can bring before the authorities for some misconduct or other. I have got very near the verge of being out of Order; but when I can enter into minute particulars I will undertake to make good all the general and sweeping observations which I have submitted to the Committee. Well, now, turning again to the statements of the right hon Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert), I must say I was rather amused at the way in which he claimed that the Admiralty had laid down principles which had not been observed. It never seemed to occur to the Admiralty that it is themselves who are the persons who do not act in accordance with the principles laid down. I heard the right hon. Gentleman expatiating upon the advantage of a rapid system of shipbuilding. Well, but everybody admits it. I never met anybody in this Committee, or out-of-doors, who had any doubt whatever that the most economical course was to build a ship of war as fast as it could be built. But why are our ships not built rapidly? It is the fault of the Admiralty themselves. They do not need to come down to the Committee of Supply and lecture us upon the necessity of rapid shipbuilding. Let the right hon. Gentleman call his Board together at Whitehall and lecture them upon the advantages of speedy shipbuilding. He will find no dissentient in the Committee of Supply. Well, then, another thing that the right hon. Gentleman lectured the Committee upon was on what he called blowing hot and cold. But who blows hot and cold? We blow hot sometimes. Since I have had the honour of a seat in this House—at least, since I have represented a Dockyard constituency—I do not know that I have ever allowed an occasion, when the House was in Supply on the Navy Estimates, to pass without blowing as hot as I could; and it has been to me an unfeigned source of satisfaction that in this new House of Commons there is a large number of gallant officers connected with the Navy who have been able to come to the House and tell the truth at first-hand, to make statements on their own authority and own personal knowledge, which I and others were, in past years, obliged to make at second-hand, and, of course, with less weight in the House. I never heard anybody, except the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), blow cold. They are not here now; but I have no doubt that one or both will come in later in the evening, and give us the speech which they have made over and over again during the past 15 years. With the exception of these two hon. Members, I do not know that any great pressure—at least during the last 15 years—has ever been put on the Board of Admiralty by this Committee of Supply to reduce their Estimates below that point at which the Navy could be properly sustained. The cold blast which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) appears to find fault with has come either from his own Colleagues at the Admiralty, or from that other Department of State whose duty it is to blow cold—namely, the Treasury, the Representative of which (Sir Edward J. Reed) I now see sitting on the Government Bench. Well, let the right hon. Member (Mr. Hibbert) either find fault with his own Colleagues, and beg them no longer to blow cold, or let him accept the pressure of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), and beg that the Treasury will no longer cut down the Naval Estimates to such a point that the Navy cannot be kept in an efficient state. Furthermore, the right hon. Member (Mr. Hibbert) told us he thought the Admiralty were not open to any complaint about torpedo boats and torpedoes. That was a very audacious statement to make, accompanied, as it was, by another statement of how little had been done, how much remained to be done, and how much they were going to do. A Department of the State which comes to the House of Commons and tells us that they have sent such a miserable pittance of torpedoes to Colonial and foreign stations that they mean to send double the number as soon as they can scrape them together ought not to be surprised if some fault is found with it. But, whether or not the House of Commons is in a position to make complaint against the Government in respect to torpedoes, and with regard to guns, the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) made the other night, and repeated it to-night, a charge against the administration of the present Government which ought to be treated with a good deal of seriousness. The noble Lord said—and no one ought to know better than he—that when you have built your ships and spent vast sums of money upon them, you find that you have not got sufficient guns and ammunition for the vessels. We have nothing at present but the bare statement of the noble Lord. I thought the other night that the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was going to give us some details on the subject, and going to show us that the statement was incorrect, and that there was sufficiency of guns and ammunition. It turns out that the War Office have not only failed to supply sufficient guns, but have also failed to supply sufficient ammunition; and the hon. Member could not give the House the information which he obviously intended at the time to give. Now, Mr. Courtney, I cannot say anything more upon the general subject; but I must ask a few questions of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) upon details which are germane to this Vote. I have only one or two to ask, and therefore I need not apologize for interpolating them into a general address, because it will save the Committee from being troubled with them subsequently. I want to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any steps have been, or are being, taken to redress the grievances of the warrant officers? The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Buckinghamshire (Captain Verney) has, by the means of Questions, called attention to this matter. It is a fact that the warrant officers in the Navy who obtain commissions do not number more than one in 1,000; whereas in the Army the promotions from the ranks number as many as four in 1,000, so that in the Army there are four times as many promotions from the ranks as there are in the Navy. And, then, why a man in the Army who is fortunate enough to obtain a commission from the ranks should be placed in a position vastly superior to that of a man so promoted in the Navy I cannot understand. It is not only as regards pay and pension, but also as regards pensions to their widows, that the men in the Army get more than corresponding men in the Navy. There is another class of men—namely, the engine-room artificers, in respect to whom I want some information. Their case has been frequently before the Admiralty. I feel great interest in the engine-room artificers. About 10 years ago I several times brought their case before the House of Commons, and I was fortunate enough to induce the Admiralty to make very great changes in the amelioration of their position. Unfortunately, the thing has only been half done, and there are, as the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) knows, applications continually being made to put the engine-room artificer in that position on board a man-of-war which he ought to occupy. In these days, when men-of-war are very costly instruments, fitted up with costly machinery, every part of which is liable to get out of order, we ought to have the very pick of engine-room artificers. It is the worst economy in the world to employ anything but the very best labour; but we cannot get good men unless we pay them well, and give them that position on board ship which they ought to occupy. Another class whose condition requires improvement is the engine-room stokers. These men have fallen between two stools, because in 1880, when the seamen had their pay increased on engaging for service a second time, the stokers were left out; and then, when the first-class petty officers had their position revised, they were again left out of the calculation. I am quite sure that if their position were improved, many of the men would be found to remain in the Service instead of quitting it. I hope that when the time comes the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) will be good enough to answer the few questions I have put to him.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): I hope to be able to remove a misapprehension which seems to exist in the mind of the noble Lord the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) in regard to guns. I stated on Monday evening that we have guns for all ships now ready for sea, and that by the time the ships now building are fit for commission we shall have guns for all of them. I stated that most distinctly, and also that we would prepare a Return showing the dates at which the guns would be delivered. I did not bring down that Return to-night, because the Return which was asked for by the hon. Member for Lincoln is now being prepared for us. The noble Lord has returned to the charge, and accuses us of neglect in the Ordnance Department. Well, I have conferred with the Director of Naval Ordnance (Admiral Hopkins), and he has assured me that the guns will be ready for the ships when they are required; and I may add that it is intended to take the sum of £46,000 in the Army Estimates this year for ammunition for guns already ordered. I may point out that the expenditure sanctioned by the War Office for naval ordnance this year is, perhaps, the largest we have ever had on the Estimates, being £1,000,000—£850,000, and £150,000 out of the Vote of Credit. This does not include a sum £200,000 for gunpowder and gun-cotton. I therefore think that when we have taken these sums we shall be able to supply the deficiencies which have been alluded to by the noble Lord. I may mention that the normal expenditure, until the year 1884, was £500,000. Last year it was £850,000, and this year it will be £1,000,000. I should also like to advert to what has fallen from the noble Lord the late First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to hiring a fleet of merchant vessels. There is no doubt we were last year urged, in many quarters of the House, to employ these ships; but it was never intended that they should fight men-of-war. It was rather intended that with their great speed they should be able to escape from men-of-war. I quite agree with the noble Lord that if we are to give a premium to these vessels it should be for speed rather than for any other quality. It would be no use hiring vessels which could be captured by fast men-of-war; but, on the other hand, we have a certain number of merchant vessels whose speed is so great that no man-of-war could overtake them, and the view of the Admiralty is that the subsidy should be given for speed rather than anything else. Then the noble Lord also alluded to the Royal Naval Volunteers, and I may remind him that we are now establishing depôts for these Volunteers. My hon. Friend the Member for Hastings (Sir

Thomas Brassey) suggests that instead of the vessels we have on foreign stations, we ought to have—I am not certain whether he said two or three—Flying Squadrons. [Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Two.] I cannot agree with my hon. Friend's observations on that subject. I should be sorry to see all the advantages which we derive from the present system given up—both as respects training of men and officers and protection to commerce. My hon. Friend has suggested that we should have a Committee to inquire as to what vessels are required on foreign stations.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY (Hastings): I do not desire to see vessels withdrawn which are capable of giving protection to commerce.

MR. R. W. DUFF: We have, at the present moment, on foreign stations 99 vessels. There was a Committee appointed by the Admiralty some years ago, consisting of representatives of the Admiralty, the Colonial Office, and the Foreign Office; and they recommended that there should be on foreign stations 83 vessels and 15 gunboats for the protection of British commerce and British subjects abroad. At present we have, as I say, 99, and after the inquiry instituted I do not think we can do with a less number. A Consul, I know, is always glad to get a gunboat, but we cannot always give him one. No doubt these boats are useful to Consuls. Everyone who has served abroad knows what services gunboats can render to British interests abroad. As to the remarks which have been made in reference to the warrant officers, they will be replied to by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert); and I am not going now into the question of Dockyards. I will defer any observations I may have to make with regard to them until we come to the Vote itself—Vote 6. When I saw the Notice on the Paper dealing with this matter, I could not help asking myself whether it would have been put there by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir John Gorst) if there had not been a change of Government. The question of the Dockyards has been fully discussed in the House. All I can say, speaking generally, is that the present Board of Admiralty approve of the reforms in the Dockyards carried out by the late Board. There are some details that probably may be capable of improvement. There is not, I think, that preciseness in the instructions given in the Controller's Department and the Department of the Constructor of the Navy that there should be. But these are matters which I do not want to criticize too minutely; and I may say that, generally, I entirely concur in the reforms carried out by the late Board. There is only one other subject to which I would allude, and it is the appreciation which the Viceroy of India has expressed of the services rendered by the officers and men of the Navy who took part in the Burmah Expedition. I think it only right and due to the Service that this recognition should be publicly acknowledged.

MR. JACKS (Leith, &c.): I listened with the greatest pleasure to the speeches of the two right hon. Gentlemen who introduced this debate, and was particularly impressed with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) when he said he was perfectly satisfied that the country desires that our Navy should be in an efficient state, but that there was another point on which they also wished to be satisfied—namely, that they were getting value for their money. We who have just come from feeling the strong pulsations of the national mind, and who are not in official life, can bear testimony to the soundness of that statement. There is a profound belief in the minds of the people of the country that they were not getting value for the money they were expending on the Navy. The only way of arriving at the truth in this matter is by instituting comparisons, as the hon. Gentleman sitting near me (Sir Thomas Brassey) has done. The hon. Gentleman compared the expenditure on our war ships—or rather, he said, by inadvertence I presume, the expenditure on "English" war ships, though as the swiftest and best war ships are not built in England at all, but on the Clyde, I suppose he means the British war ships—with the expenditure on the war ships of France. The comparison, however, does not quite hold, because the hon. Gentleman must know as well as I do—and there are Gentlemen in this House who are intimately acquainted with the arrangements of the Foreign Dockyards who will bear me out—that it is impossible to get at the correct cost of a foreign war ship, because so much of the material and armament is supplied by subsidized works, that the true cost never appears on the official Papers. I think my hon. Friend will bear me out in that. [SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Quite correct.] But there is a comparison we ought to institute which will at once settle the question in this House and in the minds of the people. We should institute a correct comparison between the cost of ships built and of repairs executed in Her Majesty's Dockyards, and the cost of ships built and repaired in the private Dockyards throughout the Kingdom. I took the trouble to analyze the Returns which have been made on this subject. I will not trouble the Committee with many figures; but I will take the liberty of quoting two or three, in order to let the Committee see precisely what is their value. In the year 1872 there were 6,000 tons built, and the average cost per ton weight in Her Majesty's Dockyards was £49 and a small decimal. The same year, fortunately, about the same amount of tonnage was built by contract in the private Dockyards, and the cost was £37 decimal 50, as compared with £49. Now, I come to the next year, and we find the figures precisely reversed—£36 per ton weight in Her Majesty's Dockyards, as compared with £60 per ton in the private yards. We go on a few years, and the absurdity is always getting greater, until there is a small print put in which explains that the cost in Her Majesty's Dockyards is expenditure in wages only, as compared in the private Dockyards with both material and wages. Now, I ask any hon. Gentleman in this House who has had any experience in controlling and guiding large manufacturing establishments whether these Returns are of any value whatever; and whether they are not as useless, for all practical purposes, as if they were hidden in the deepest hieroglyphic obscurity? I would ask any hon. Member whether, if he were managing a large private establishment, he would waste three minutes of his time in looking at such Papers. What is the comparison we require? The only comparison we require is one which I am sure the hon. Member for Govan (Mr. Pearce), if he were here, would say is carried out in the yard with which he is identified. Any other hon. Member connected with a Dockyard will say, I am sure, that the system to which I allude is carried out there—that is to say, having a simple form showing the cost of the ship for plates, angles and bar iron, woodwork and fittings; and then another line showing the expenditure in wages. That should be carried through with a small note at the end, where there is any difference in regard, for instance, to class of ship and of fitting. Let such a table be made out both in Her Majesty's Dockyards and the private Dockyards, and then we shall know where we are. We shall know what the cost is, and we shall know precisely how the money has been expended. We shall know more. We shall know what a certain ship will cost by simply taking into account the difference in the price of iron at the date when her prototype was built. And we shall even have a guide in this matter when we propose to have another class of ship. What is the reason we have not had these Tables or Returns? It is to be found in the Report which was only put into my hands a few minutes before the meeting of the Committee. I do not want to fall into the error for which the heathen of old were so justly condemned—a condemnation which may apply much nearer home than Galilee—of indulging in vain repetitions, and of expecting to be heard through much speaking; but I will ask any hon. Gentleman who has referred to this Report whether the whole burden of its story is not utter want of organization and management? The Report itself says there is this, that, and the other; but its own fatal words are—

> "Of management there is none." "Have you any check?" "No." "Have you any on wages?" "No." "On materials?" "No." "Do you check the stores?" "No." "There is no real audit of labour or store expenditure."

—and so on.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): What Report is the hon. Member speaking of?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY (Hastings): Of Admiral Graham's Committee.

MR. JACKS: I thought it my duty to call attention to this particular point. I would urge on those who are responsible for these things to try to give us such a comparison as would be of practical use. I myself, like every Member of the Committee, have received lots of Returns, and I am sure that a great part of them are of no use whatever—fully 25 per cent are useless because they have no regularity or business-like precision. I never saw a more glaring instance of this than is to be found in these Returns, which are supposed to be authoritative, as to the cost of shipbuilding in Her Majesty's Dockyards and in private Dockyards. I will not go further than to refer to just one other point on which a declaration came from the hon. Member near me (Sir Thomas Brassey), and, of course, came from such a quarter with considerable weight. For I cannot sit down without mentioning the great desirability of increasing our Naval Reserves. Hon. Gentlemen who, like myself, are acquainted with seaport towns, and have been so all their lives, know very well that amongst the great fishing community we have the most splendid sailors, and, more than that, men of daring and of the highest courage that the world offers; and yet 80 per cent of these are quite unutilized. In them we have a power of which any country might be proud, and here we are letting it die away unutilized. I hope Her Majesty's Government will try to utilize this part of our national strength.

Mr. PULESTON (Devonport): I had an idea, like the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir John Gorst) who spoke from this side of the House some time ago, and other hon. Members, that we were to have something like a general discussion on this Vote. I am sorry that it is not so. If I went into all these questions of Dockyard management I should be ruled out of Order; and yet one considers himself not only entitled, but feels it a duty, to reply to so many remarks which have been made on the subject. However, under the impression that we shall be able to go into these matters some other time, I shall content myself with referring to some remarks already made by the Secretary to the Admiralty and others who have preceded me in the debate so far. I must, and not as a formal thing, join other hon. Members on both sides in congratulating the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert) on the very plain and straightforward speech with which he has honoured us. I am glad that he has his materials so well in hand; and I must say, taking into consideration the fact which he remarked on himself that he has been so short a time at the helm, so to speak, that he has shown himself thoroughly capable of managing his craft. I regret that he is not here as First Lord. I thought that some time ago we had settled the point that it was most desirable that the First Lord should be in this House. However, when next the right hon. Gentleman addresses the House I hope he will do so in that capacity. He will then speak to us with more authority. He told us he addressed us in the double capacity of economist and Secretary to the Admiralty. I hope, too—for it is an important consideration—that he addressed us, to some extent, in his old capacity of Secretary to the Treasury. I think the difficulties we have had to face in these matters we are too often apt, in this House and elsewhere, to attribute to the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman, who was pretty well grounded in his position at the Treasury, will be able to draw on his experience in that Department, and will be able to smooth over and manage more effectively the business of the Office he now holds through his late connection with the Treasury. I am glad he has had the courage to throw overboard, in a very direct and emphatic manner, the late First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook). It is true, as the right hon. Gentleman said, that the Earl of Northbrook was five or six years building ships, and that the work could be done far more economically, and in a manner that would minister far more to the interests of the country, if no more than three years were occupied in construction. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on having evinced so much courage, and on having been able so boldly, properly, and righteously to condemn the policy of the noble Earl who formerly held the position of Head of the Admiralty. With regard to the noble Earl of whom I speak, I am glad that, so far as the Admiralty is concerned, he has not reoccupied the position he held some time ago, and which deprived any of us humble Members who sit on this side of the House and who represent the Dockyards of the advantage of approaching him when we deemed it desirable. I think we have advanced a great deal of late. We have arrived, on both sides of the House, at a knowledge of the fact that whoever controls the Admiralty it is necessary to concede that vessels of war must be rapidly constructed. The excellent speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Jacks) bore upon this subject. I appreciate every word the hon. Gentleman has uttered, and I congratulate him on having made his statement in such a straightforward manner. He has heaped no abuse upon the Dockyards, and I am glad to see an hon. Member on his side of the House take up such a position as that he has assumed. Unfortunately, we regularly hear the Dockyards attacked from the opposite Benches. The Dockyards are denounced; they are to be abolished, and I know not what. That is the policy that has been pretty generally advocated on the other side; and hon. Gentlemen who doubt it have only to refer to the pages of *Hansard*. I hope the hon. and gallant Member for Portsmouth (Sir William Crossman) is not going to run away because I mention this. I am sure he will strengthen his Party in the matter. There has been lavish expenditure on shipbuilding in Her Majesty's Dockyards, it is true; but it has not been the fault of the Dockyard Service or of the management locally. It has been the fault of the Admiralty. When the Admiralty have a ship to build, and they give it out by contract, they agree to its being constructed in the ordinary business manner; but when they build a ship in a Royal Dockyard, they cut it in pieces, alter its construction, and instead of completing it in a year, or two years, as the case may be, as it would be completed in a private Yard, they take four or five years to do the work. When a ship comes out of one of the Royal Dockyards, it is an entirely different vessel to the vessel originally proposed. There is hardly a vestige of the original remaining. However startling these figures which have been referred to may be, you will find that they in no way tell against the Dockyard management. They tell against the way the Admiralty manage the Dockyards; but as for alleging the Dockyards to be full of idlers, as the right hon. Gentleman did, those of us who know anything about these places are able to refute the assertion.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT) (Oldham): I did not make an attack upon the Dockyards *per se*. I merely wished to show that it was more expensive to spread the construction of ships over a number of years than to have them completed in a short time. I did not refer to the Dockyards.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): I thank the right hon. Member for that explanation. It elucidates an important point, and I feel sure that after his experience at the Admiralty he does not think the charges made against the Dockyards are properly made. Of course, there are idlers there, as there are everywhere; but to charge a whole body of public servants like those of the Royal Dockyards with indulging in idleness is simply ridiculous. No one knows more about the efficiency of our Dockyards than the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), and the loyalty with which the men work there —and that for less wages than in the private yards. He, I think, will gladly state to the Committee his high appreciation of the *employés* in the Dockyards. I trust we shall not lose any of the independence of criticism we used to get from the hon. Member now that he sits on the Treasury Bench; but, however that is, no one in the House, I am sure, is more conscientious, or more thoroughly acquainted, and no one is more entitled to respect, than the hon. Member for Cardiff. There is another very important question involved in this matter of building by contract and building in the Yards. Whilst I maintain that a ship can be built as cheaply, and, it goes without saying, as well in the Dockyards as in any private Yard, and ought to be, I think if the Reports were properly investigated and the right figures put in the right places, and so on, I think you will find that there is not the discrepancy the right hon. Gentleman refers to. But suppose it did cost a little more, which I deny—suppose it were a trifle more expensive to build in the Dockyards than the private Yards, it is still our duty to keep up the former for use when cases of emergency occur. We have had panics. We had one last year. Some years ago, at the time of the Russian War, we wanted one or two large vessels built rapidly, and we put them out by contract. The men struck work, and we had to send the Devonport men from their own Yards to help the private shipbuilders to fulfil their contracts. That was done at very great cost and at very great inconvenience. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Leith (Mr. Jacks) particularly will recognize the fact that we may purchase economy in shipbuilding at too dear a price. We have to run the risk of the Dockyards being inefficient, and they must be inefficient, and cannot be useful in times of emergency, if they are not always kept up at full work. It is because the Dockyards had not, for some time previously, been kept at their full complement that we are put to great strain and enormous outlay at the times of panics, such as frequently occur, and such as we had last year. At such times millions are thrown away, which would be much better and more effectively expended in our own Dockyards in times of peace and quietness. What do we see now? Why, that only last year there was the most wasteful extravagance. Millions of money were thrown away in buying ships here, there, and everywhere in the most reckless manner. All this is not ancient history: it is only the history of a year ago. It is useless to discuss here the question of 1 or 2 per cent difference in the construction of one ship here and another there when we take into consideration the cent per cent and the many cents per cent which were thrown away in buying ships upon an emergency like that of 12 months ago. While this question of the efficiency of the Navy is a burning question, while everybody, I believe, except a few hon. Members who sit below the Gangway opposite, but who do not represent, I undertake to say, anything like a prevailing opinion in the country, recognizes the great importance of having an efficient Navy, and while, besides, at the present time there is the greatest possible depression, what do we find at Devonport? Why, men discharged by wholesale—400 men discharged at one fell swoop. I thank my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) and my hon. Friend the Civil Lord (Mr. R. W. Duff) for the interest they have taken in this subject. They have certainly minimized the evil which was likely to arise from the discharging of men by reducing the number to be immediately discharged; but such a thing has never been known in the Dockyards of discharging so many men at one time. I quite appreciate the fact that the authorities of the Dockyards were within their right in discharging the men; having completed a certain job, the men engaged to work upon it were discharged. At the same time, some consideration should be had to the time and place. The Chairman shakes his head, and therefore I am afraid I am going too minutely into Dockyard matters. I regret that the Navy Estimates and other Estimates are not discussed day by day until they are disposed of. If they were we should save an immense amount of time, because when we come to discuss Dockyard matters again all that we have said to-day will be ancient history. Hon. Members will return fresh to the charge, and the probability is that much that has now been said will be repeated. Much time, too, would be saved if we had the opportunity of discussing the whole question, for practically naval matters form one question. Although the Estimates are split up into Votes 1, 2, and 3, and so on, the Votes are closely intertwined one with the other. I wanted to say something about the Victualling Yard, and also upon Votes 3 and 4; but it is almost impossible to discuss any one of the six Votes without, in some shape or other, touching upon another, and thus getting on the brink of disorder, so far as the Rules of the House are concerned. Now, before I resume my seat, I should like to make a few remarks upon the question of the rapid construction of vessels. We built the *Hero* in, I think, 16 months. It was said it would take four years to build; but the Admiralty were seized with a very good fit at the time, and we built the ship in about 16 months. I remember very well that the rapidity with which the *Hero* was turned out created very great consternation in France. The French said—"Look how quickly the English people can do their work." If hon. Members would refer to the cost they would find that the *Hero* was built proportionately cheap. There is another very good reason why the expenditures in connection with ships are higher than they ought to be. The recommendation of the Committee to which hon. Gentlemen have referred was very strong on the question of repairs. The Committee recommended that repairs should be done at once. Why are they not done at once? I think the *Invincible* has been lying four or five months at Devonport for repair, and she has not yet been touched. Surely the *Invincible* should be taken promptly in hand. What is the consequence of the delay? It is that there is a large number of idle hands—well, not idle hands, but hands necessarily in attendance, or kept in readiness for the work upon the *Invincible*. The recommendation of the Committee does not seem to have had the least effect. There is one other observation I desire to make, and it is that it struck me as very remarkable that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) should ask us to wait for a year while the Admiralty decided as to the design of the ships of the future.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): The hon. Gentleman will, I am quite sure, excuse my interruption. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) did not ask the Committee to wait for a year. He said the present Board had only been in Office six weeks, and they were now preparing to consider the plans of vessels.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I certainly understood that we were asked to wait until next year for certain shipbuilding to be undertaken. What the Civil Lord (Mr. R. W. Duff) says is perfectly reasonable. What I was anxious to say was that we permit delay in the building of our ships. We cannot wait for a few years, or even for a year, in order to find out some new development in shipbuilding. I must express the pleasure it gives me to find that we have turned over a new leaf in regard to the Navy. I am glad to see my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) in his place—I thought earlier in the evening he could not be far away. I am sure that even he will not venture to repeat to the full extent the speech with which he has annually favoured us against the rapid construction—or the construction at all—of ships of war, or against the spending of money upon our National Dockyards. I am sorry he has not been present during the whole of the discussion; but, however, I hope that when he rises he will be able to tell us that he, too, falls in with the sentiments of the whole country. The country has come to the conclusion that the more we spend—provided we spend it properly—to make the Navy efficient, the more we add to the security and prosperity of our country, the more we contribute eventually to economy in our finances. It is the piecemeal system of building ships, having a thing half done, doing a little this year and a little next, the Treasury knocking off this item and then that item, which has ruined our Navy, and which has prevented us from getting a proper show even for the money that has been voted. If, with a generous hand, we contribute to the better progress of our Navy, of course, taking care that we take all the safeguards against extravagance and waste—if we get our ships finished rapidly, one after the other, we shall the sooner be able to see our Navy in a thorough state of efficiency, and the better it will be for the country, the better for the country's commerce, and the better for the peace of mind of everyone.

SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): I do not wish to trespass long upon the attention of the Committee. I merely rise, as one of the Members for Portsmouth, to say that I agree entirely with what my hon. Friend the Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) has said as regards the Dockyards. I am sure that anyone reading the Report to which my hon. Friend the Member for Leith (Mr. Jacks) has referred must have been struck with the statements therein made. I believe that the fault does not lie so much with the Dockyards as with the system carried out of late years by the Board of Admiralty; and I think the statements made in the Report in question are of such serious consequence to the State that it would be a good thing if the whole subject of Dockyard management were referred to a Select Committee of the House. However careful a Departmental Committee may be in investigating matters, it does not command the same confidence, either from the people of the country or the House, as a Select Committee of the House does. Therefore, it is, I think, much better that the whole of the question should be referred to a Select Committee. But this is not the time to propose such an arrangement. I can only say this—that I have met many Dockyard labourers, and have found that they are very much hurt indeed at the statements that are made about their general idleness. I do not at all say that there are not some idlers in the Dockyards; but an accusation to the effect that there is general idleness on the part of the men is one which cannot be received. Now, Sir, I do not intend to weary the Committee with any statements as to shipbuilding—a subject with which, perhaps, I am not very conversant; but there are certain matters in connection with this Vote, in addition to those mentioned by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Sir John Gorst), which I wish to mention. The hon. and learned Gentleman has referred to the claims of the warrant officers, the engine-room artificers, and the stokers. These are matters of detail which it is not necessary I should go into at present. But there are other classes of men which require some consideration—I refer particularly to the naval schoolmasters. They are not paid as well as schoolmasters in the Army are. I hope my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) will give his consideration to the subject. Now, there is one important part of this Vote to which I wish specially to refer. Everyone will admit that no branch of the Service stands higher in reputation than the Royal Marines and the Royal Marine Artillery. There are 13,000 men in the Royal Marines and the Royal Marine Artillery; but they, particularly the officers, are placed in the most anomalous position. I have had the privilege and pleasure of sailing on board men-of-war, more often, perhaps, than most soldiers have; and nothing has ever struck me more on board Her Majesty's ships than the position which some of the officers in the corps I have named hold. When on board, Marines are not under the command of their own officers, but under the Captain of the ship; and even when they are on land, as they often are, they may still be under the orders of the Captain of the ship to which they belong. Now, I think that the Marines have a perfect right to claim that they shall be entirely commanded by their own officers. Even on bourd ship I think the Marine officer should have the power of punishing his own men. The only General Officer attached to the 13,000 is the Deputy Adjutant General of Marines; and when the men are landed and acting with other regiments of Infantry I do not think anyone ever heard of a case of a Marine officer commanding a Division or even a Brigade. On account of this Marine officers are kept out of those rewards which all soldiers look to when they have seen active service. But not only so, but Marine officers are debarred, at present, from having anything to do with the General Staff of the Army. They are, I believe, as highly educated and as good officers as any officers met with in any other branch of the Service; and, therefore, it is most unfair that men like these should be debarred from obtaining Staff appointments. They are even debarred, I find, from sitting on courts martial on men of their own corps on ships of war. That, I think, is grossly unfair to them—indeed, the whole system under which the Marines are managed requires the serious and immediate consideration of the Government. In my opinion, great saving might be effected if the Marines were turned to some uses for which they are particularly fitted. On my return from China, 15 years ago, I remember saying the same thing to the present Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers), then First Lord of the Admiralty. I thought then, and I think still, that the Marines are just the men to garrison all our coaling stations abroad. By placing Marines under the Admiral Commanding-in-Chief in charge of the coaling stations, we should obtain very good employment for the men, and we would effect great saving in our Army Estimates. We find that at Portsmouth there are some 2,000 Marine Artillery—I am not quite sure that that is the exact number—none of whom are actively employed in the defence of Portsmouth itself. They are being drilled for work on board ship which they hardly ever do, because there are so few of them in comparison to the total number of men employed on Her Majesty's ships. If we cannot employ them, as I do not say they might not be employed, in manning our own forts at Portsmouth, Plymouth, and other naval stations, they are the very men to man with advantage the forts of our coaling stations abroad. I hope that these suggestions will receive consideration, and that the Marines will be taken into greater account than they have been of late years. Of course, one has a good deal to say upon the Dockyard management; but as I understand the subject will come up under Vote 6 I will not attempt to say anything about it now. I desire, however, to say that I am convinced of the truth of what was said by the noble Lord the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), as to the advisability of putting our naval resources into a proper state of efficiency at once, and not leaving it over for five, or 10, or 25 years. I also think it is most advisable to carry out all these defences of the coaling stations referred to a few nights ago by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). It is desirable that both these objects should be attained, that we may be free from panic and wasteful extravagance hereafter. It is said that to provide the requisite money Terminable Annuities ought not to be resorted to. The suspension of the Sinking Fund is repudiated by both Parties in the House. If I might venture to give a hint as to the raising of the money it would be that ¼*d.* in the pound be put upon all realized property, leaving out all under £500, and we would have sufficient money to do everything that is required.

Mr. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I listened with great interest to the speeches addressed to the Committee this evening by the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert); but there was one point—and, I think, a very important point—omitted in their statements, and it had regard to the type of engines which the Admiralty were supplying to the modern men-of-war. Within the last three or four years a very great change has been made in the type of engines with which merchant vessels are fitted. Some 25 years ago a great change was made in the form of engines for all vessels. The Admiralty of that day, I know, were very slow in following the lead that was set by a very eminent firm which was represented by the hon. Member who sits on my left (Mr. Pearce). The saving in fuel which was effected by that change amounted to something like 30 per cent. The system was gradually developed up to two years ago, when it made a very great leap. The change of 25 years ago was from pressure on the boilers of vessels from 25 to 50 and 60 lbs. It then extended from 60 to 90 lbs., and within the last two years the pressure on the boilers in our merchant vessels has extended from 90 to something like 160 lbs. Now, this difference of working pressure on the boilers with the triple or quadruple expansion engines has made a most serious difference in the working expenses and the consumption of coal of the Merchant Fleet. I hope that where the consumption of coal and weight carrying is of such importance as it is in Her Majesty's ships, the Admiralty will not allow themselves to be so far behind the progress of the age as they were 25 years ago. I have ascertained as well as I can from the Estimates the cost of fitting vessels with engines, and I find a very great discrepancy between the prices of London and Provincial makers. The price varies from something like £8 per indicated horse-power paid to makers out of London, to £10 10*s.* per indicated horse-power paid to London makers. Why there should be this difference between the prices of country makers and those of London makers I do not know, unless the reason is that the London makers are to put in some of the vessels the new type of modern engines. I hope the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) will pardon me mentioning this matter. I only do so because I am quite sure it will be of great satisfaction to the shipowners of the country to feel that the Admiralty are keeping abreast with the important improvements in marine engineering. Something has been said as to the necessity of the country possessing fast cruisers in contradistinction to what I may call fighting vessels. It is well known that 12 months ago there was a great scare among shipowners simply because our Admiralty were not possessed of vessels of the type necessary for the protection of the great Commercial Fleet of the country. No doubt the Admiralty did the best they could in the panic. They chartered a number of fast cruisers. I asked the other day for a Return of the cost of these cruisers to the country. The Return has not yet been made; but I believe it will show that a very large sum of money was virtually wasted by the hiring of these vessels. When I say virtually wasted, I mean that if the Admiralty had in years past been alive to the necessity of protecting our commerce they would have had these fast vessels already in their possession, and would not have had to rush all over the world picking up a vessel where it happened to be. I doubt very much whether any great protection can be afforded to our commerce by the arming of merchant steamers. There are very few merchant steamers that are fitted to carry a gun, and I believe that when the Return for which I have moved is published it will be found that a very large sum of money was expended in fitting the cruisers with guns, and in taking the fittings off again. I trust the Admiralty will not overlook the necessity of keeping very fast light-armed cruisers ready to protect our commerce at the same time as they provide the very best fighting vessels. We cannot forget that 25 years ago 90 per cent of the American trade was carried on in American bottoms, and that, owing to the inaction of the American Government in not providing themselves with fast cruisers, one such cruiser almost succeeded in sweeping the American mercantile flag off the ocean. It would be a terrible thing if we found our Mercantile Marine without proper protection in case of need, and if our shipowners were obliged to fly for protection to a neutral flag. I wish to urge most seriously these points upon the attention of the Admiralty, because once a vessel changes her flag she never comes back to the original flag. The question of the stamp of engine used in merchant vessels is of great importance; but it is of even greater importance in the case of our armour-clad vessels. Therefore, I hope we shall have an assurance from the Admiralty that they are quite alive to the necessity of possessing fast cruisers, and of fitting our ships with the most modern engines.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): I will not detain the Committee very long with the remarks I have to make, principally in reference to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert). I may touch lightly, as my hon. Friend near me (Mr. Puleston) did, on the question of the Dockyards. I, for one, should be very glad to see a reform of the Dockyards, not that I think the men and officers work badly, because their work is the best that could possibly be; but that there is occasionally considerable expenditure that might be avoided. Let me give the Committee an instance of this. It is quite clear that different types of ships require different classes of material. Now, there is the awning stanchions necessary for all all ships—the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) will know what I mean. When I had the honour of being second in command of the iron-clad *Thunderer,* we naturally spread our awnings as soon as we commissioned, in order to ascertain if they would set properly. The stanchions being of the same strength and substance for a ship of 36-foot beam as for a ship of 70-foot beam, the result was that when we spread our awning the whole apparatus gave way. All this led to great expense, which could have been avoided if suitable stanchions had been made for the ship before she was actually in commission. Now, in regard to the reform of the Dockyards, I should be very glad to welcome the idea of having a civilian attached to the Admiral commanding, provided it is not the thin edge of the wedge to make a civilian the administrative officer in the Dockyard. From a boy an Admiral is brought up to administrate; it is his training. All our executive officers are taught to administrate. It is their duty to know what speed they want, and how many fathoms of rope are required, as well as to administer justice. As boys, they have practical experience of all work of administration; and, in my opinion, they are quite fitted for the work they are now called upon to perform, on account of the experience they have derived. I should be sorry to see them superseded by civilians. I should, however, welcome the assistance which civilians might render in promoting economy. You must remember this—that if ever civilians are appointed to the administrative posts in the Dockyards, the general supposition will be that the Navy was made for the Dockyards, whereas the Dockyards are necessarily made for the Navy. That is a very important point; but I merely mention it to see what view the Government take upon it. Now, I heard the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) say something about the increased Naval Estimates for the year; and, as far as I could gather, the idea he wished to convey to the Committee was that it was impossible the Navy could want anything else. I venture to say that was the sole argument, if it can be called an argument, which was urged against the facts which I adduced in the House the other night. The only argument the Chancellor of the Exchequer advanced in opposition to my Motion was, "How can it be possible for the Navy to be inefficient if you have such large Naval Estimates?" I do not consider that an argument at all. It does not matter what your Estimates are. The question is, is the Navy in the position it ought to be in? I endeavoured to show the other night that the reason the Navy Estimates are this year put at so high a figure is that the Navy was not in years past put in the position it ought to be in. The large Estimates of this year are simply the result of a panic. Now, we have had a great deal of debate, principally carried on by my brother Officers in the House, which has led to the conclusion that we who are connected with the Navy wish to spend a great deal of money. That, I believe, is so. ["Hear, hear!"] I heard an hon. Gentleman say "Hear, hear!" but I must say, also, that there are very great economies that we ask to have made in the expenditure of the Navy. For instance, we should like to see all the small and useless craft ordered home at once. Personally, I should like to see these vessels ordered home and paid off to-morrow, if it were possible. If we do not recall these obsolete vessels we shall have to repair them; and, therefore, we shall be expending money upon vessels which are really a danger to us, because we shall have to use them in time of war. I maintain there would be great economy if the Admiralty would order home all the small craft, and put in their stead one or two large and useful ships to do double work, and be as nearly as they can in two places at one time. Now, this is one economy I propose, and I propose it in the hope that hon. Gentlemen who hold very opposite opinions to mine will not think that we wish to spend money on the Navy simply for the sake of spending money, but that we wish to administer it properly, and with a view to economy. I think that all the great Votes submitted in respect of the Navy should be carefully scrutinized, for the best economy is to have the greatest efficiency. Now, Sir, with the few remarks which the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) made relative to the *Nile* and *Trafalgar* I entirely agree. I think it would have been very wrong for the Board of Admiralty succeeding that at the head of which was my noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton) if they had not proceeded with the construction of these ships. They are most useful ships; they are of a type that I myself, as a humble officer in Her Majesty's Service, entirely approve of. They are belted ships; they are not great floating batteries with four guns which can only be fired once in five minutes, but they have besides heavy guns a good armament of small and quick-firing guns, which are most useful in action. Their speed is not quite what I should like to see, when I recollect the class of ships the Italians are building. I hope the Secretary to the Admiralty will make a note of this point, and see if it is possible, with a little extra expenditure, to increase their speed. I have no doubt each of these ships will cost £1,000,000 sterling; but the money will be well laid out. England cannot afford to let any other country build a ship which is better than any she has got, because each individual ship England has had a great deal more to do than a ship belonging to any foreign country. We must, of course, contemplate the possibility of a large iron-clad being blown up by torpedoes; but then we must also have regard to what the ship has to do, and the positions in which she would be most useful and available, where a torpedo boat or a fleet of torpedo boats would be perfectly useless. With small craft and torpedo boats what could we have done at Alexandria? What could such a Fleet do in the Baltic? It is no use sending torpedo boats; they cannot do the work required. In these days our Fleet must be formed of component parts; we must have big, heavy iron-clads, as well as torpedo boats to protect them. The Secretary to the Admiralty said very truly that 40 torpedo boats had been ordered, and I understood him to add that 40 was a sufficient number. I do not agree with him there, and I endeavoured the other night to show the reason. I will not repeat myself, but I will point out this fact—that the 40 boats ordered are only to go 19 knots an hour and are 125 feet long, and that Foreign Governments have now got contracts out for boats 135 feet long to go 23 knots an hour. It is obvious that our boats cannot be driven at the speed of the larger craft.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT): What I said was that we did not wish to build any other boats until we saw what was the best boat for the future.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Nothing can be fairer than what the right hon. Gentleman has said; but I hope he will give me an assurance that if he finds the 135 feet longboats the better craft he will order some of them. The point ought to be impressed on the Committee that we shall not have a sufficient number of boats when these are finished. These boats were ordered at a time of panic 12 months ago, when it was considered absolutely necessary that they should be built as quickly as possible. Although I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it is well that we should have a trial to find which is the best boat, I must ask him and the Board with whom he acts to take into consideration the question whether there are boats enough. I must also remind him that the question of the size of the boats is of great importance. I understood him to say that the Government did not intend to build very many more torpedo boats of the larger class. No doubt, in these days of perfection in artillery practice, the larger your target the more certain you are of hitting it. That boats shall not be too large is of immense importance to the officers and crews of the boats leading a torpedo attack. I think that here an immense economy may be effected, and I say that with all deference to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. The present system of making guns at Woolwich has been fairly good in its results, but it has been extremely costly; because not only have ships been delayed for the want of guns and additional expense incurred in consequence, but when the guns are made they have to be tried, and the cost of the experiments, which is very heavy, comes upon the country. I believe the Navy would like the guns which they require to be ordered by them and put out to contract. We know exactly what we want, but at present we have very little to say in the matter. Well, Sir, I should like the guns for the Navy to be tendered for under contract. I should like to see an official announcement that such and such a gun is wanted, with the various requirements as to velocity, weight, powder, and the projectile to be carried. The Naval Board should say to the contractors—"These are our conditions; produce a gun; we will try it; and if it is satisfactory and produces the results we demand we will order 100 guns." You would in that way get your gun at once, having to bear the cost of one experiment only, and without the process of red-tapeism which is called economy, but which is, in the long run, very extravagant. Well, Sir, I believe if it were tried the plan I have indicated would be found to be economical. There were several remarks made by the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), who I am sorry to observe is not in his place, because I wanted to ask him one or two questions upon the subjects to which he has referred. The noble Lord stated that a larger sum than was now to be given—the sum of £1,000,000—was proposed by the Government of which he was a Member for the purpose of building small craft. I should like the noble Lord to have informed the Committee what is to be the tonnage of those small craft proposed by the late Government. I ask this because, as far as I understood the noble Lord from his speech, he entirely supported the theory and the proposals which I put forward the other night. There are liabilities, I believe, amounting to £3,000,000, although the money has not yet been expended, and that sum, taken together with what is required for the Navy to be put into next year's account, make up the £5,000,000 which I spoke of; and my proposal is, therefore, backed up most thoroughly by the noble Lord. I therefore trust that the Board of Admiralty will think this question over also. Another thing which the noble Lord referred to was the largeness of the establishments. But that is a necessary evil; we have to provide so much when we go to war, and it is, therefore, most necessary that we should keep our establishments on as large and efficient a scale as the nation will pay for, so as to have at our command what is necessary if there should be a declaration of war. The noble Lord made an excellent remark—if I may be bold enough to say so—with respect to the rigging of ships, because the question of rigging first-class fighting ships is a mystery to a great number of seamen. If you want your fighting ships to be successful in action, do not put masts, sails, and spars into them, because they are one of the greatest sources of danger. If a shot cuts the rigging through on the starboard or port side, over go masts, rigging, and all, and you cannot fight any more, because your screws will sure to get foul, and when once your screws are foul you are put out of action. Therefore, I say, do not put your ships in that position—have your fighting ships without rigging, but have your training ships rigged with masts and sails ready to be turned over to the Navy when required. Never do away with your Training Squadron, for it is that which creates seamen with those qualities so necessary for fighting with anything that floats. The noble Lord referred to another important point—namely, that of non-combatants in the Fleet. That question was brought forward by me some years ago. The large proportion of non-combatants in our ships is fraught with considerable risk. The French have in their ships probably 400 or 500 men, but they have only 5 per cent of non-combatants, whereas in our ships there is a far larger proportion. The non-combatants in our ships are the stokers, ship police, carpenters, sailmakers, servants, and so on—a class of men which in a ship like the *Thunderer* runs up to about 63 per cent. That, Sir, is a question which I think demands serious consideration, and I am of opinion that in ships of every class there should not be more than 5 per cent of non-combatants. When I was in command of the *Thunderer* it was thought we were going to war with Russia, and it was considered that the number of non-combatants on board was a serious thing for the ship and for England, because we were representing England at the time. Well, Sir, we called a muster to ascertain how many non-combatants there were; all the boats were manned and sent off from the ship, and the only men left on board who were combatants were the four quartermasters. Now, suppose it had been necessary to do anything quickly—suppose four ship's cutters had come alongside from the Russian Fleet, this 65 per cent of non-combatants would have been of no use; they could not have carried out the orders given; they could not have loaded a rifle, because they had never been drilled. Now, I think that constitutes a very great danger, and when I spoke on the subject before, it was to urge on the Admiralty that all these non-combatants should be drilled and taught to fight. The men want to learn to fight, but we do not teach them, and therefore I again press this matter upon the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty. The hon. Member for Hastings (Sir Thomas Brassey), who, I regret, is also absent from his place, has made some comparisons which, however, I do not think applicable. There is no use in comparing ship with ship, or a certain number of ships with the same number; to arrive at any useful result, the comparison must be with regard to the work to be done; and I say that so far as the French and Italian Fleets are concerned, the comparison instituted by the hon. Member is useless. But the hon. Gentleman the Member for Hastings was also wrong in saying that the speed of the English ships to that of the French was as 17 to 14. The speed of our cruisers is at this moment a knot less than the French, and many of those vessels are obsolete. I am sorry that I have not the list with me; but I can state to the Committee that, out of the 41 cruisers which we have now, 18 are obsolete. I entirely agree with the remarks that have been made about the Training Squadrons. We cannot do without them. There are also some of the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Sir John Gorst) with which I agree, particularly those which relate to the artificers of the Royal Navy. The grievance of these men is that their pensions are not in proportion to their pay, whereas the pensions of the chief petty officers, with whom they rank, are in proportion to their pay; and I submit to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty that he should take note of the fact, and that it should have the attention of the Board of Admiralty. The artificers of the Royal Navy are a most useful body of men. We must remember that, in these days of steam, although it rests with the captain to put his vessel in the position which he desires, he is entirely in the hands of the stokers and others. So much indebted do I feel to these men that, in one little action in which I had the luck to be engaged, I ordered the stokers to go to one side of the ship and the Blue-jackets to the other, and I called on the Blue-jackets to give the engine-room department three cheers.

Well, Sir, the request I have to make on behalf of these men is that the question of their pensions and their position in the Navy should be taken into consideration; and, with regard to the latter, I ask that they should be called engine-room artificers—there is no need to call them warrant officers. The hon. and gallant Member for Portsmouth (Sir William Crossman) has made some remarks about a corps of which we, as naval officers, are as proud as he is. I do not agree with the whole, but with some, of the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman. I do not agree with him when he says the Marines should not always be under the control of the naval captain, because it is, I think, obvious that the captain's control must extend over everything and everybody connected with the ship. I agree with the hon. and gallant Gentleman that the position of the Royal Marines is not what it should be, and that they do not get those advantages in which they are entitled to share. I also partly agree with the hon. and gallant Gentleman in his remarks with regard to Staff appointments. The difference between a soldier and a sailor is this—that a sailor will run where he thinks he is wanted, but a soldier will stand at his post. At the time the Duke of Edinburgh was shot at in Australia, we stationed a Blue-jacket guard for his protection; there was a double ring of sentries around the house, and they were ordered to hail anybody who came past three times, and if there was no answer they were to fire. There was an emu in the garden. The emu passed; the Blue-jacket sentry hailed the emu, which did not answer; he hailed it three times, but it never answered, and then fired, and I am sorry to say he missed the bird. I mention this to show the difference between the Marine and the Blue-jacket, for directly afterwards every Blue-jacket sentry ran to the place where the shot had been fired; whereas, of course, military sentries would have remained at their posts. The fact is, you train one man—the Blue-jacket—to be useful everywhere on the spur of the moment, and you train the soldier to do his duty on the spot. I repeat that the Marines are a most useful body of men, capable of being landed and carrying out with the discipline and precision of the soldier whatever work they have to do. As to the question of expenditure, I have endeavoured to show as briefly as possible that great saving can be effected, particularly in the Dockyards; but not by reducing those establishments, because I believe you can never get work better done than it is in our Dockyards. What you want is better organization and better administration; and I hope that it will be clearly understood that an Admiral shall always administer the Dockyards over the heads of whatever civil assistants there may be to support him.

CAPTAIN VERNEY (Bucks, N., Buckingham): Sir, we have been told by an hon. Member (Mr. Illingworth) that we naval officers returned as Members of this House, when a question of naval policy comes forward, are not to take part in the discussion. But I venture to ask the Committee to consider that there are two or three sides to a question of naval policy, and there is one portion of it on which naval officers may claim to have something to say. In the first place, on the question of expenditure in connection with the Navy, naval officers do not pretend to be financiers; and they ought, therefore, to be content to leave questions of finance to those who understand them. As to the question of naval establishments, naval officers ought to know something about that; but they have no right to lay claim to exclusive knowledge on the subject, because there are others capable of forming just as good an opinion as they can of the class and number of ships required in the Navy. Those persons have, of course, the advantage of consulting with naval officers on questions relating to the requirements of the Fleet; and, therefore, I repeat that naval officers cannot lay claim to exclusive knowledge on that point. But there is one point on which naval officers have a right to speak, and on which men without practical experience should be silent. When the ships and guns have left the hands of the professional experts, the country does not want to know on what scientific theories they were constructed, but how they will serve us when put to the test of real work. Naval officers are alone capable of judging of the efficiency of the ships of the Navy; and, therefore, Sir, I think it is unwise of economists in this House to be desirous of shutting the mouths of naval officers, as the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) attempted to do a few nights ago. Why, Sir, it is the greatest service that can be performed from the point of view of economy in respect of naval administration to tell the House and the country whether the ships on which such vast sums of money are expended are or are not efficient. The old Navy before the days of steam was essentially an efficient Navy. Our ships were the best afloat; they had the best rope, the best canvas, and the best guns that could be made—there were no ships in the world that could compare with the ships of our Navy before iron-clads were introduced. They were thoroughly efficient; they always went at full speed; the material of which they were constructed was of the best; their armament was the very best that could be found; and, as I have said, there was no better class of ship than the sailing vessels of the Navy in the old days. But it is not so now. We have at the present time very few efficient ships in the Navy; and therefore I say that this is a subject on which we men of the Navy have a right to speak. Take the question of speed. We have not many ships in the Navy which can go at full speed for any length of time. When I was afloat from 1870 to 1873 in the Mediterranean, almost every ship had to work her boilers at reduced speed. Then we find other nations with more powerful weapons than we have; and therefore I say that our Navy is not efficient in the matter of weapons. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) told the House the other day that naval officers do not now get the training necessary to fit them for the command of ships. Well, Sir, reverting to the subject of the rate of speed, during the three years of my command I do not think I went more than 20 times at full speed. There is a standing order in the Navy that the captain shall ascertain what is the most economic rate of speed—that is to say, the speed at which he can cover the greatest distance with the least expenditure of coal. This generally works out at from five to seven knots an hour; and a ship, unless on particular service, is always required to steam at that speed, the consequence being that naval officers are only accustomed to handle their ships at a low speed. But when your Navy is required for active service, you have to go at full speed; you have to go at 10, 15, or 16 knots habitually; and I say that under the present system you do not give your naval officers a chance of handling their ships at that speed. A ship steers very differently, and requires, in consequence, very different handling when going at one speed from what she requires under another. The stokers cannot, under the circumstances I have mentioned, keep up steam enough to get speed out of the ships. What would be thought in the Army, if a Cavalry officer were expected to take his regiment into action at full gallop, when he had never been allowed to drill it except at a walk? Would any hon. Member intrust his carriage to a coachman who had never driven his horses except at a foot's pace? And yet you require your naval officers to go into action and manœuvre their ships at a tremendous speed to which they have not been accustomed. Why, Sir, when we do handle our ships at full speed, we feel we are not accustomed to it. No doubt, the cost to the country of allowing the ships of the Navy always to go at full speed would be very great; but that is no business of the naval officer. Our business is to tell you that your ships, on which you have spent large sums of money, are not as efficient as they ought to be; and it is the duty of every hon. Member to insist that the Navy of this country, even if it be small, shall at least be efficient. It cannot be efficient under the conditions I have described. English naval officers ought to be the best officers in the world. I do hope that hon. Members will not be found to rise in this House and ascribe to naval officers unworthy motives. Perhaps it would be well to give them credit for a little patriotism and regard for the efficiency of the Service to which they have devoted their lives, as well as a desire to win the respect and affection of their countrymen. I venture to say that the name of the noble and gallant Lord who sits opposite (Lord Charles Beresford), and who has spoken to-day, is beloved wherever it is mentioned. In the old days, when one ship fouled another very little harm was done, and the damage could be easily made good; but if one of our iron-clads fouls another a very different result follows; the ship has to be taken into dock, and it will probably be found that there is a great hole in her side. It is the enormous weight of the ships as compared with what it was formerly that causes this. For handling ships of this kind you want a man of exceeding nerve, and one who carries in his mind's eye the exact curve which the ship will make in steering. If a ship is going out of a narrow harbour, for instance, everything depends on the captain's knowledge of the behaviour of the ship under different rates of speed. You must not falter; you must not stop; if you do you will come to grief; you must, therefore, go on and have in your mind's eye the exact curve which the ship will make. Well, Sir, I think that in a situation demanding such discrimination the Committee will agree with me in saying that the captain must know exactly what his ship will do at full speed. It is necessary that our naval officers should know how to handle the great engines under them with perfect nerve and skill; and it is in my judgment clear that nothing ought to be allowed to stand in the way of their attaining the knowledge necessary to produce that result, because otherwise, in time of need, the nation will suffer for it. The hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Sir John Commerell) has told us what his experience has been with a vessel having a twin-screw—the gallant Admiral may not be as well known to the House as the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford); but he is as well known in the Navy, and there is no man whose voice should be more attentively listened to. He explained his own experiences when in command of a heavily-sparred twin-screw vessel, and how he had represented to the Admiralty the uselessness, and even the danger, of such heavy masts; but when he returned home he found another twin-screw ship being rigged with still heavier spars. What have the economists to say to that? Now, I felt very much what the gallant Admiral said, because I also commanded a twin-screw ship, and I also made representations about her spars. What I found was this—that she would never go to windward at all under sail, and if ever I wanted to go a little way to windward it was necessary to get steam up. For instance, I had on one occasion to get steam up to steam only about 200 yards to get into Ascension. Well, surely that was not economy. But why was it? Because the Admiralty had put useless spars into the vessel, which was a positive blunder, and could have been no use to her in the event of her going into action. In regard to the efficiency of the men, all I can say is this—that there never was a time when our officers and men were more efficient than they are now. When I look back at the low class whom we had amongst the men of the Navy, when I first went to sea, and the low tastes they developed, I am astonished when I compare them with the men whom we have in the Service at the present time. The seamen of to-day are amongst the most sober, intelligent, and educated of Her Majesty's subjects. Then, in regard to the officers, I do not know that the members of any profession are better educated in their profession than are our naval officers. During the three years in which I commanded a ship in the Mediterranean, I never knew an instance when the captain of an English man-of-war did not take his ship in and out of harbour without a pilot, although the captain of every foreign man-of-war, without exception, always employed a pilot. It occurs to me, however, that the time has now come when this House should insist that there shall be promotion from the ranks in the Navy as well as in the Army. I believe that the time has gone by when the country will allow all the higher grades of the Profession to be held exclusively by one particular class, and before very long I hope to see a way open to the highest ranks of the Navy to seamen of the Fleet. I have a Notice on the Paper on this subject which I intend to bring forward. I postponed it until after Easter, because I believed that I was going right in the teeth of the Navy. To my astonishment, however, within the last few days I have discovered that many of the higher officers are in favour of it. I have asked three Questions on this subject from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert), and I cannot forbear expressing my thanks for the courteous and careful consideration with which he has replied to them. I have reason to believe that the matter is likely to be considered in a short time by the Admiralty, with a view of seeing if it is possible to do an act of justice to every seaman in the Fleet, by giving him an opportunity of rising to the highest ranks of the Profession. If this be done, it will go far to remove the grievances of the seamen of the Fleet, and the English Navy in the future will continue to be what it always has been in the past. I hope the Committee will not think that we naval officers are extravagant when we demand efficiency. For my part, I shall never hesitate to speak out my mind when I think the Service falls short of what the country has a right to expect.

Captain PRICE (Devonport): I listened with the greatest pleasure to the very able and very lucid speech of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert); but I think I must also say that the Navy will listen with some feeling of disappointment to the statement which has been laid before us by the exponent of the Admiralty in this House this evening, and for this reason. After all the money we were called upon to spend last year; after the great scare which went over the country in regard to Russia, and after all the expense which was caused by it, the Navy did expect that the Representative of the Admiralty would have been able to come down here to-night and have told the Committee that at last the Navy had been put into a thoroughly efficient state. I know very well that he is not to blame, however, and that he has only followed the example of other Secretaries to the Admiralty, and has simply come down clearly to explain the Estimates before the Committee. It never has been the custom, unfortunately, and I am afraid it never will be, for the Representative of the Admiralty to tell us, to tell the Committee or the country, that the Estimates which he is placing before the House are sufficient to place the Navy in a thoroughly efficient condition. I did not take part in the debate on Monday night for this reason. There are several new Members in the House belonging to the Naval Profession, and I thought that it was only right that they should have a full opportunity of putting before the House their views on the state of the Navy. The House has been in the habit of hearing the same Representatives of Dockyard boroughs year after year advancing the same arguments on these Estimates in regard to the Navy; but this year we have new men, who have had great experience of the Navy, coming here and confirming everything that we have said before on these matters. What is the leading feature of the statement which has been put before the Committee to-night? I think the country will consider that it is this. That the Estimates of the late Board are really the Estimates which were presented to the Government, and that those Estimates have been reduced by no less than £500,000. It is well known in this House and out-of-doors that the Government have only to say that such and such a sum is necessary for the efficiency of the Navy, and no single Member in this House would decline to vote the sum asked for. For the first time within my knowledge, the Government have declined to ask for the sum of money which has been considered by the Board of Admiralty sufficient, and only sufficient, to put the Navy in an efficient condition. I do not think that I can be contradicted when I say that the Estimates now put forward are not those submitted by the Board of Admiralty. All the principal members of the present Board, and nearly all the permanent officials and heads of Departments, have been sitting at the Admiralty for months past, and they came to the conclusion that it was necessary to pay a certain amount of money to put the Navy in a proper state of efficiency. That sum was asked for by the Board, and that sum has been reduced by £500,000. I think I may put it in this way—that the Treasury have been asked for £500,000 more than we have been asked for to-night. I should like to put the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) into the witness-box on this matter to-night. Speaking in the City yesterday, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the Admiralty could not have everything that they required, and that they must cut their coat according to their cloth. I think there is a great deal which we can read between the lines in that remark. What it amounts to is this—that the Admiralty cannot have what they require; that they must take what he was prepared to give them. Well, Sir, by-and-bye hon. Members are to be asked to give £200,000,000 for the disruption of the Empire, and I do not think it is too much to ask them to give £5,000,000 to assist in maintaining the remnants of the Empire. My noble Friend below me the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) told us that he asked for £500,000 more for the purpose of laying down small ships and for providing torpedoes. He wanted £350,000 for torpedoes.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): For torpedoes and torpedo boats.

Captain PRICE: I do not know how much that that would amount to for torpedoes alone. If I rightly understand the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hibbert), he said he can only ask the Committee to provide 900 torpedoes this year, although 1,400 would be eventually necessary. As Whitehead torpedoes cost last year between £300 and £400 a-piece, the purchase of 900 of them would require a good bit of money; but why are we not to have as many as are required? I believe it is because we have no means of making a sufficient quantity in this country. Last year, during the Russian scare, I am told that there was a great deficiency of torpedoes; and I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert), therefore, whether any arrangement has been made at Woolwich or elsewhere for supplying them? I should like to ask him whether any contract has been entered into with Mr. Whitehead for manufacturing them this year? As to torpedo boats, we heard something amusing about them last year, when the Earl of Northbrook, in "another place," told us that he was going to provide 40 torpedo boats, and that they would be armed with guns during the war, and that after peace was proclaimed they were to be armed with their natural weapon—the torpedo. I should like to know whether that policy is to be repeated? The Secretary to the Admiralty, in his very able speech to-night, said nothing at all about the *personnel* of the Navy; but I dare say he intends to allude to that matter upon some subsequent Vote. It has been the custom to refer to the matter on this Vote, but I quite recognize the circumstance under which he has refrained from taking that course to-night; but I hope that he or his Colleague, at some future time, will give us a little more information upon the *personnel* of the Navy. There is one matter which I should like to refer to, and which reflects great credit upon recent First Lords of the Admiralty—and that is, that they have at last come to the conclusion that we ought to provide for the support of the widows of our seamen and marines. I hope that the matter will be satisfactorily settled, and in the most liberal possible spirit. Something has been said about that gallant corps, the Royal Marines; and I think that that is a question which no naval officer can altogether help referring to when Naval Estimates are before this House. I must say that I am sorry to see that this force is to be reduced by 70. The reduction is a small one, no doubt, but still it is a reduction. In my opinion, there in no force in the service of the Crown which is more economical, or more efficient, than the corps of Marines. Regarding the question which my noble and gallant Friend below the Gangway (Lord Charles Beresford) has mentioned, I understand that he spoke about the punishment of Marines for serious offences on board ship. I think my noble and gallant Friend was right—that that matter ought to be left to the captain of the ship. But, for my part, I think that the power of inflicting punishment on the Marines should be left in the hands of the senior officer of Marines on board ship as much as possible, and on shore entirely so. In regard to the engine-room artificers on board ship, also, I wish to say that I think that, in the interests of discipline, I believe it is necessary that those men who are put in charge of the engines ought, at the very least, to hold the position of warrant officers. I have always maintained that the upper classes of artificers, after 10 years' service, ought to be raised to the rank of warrant officers. Just one word on the question which the hon. Gentleman (Captain Verney) has raised as to warrant officers. I understand that after Easter he is going to raise the question, and take the vote of the House upon it. If he does, I shall have very great pleasure in seconding him. It is a question I have often raised in this House—that of the promotion of warrant officers. It seems to me extraordinary that in the Naval Service of this country, above all others, no man—no seaman—should be able to rise above the rank of warrant officer.

It used not to be so in years gone by. There were frequent cases in the old days of seamen rising to be Captains and Admirals; but now they are altogether cut off from anything of the kind. This is not the condition of things in the Army. We do not pretend to have an Army. That small, if gallant, body of men we have to fight our battles for us is only by compliment on the Continent called an Army, and yet the cases in which men have risen from the ranks to the possession of commissions are very frequent. I think there are 120 men now holding commissions as Captains and Lieutenants who have sprung from the ranks, besides 600 or 700 Quartermasters and Ridingmasters. Though an Order was placed on the Statute Book by which it was provided that commissions should be given to seamen, yet, although that Order came out 30 years ago, not a single instance has ever yet been noted of a man being so promoted. I know I shall be told, as I have been before, that commissions are given. But what are these commissions? It has been the custom for the past few years to promote gunners and boatswains to be what are called chief gunners and chief boatswains; and they are told when they are so promoted that they are commissioned officers. They receive a piece of paper with the word "commission" written on it, which entitles them to call themselves commissioned officers; but they are not really commissioned officers. They are still boatswains and gunners, and do not rank with the officers. Well, there is no unreasonable request made in connection with this subject—there is no difficulty in the matter at all. We are told that there are social difficulties in the way of conferring the rank of commissioned officers upon these men; but there is no reason why they should not be promoted to be Lieutenants or Commanders. You need not put them in the ward room with the other officers, if this difficulty exists, which I do not believe; but, at all events, there is no reason why you should not put them in the Coastguard Service, where the social difficulty would not exist at all. We are sometimes told that we shall not be able to get the warrant officers to pass the examinations necessary to become Lieutenants, and I dispute that entirely. I maintain that every gunner in the Service is able to pass the same gunnery and seamanship examinations as the Lieutenants, and that the gunners and boatswains could easily, with the ordinary six months' training at the Naval College, pass the necessary examinations in navigation and mechanics. I have said there is no difficulty in regard to education or the social aspect of the question; and I say, if you can do it, promote those men to be Lieutenants who are worthy of it—place them in the Coastguard, or in command of gunboats, or second in command of gunboats. There are heaps of positions you could give them in the Navy. I want, further, to suggest—and I want the Representatives of the Admiralty to consider this matter, because it has been put before me by deputations and otherwise—that chief boatswains and gunners, when they retire from the Service, should be allowed to retire with the rank of Lieutenant. That may seem an empty kind of honour to ask for; but it is really nothing of the kind. If the rank of Lieutenant is given these men on retiring, their children—their sons—will have the satisfaction of knowing that many appointments are open to them which otherwise would not have been open to them, to say nothing of the pride which they will feel in being able to say that their fathers were promoted to commissions for long and faithful services. I hope the Admiralty will consider this question, and that, as the French soldier used to be able to say that every knapsack contained the baton of a Marshal of France, so every sailor in our Navy will be able to say that he has in his locker the cocked hat and epaulettes of a British Admiral.

MR. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Your ruling, Sir, to-night, which is, no doubt, correct, is of such a nature as will, I am afraid, prevent me from dealing with many of the questions that have been raised with reference to certain action we thought it necessary to take when we were at the Admiralty with that fulness I should have been glad to have been able to adopt. I know, however, there will be other opportunities when we shall be able to discuss these matters in greater detail, and when we shall be able to defend the course we thought it right to take in the interest of the Service on the subject of reorganization. There are, however, one or two points I desire to refer to, and which I shall be able to touch upon without bringing myself under the censure of the Chair. With regard to the speech just delivered by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Captain Price) as to the Estimates which the late Government, in the interests of the Navy, thought it necessary to formulate, and the Estimates now before the Committee, I must express my great satisfaction that the proposals presented to Parliament by the present Board are, on the whole, of so satisfactory a nature. I am glad to think that the shipbuilding programme which we thought it necessary to formulate in reference to the building of ships in our Dockyards has been to the full adopted by the present Board, and that they propose in the Dockyards to spend this year probably a larger sum than has ever been spent before, exclusive of the sum taken from the Vote of Credit for wages. I am extremely glad that they have so far adopted our views in that respect, because I feel sure that if arrangements are made for the economical administration of the money that it is proposed to devote, the more wages you spend in the Dockyards, within certain limits, the more likely you are to have an efficient and cheap Navy. It would, perhaps, interest the Committee to hear that, large as are the wages taken for shipbuilding in our Dockyards, they are nothing like the proportion that would be spent in the private Dockyards which had the same amount of work on hand. Certainly, if it pays private builders to spend large sums of money in wages in order to get the work quickly out of hand, it ought to follow that a similar course would be to the interests of ecoonomy in Her Majesty's Dockyards. Great fault has been found—and I think rightly found—with the delay which has taken place, and which is almost the normal condition of things, with reference to building in our Dockyards; though it is true that in one or two cases ships have been turned out with remarkable and praiseworthy expedition—and especially I would refer to the ship to which reference has been made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston)—namely, the *Hero*, which was turned out with a speed which would have done credit to any private Yard in the country. In the case of the *Hero*, the ship was turned out so rapidly because there was not a large amount of new work being done at the Yard. A large amount of labour could be got on it, and kept on it, which is the great secret of turning out ships with rapidity. When we were at the Admiralty, our view was that it was to the truest interests of economy that everything in our power should be done to obtain more rapidity of construction in the Dockyards than had ever been exhibited. The Committee will see that the programme for work in the Dockyards that has now been adopted by the present Board of Admiralty is a programme which will insure much more satisfactory progress in the Dockyards than has hitherto been the case; and I would point out that whereas it was stated by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) that the *Ajax* was nine years being built, the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*, two ships of far greater tonnage than the *Ajax*, are put down in this year's Estimates to be completed by the year 1890, so that if the programme which is now placed before the Committee and the House is carried out, we shall see these two vessels, the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*—which will be two of the most powerful ships in the world when they are afloat—turned out of Her Majesty's Dockyards in a period which I think in ordinary times would hardly be exceeded by any private Yard. I hope that the present Board will make it a point to see that their proposals in that respect are pushed forward with the view of carrying out the programme that is put before the Committee. While, however, I express my entire satisfaction with the proposals made by the Government with reference to the work in the Dockyards, I am sorry to say that I cannot express the same amount of approval of the other portion of their programme. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Devonport (Captain Price) said the Estimates presented by the present Government were not within £500,000 of the Estimates prepared by the previous Board. In that he rather under-estimated than over-estimated the condition of things. The Estimates presented by the present Board, so far as my recollection goes, are, in round numbers, £500,000 less upon what may be called the ordinary programme of the year than the Estimates of the late Board, apart from the additional programme for extra small vessels which we hoped —I must say, however, that it did not go beyond a hope—we might have been able to induce the Treasury to sanction. Therefore, how is it that notwithstanding the Estimates which are now before the Committee are £500,000 less, so far as what I may call the ordinary programme of the year is concerned, than those which we formulated, yet the same amount of work that we proposed is going to be turned out of the Dockyards? Well, I will tell the Committee that the difference is mainly in the Contract Vote, and that the present Estimates provide for a very considerable sum less being spent under that Vote than we estimated would be earned by the contractors during the year. I should very much like to know from the Secretary to the Admiralty how it is, and by what process it is, that these Estimates have been reduced in the way that I have mentioned, because I do not find that there is to be any smaller programme? The same number of ships are to be built—the contractors are to have the same work in hand—as we proposed. It is proposed to order machinery in the same way as we proposed to order it for ships that are building in the Dockyards; but, notwithstanding that, so far as we can see, taking the number of ships and the work that is to be taken in hand into consideration, the programme is to be the same as the one we left at the Admiralty, there is to be on that particular Vote something like £250,000 less spent than we expected we should have to spend during the year. I should like to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he has obtained from his responsible advisers estimates of the progress which is to be made upon the ships and the machinery which has been ordered and is to be ordered, £250,000 less than those they furnished to us when we were in Office? Is it the case, as to my certain knowledge it has been in previous years, that it being desired to cut down the Estimates by £250,000, orders have been given to the permanent officials charged with the duty and carrying out the work to take off the sum by which it is thought desirable to reduce the Estimates *pro rata* from all the ships? I must say I cannot believe that it is to the first of these causes that we have to look for this diminution in the amount of the Estimates, because I cannot imagine that the responsible officers of the Admiralty would within the short space of two or three weeks alter their minds so much as to be able to advise the Admiralty that the contractors would not earn within £200,000 or £300,000 of the money they had advised us they would be able to earn. If I were allowed to go into questions of detail, I could show the Committee that whether you take the ships that are being built by the contractors, or take the machinery now in order, or the machinery that is to be ordered and must be ordered, there is a suspicious look about these various items which makes it appear, certainly to me, as if a reduction had been ordered, and that simply £8,000 had been taken off this ship and £8,000 off the other, and £10,000 off this machinery and £10,000 off the other. I venture to say that if that is the course that has been followed it is a course that the Committee and the House ought to condemn. There is only one legitimate mode in which Estimates should be presented to this House, and that is by stating the amounts—I am speaking now of contract work—which you are advised by those who are responsible for directing you in these matters will be earned by the contractors in carrying out the work you have intrusted to them. What is the position the House is likely to be placed in at the end of the financial year if the reduction has been made by simply cutting down the Contract Vote by £250,000? They will find that if the contractors go on building in the way that was originally anticipated, they will at the end of the year be asked for a large Supplementary Vote. It was our fortune, or misfortune, to be the means of its becoming necessary for the present Government to present a considerable Supplementary Estimate to Parliament for the purpose of meeting the demands of the contractors. But, Sir, the course we adopted was one of which the House unanimously approved. We found that the contractors were proceeding more rapidly than was anticipated when the Estimates were prepared, and we did not think it necessary to stop them, feeling sure that the House would approve of the course we pursued in desiring to get these ships built as rapidly as they could be built. But while the House was quite willing to excuse us for having adopted that course, and to justify us for having adopted it, I do not think that the House would be likely to approve of the custom of adopting that as a principle. I do not think the House would be satisfied with a systematic under-estimating of the amounts to be earned by the contractors' Ministers trusting to the House at the end of the year to give them the amount rendered necessary by the extra earning of the contractors. But it is not only with reference to the work which is being undertaken by the contractors that there has been what I am afraid is an undue cutting down of the Estimates which we left behind us. There has been—and here, again, I cannot enter into detail—a large sum cut off the Stores Vote, the effect of which will be that at the end of the year the naval stores in stock will be lower than they have been at any time during the past 13 years. Well, I can quite understand the difficulties under which the Government labour. There is a declining Revenue and a failing trade, and I can quite understand their extreme desire to keep down these Estimates, which in any case are extremely high, to the lowest possible amount; but I do not think it is desirable to cut down the Estimates if it is done by the means which I have pointed out to the Committee. Well, now with reference to what I would call the extra programme which we left behind us and which we hoped we might have the authorization of the Treasury to proceed with. I can assure the Committee that there is no expenditure which is more necessary than that upon the small additional programme which we left behind. We, as the noble Lord the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) pointed out to the Committee, considered that it was our first duty to endeavour to bring the Iron-clad Fleet of the country up to a level with and a superiority over that of any other Power; and, therefore, we felt that our first duty was to see that ships were laid down and built which would be a match for any iron-clad that was building, or built, throughout Europe. But we did not shut our eyes to the fact that there was also a grave necessity for small vessels to be provided. I should like to point out to the Committee, speaking with regard to the gunboats, that although we have 33 on the list as effective, in five or six years we shall not have half-a-dozen effective gunboats in the British Navy. Well, that is a matter which I think requires the earnest attention of the Government; and I was very glad indeed to hear my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty say that although the Government had not included this small additional programme of ours in the programme to be laid before Parliament, yet that they had hopes that before the end of the financial year they might see their way to proceeding with some of these extremely necessary small craft. I, of course, do not quite see myself where the money is to come from; but I hope my right hon. Friend has in his eye some unexplored mine into which he will be able to dip, and out of which he will be able, at any rate, to commence these vessels.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT) (Oldham): As you commenced five new vessels without having the money for them.

MR. RITCHIE: I am not aware that we commenced five new vessels without considering where the means were to come from to pay for them. I should like to have the details of that. I can only again express a hope that the right hon. Gentleman will be able to do what he expects he will. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) asked me what is the tonnage of the small craft we proposed to build. We proposed to build four corvettes of 2,000 tons each, four sloops of 1,000 tons each, two improved *Curlews* of about 785 tons each, and eight gunboats of the *Rattler* type of 670 tons each. That is the whole of the additional programme we proposed, and we hoped of these to have built in the current year eight gunboats, one corvette, and two sloops. We felt that the time had arrived when it was absolutely essential that the question of gunboats should be taken in hand, because we were face to face with the fact that we had a large number of gunboats in the Navy List that were absolutely useless, and which, if money had been spent on their repair, would have been wasted, as we could not have got out of them more than eight knots an hour. I think the

House would have had reason to complain if we had spent large sums of money in trying to make seaworthy gunboats, which, after they were made seaworthy, would not steam more than eight knots an hour. With reference to the question of reorganization at the Admiralty and in the Dockyards, my hon. and learned Friend (Sir John Gorst), who, for the purpose, has assumed a position of greater freedom and less responsibility below the Gangway, is evidently very angry with us.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I rise to Order. If it is in Order for the hon. Member to go into that question, it will be equally in Order for us to reply, and I have a very long reply to make.

Mr. RITCHIE: I am not going into the question in any detail. The general question of Dockyard reform was touched on by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, and has been touched on by more than one speaker; and, while I will rigidly guard myself from going into any question of detail in connection with it, I think I shall be in Order if I say one or two words to show the necessity of dealing with the Dockyards. Now, what were the circumstances? We were face to face with the fact, about which there has been conflict in the House and in the country over and over again, that the ships which were building in our Dockyards were not being turned out with that expedition with which they ought to have been turned out, and that they were being turned out at a cost greatly in excess of a fair and proper amount. That led us to inquire into all the circumstances in connection with the Dockyard administration. Now, I wish it to be clearly understood that although in the Blue Book which has been referred to more than once, containing the Report of Admiral Graham's Committee of Investigation into the Dockyards, certain statements are made as to idleness in the Dockyards, the Committee must not be under the misapprehension that the reforms which we undertook were undertaken in the belief that the only fault, or the great fault even, was that of idling in the Dockyards. Of course, where there are large numbers of men congregated together, as there are in the Dockyards, there must be, and there will be, idleness here and there; but I am convinced that no country possesses more efficient servants than this country possesses in the artizans who are employed in our Royal Dockyards. And, further, Sir, I am satisfied of this—that whatever may be the question of cost in connection with what is turned out of the Dockyards, or whatever may be the question of time, no Dockyard in the country, or in any other country, turns out work superior to that turned out of Her Majesty's Dockyards. I would almost go further, and say that I greatly question whether work such as is turned out of Her Majesty's Dockyards is turned out of any private yard in the country. Hon. Members for Dockyard constituencies, whose indignation I can well understand and appreciate, must not run away with the notion that we have been driven into the question of Dockyard reform in consequence of the complaints which have been made with reference to the hands employed in the Dockyards. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Sir John Gorst) and my hon. Friend the Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston), while denouncing the reforms which we had made, and while applying the most opprobious terms to the assistants to the Superintendents whom we had appointed, themselves bore the strongest testimony it was possible for anyone to bear to the absolute necessity for the reforms which we had initiated. The hon. Gentlemen themselves complained of men standing idle for days and weeks together; they said the men had no work to do, although ships were lying in the Yards ready to be repaired, but upon which the men were not employed. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham complained of the total inability of the men to obtain the stores which it was necessary they should obtain in order to proceed with their work. What did all these complaints point to? They pointed to a want of management. And, Sir, what we considered necessary, judging not only from the evidence which was placed before us, but from the evidence of our own eyes when we made our visitation to the Dockyards—what seemed to us to be absolutely essential was that there should be placed in the Dockyards someone with technical knowledge, who should be responsible to the Superintendent and the Admiralty for the efficiency of the work which was done there. And, Sir, I agree with my hon. and learned Friend that there was as much necessity, to say the least of it, for taking in hand the reform of the central government in the Admiralty as any reform in the Dockyards; and I believe that we have instituted such a system, both at the Admiralty and in our manufacturing establishments, as will secure that the country obtains quickly, efficiently, and expeditiously value for the money which this House votes. We have endeavoured in all that we have done to follow out the system which leads to such successful results in the private Yards of the country. We formed our plans on the basis upon which private Dockyards in the country have been so successful for so many years; and I want to impress upon the present Board of Admiralty what we considered one of the fundamental, if not the fundamental, principle which underlies all the reforms which we have endeavoured to secure. We have adopted a system by which, for all practical purposes, the two Departments of designing and of building shall be separate, and that the officer charged with the designing shall be responsible for his designs, and that the officer charged with the building shall be responsible to the Board of Admiralty for quickly and economically and efficiently carrying out the work which has been placed in his hands. I would impress strongly upon the present Board of Admiralty that they cannot be too particular in endeavouring to secure, as far as it is possible, this clear division of labour, in order that there may be responsibility where responsibility ought to lie. Sir, I am speaking upon a subject which was to me one of daily and nightly concern during the whole time that I had the honour of filling the Office of Secretary to the Admiralty. There is much that I should like to say upon it, but I know it would be altogether irregular for me to do so; and, therefore, I shall reserve what I have to say with reference to the details of the arrangements which we have made until we have a legitimate opportunity of considering them. There is, however, one word which I should like to say in support of what was said by my noble Friend the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) with reference to the manufacturing establishments of the Navy. You may make all the reforms in administration which you please, and yet you will not get what you have a right to expect unless you take in hand vigorously the reform of the tools which you give your servants to carry out their work with. I venture to say that no one can go round Her Majesty's Dockyards without being amazed at the antediluvian character of a vast deal of the machinery which is given to those in the Dockyards who have to carry out the programme decided upon. There is a great deal of machinery which ought to be ruthlessly swept out; and I can conceive nothing more unsatisfactory than the mode in which, at the annual visitation of the Lords of the Admiralty to the Yards, the question of what machinery is wanted and what buildings are wanted is settled. It is taken for granted that so long as the sum which was voted the previous year is not exceeded in the demands of the year that is to come, everything is all right; but, Sir, to my mind, that is a fatal and a most costly process. Anyone who goes round the private Yards will see that as little as possible is spent upon buildings and as much as possible upon machinery; anyone going round Her Majesty's Dockyards will see that the reverse is the case—that as much as possible is spent upon buildings and as little as possible upon machinery. I do no not care how flimsy your buildings are so long as you have fine machinery—machinery brought up to the present day. A person who inspects some of our greatest Shipbuilding Yards cannot but be struck with the flimsy character of the buildings and the splendour of the machinery. I remember saying, in one of the principal Yards—"Dear me, what a very light structure you have got for all this splendid machinery." "Yes," said the owner—"That is the principle we adopt. We put up a very light building. We never know what we may have to do. We may have to pull down the building. We may find it in an inconvenient position, and we may want to move it to another place. But we think it absolutely essential to have the best machinery that can be obtained." As I have said before, it seems to me the direct contrary is the case in Her Majesty's Dockyards. Now, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leith (Mr. Jacks) gave us one or two illustrations, by way of comparison, of the cost of building in Her Majesty's Dockyards and the cost of building in private Yards, and he said that the Returns which were presented to Parliament were of no value whatever. If the hon. Gentleman was speaking of the form of Estimates which have been presented to Parliament hitherto, I should feel very much inclined to believe him, for I am certain that anyone taking up the Estimates of previous years would be utterly unable to make head or tail of them, unless he possessed a great deal of technical knowledge and a considerable amount of special education. But, Sir, I hope that the hon. Gentleman will alter his mind when he studies the Estimates of the present year. He said he had only just received the Report of the Committees with reference to administration. I hope he has only just taken up the Estimates, and that he has not had time to look at them, because I should be extremely sorry and very much disappointed if his observations had been based upon the Estimates of the present year. He will find, and the Committee will find, in the Estimates of this year every possible kind of information which will enable the Committee to make comparisons, or to learn whatever they wish to learn in regard to the naval expenditure.

MR. JACKS (Leith, &c.): May I ask if in the Estimates comparisons are made between the cost of labour and material in the Royal Yards and private Yards?

MR. RITCHIE: It is perfectly impossible for the Admiralty to adopt forms of Estimates giving the cost of labour and material in private Yards. What we have done in the present Estimates is to make a clear distinction between the labour and material on every ship that is being built, so that all the hon. Gentleman has to do is to look at the Estimates, and if he desires information about any particular ship, he will see, in separate columns, the labour and the material which have been spent on that ship, and the labour and material which it is proposed to expend on that ship in the current year. I presume I should be somewhat out of Order if I were to go into further details in connection with the Estimates; and, therefore, I will content myself by saying that our endeavour, with reference to these Estimates, has been to present in an intelligible form the progress which has been made, and the progress which it is proposed to make, during the ensuing year. Something was said by my hon. Friend the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) in reference to the amount which is to be expended during the next year upon guns and ammunition. I do not propose to go into details in reference to this subject; but I do desire to emphasize some remarks which have been made by my noble and gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) upon the point. My noble and gallant Friend spoke of the extremely unsatisfactory position of things, as between the Admiralty and the War Office, with reference to the armaments and ammunition supplied to the Navy. I entirely agree with the noble and gallant Lord. I think that the present condition of things, by which the War Office undertakes to supply the Admiralty with the guns which they require, is anything but satisfactory. My own belief, and I think it is a common-sense view, is that the Admiralty, which is responsible for the building and equipping and fitting of a ship, ought to be responsible for everything in connection with the ship. They ought to be able to bear upon their own Estimates the cost of all the guns and ammunition which they require, and they should be at liberty to go to the cheapest and the best markets in order to obtain their guns and ammunition. If Woolwich can supply them more cheaply, or as cheaply, and as good, and as quickly as any other people, then by all means employ Woolwich; but if it cannot, then let them be at liberty to go elsewhere. There is no doubt that, although there are many reasons why ships are delayed in the process of building, they are frequently delayed by the difficulty in obtaining their armaments. When we left the Admiralty negotiations were going on with a view of placing this matter on a satisfactory footing; and I trust those negotiations will proceed, and that in a short time the Navy will be able to have the money for her own guns and ammunition on her own Estimates, and will be able to provide her armaments more expeditiously. I am afraid, Sir, that in some cases I have approached very near to the limits of the debate which you have drawn; but I will not trespass longer upon the attention of the Committee.

What one has to say on these matters is naturally of an extremely discursive character. In conclusion, I will say that there does not seem to be from any quarter of the Committee any strong opposition to the programme which the Admiralty have resolved to adopt. I myself regret very much indeed that they did not see their way to enlarge their programme somewhat; but I know that circumstances at present are extremely depressing, and that the difficulty of obtaining money from the Treasury must be very great. For my own part, I am sufficiently unorthodox to agree with my noble Friend the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) in the proposal which he advocated the other evening. I do not think that it is a very advisable thing either to suspend the payment of the National Debt or to issue Terminable Annuities; but my opinion is it is the lesser of the two evils. If ships are wanted, if increased expenditure is necessary in order to bring the Navy up to an efficient condition, it is a much lesser evil to raise the requisite money by means of Terminable Annuities than to leave the Navy in an inefficient state. All we should do would be to pay 3 per cent for the money of which we obtained an advance; and I venture to say the advantage we would obtain by having our Navy in an efficient and strong condition is worth 10 times the 3 per cent we should have to pay. But that is a matter I do not wish to dwell upon. I can only express my personal thanks to my right hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) for the extremely kind and courteous, and, indeed, handsome manner in which he has spoken with reference to the action which has been taken on several questions by the late Board of Admiralty, and for having so loyally set himself, as I know he has, to carry out the programme which was left behind by the late Board.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. HIBBERT): I do not know whether we have arrived at the time when we may be allowed to take the Vote — [Admiral FIELD: No, certainly, we have not]—but I think the time has arrived when I may reply to the observations which have been made by several hon. Members. First of all, I may say that I do not feel at all dissatisfied with the discussion which has taken place upon the Estimates which are now before the Committee. Of course, there has been, very naturally, a considerable amount of criticism. The great part of it—the greatest part of it —has been of a friendly character, and where it has been otherwise we must, of course, try to make the best of it, and see whether we can do anything in future to carry out the views of those who do not agree with our proposals. Well, I should like to say a word, in the first place, in reply to the remarks of my hon. Friend the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie) as to the Navy being free to purchase their guns in the best market. I entirely agree with him. The noble and gallant Lord's (Lord Charles Beresford's) case is, I think, that if you do not confine the Navy to obtain its guns from one particular place, like the Woolwich Arsenal, it would probably have a much better chance of improving its armaments and of availing itself of new inventions. It is quite obvious that the Navy would profit very largely by being at liberty to go where it liked than if it were confined within the four walls, so to speak, of a Government Department. Then I also entirely agree with my hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) as to the necessity of getting rid of all obsolete machinery in our Dockyards. I did not touch upon that in my original statement—I meant to have done so, but I thought my observations were getting too extended. I may, however, say now, that since I have been at the Admiralty I have tried to ascertain what the amount is which will enable us to get rid of the really obsolete machinery in the different Yards. I find that the expense is really not of so very serious a character as one would have thought; and therefore I think that, before another year comes round, either we, or some other Government which may be at the Admiralty, will be able to undertake the abolition of the obsolete machinery. As far as I can ascertain, the total amount required in addition to what is being provided this year—for we are providing this year no less a sum than £70,000 for the purchase of new machines—is not much more than £70,000, the greater part of which would have to be expended at the Chatham Yard. Now, my hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) has said a great deal in favour of the programme of his own Board, and I extremely regret that we were not in a position to carry out that programme. I believe that if we could have carried their programme out it would have made our proposals almost perfect; but we felt we could not adopt it. Then he asked me how it is that we can obtain money to carry out the proposal to build eight gunboats? We shall obtain our money probably in the same way that they have taken money for vessels which they commenced during the time they were in Office—they obtained it from savings, and from using moneys which could be adapted for the purpose. Probably we may be in the same fortunate position they were in; and if we are in that position we shall feel it our duty, and shall make the attempt, to lay down something like six or eight gunboats. Then, again, my hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) asked me how it is that we get rid of the £250,000 upon our Estimates for contract work? We thought the amount placed in the Estimates for contract work was excessive, and we asked that it should be revised, at the same time saying that we had no desire in any way to curtail or postpone the contract work. After going into the matter carefully and fully, we were assured it would be possible to reduce the amount put down for contract work by something like £200,000 or £250,000. Supposing the worst came to the worst, and the work goes on so rapidly that more money will be required than we have put down in our Estimate, why should we be more afraid of coming to the House and asking for money in a Suplementary Estimate than the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) and my hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie) were? I do not see why, if the money is earned and if it is desirable that these vessels should be built and delivered at as early a period as possible, we should not face the House of Commons and ask for the money that is required. But I do not suppose we shall be in that position. I trust we shall not —at least, I do not know which I hope for most. Personally, I shall be quite prepared to take a courageous course and ask the House for the money if it is earned. Now I should like to say something upon the Store Vote, because I have not referred to it hitherto. My hon. Friend the Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) put a question to me in respect to torpedoes. I stated in my first speech that we were short of 1,463. Of that number we shall have 683 ready at the end of December next, being 780 to be provided for. As to this 780, we have arranged that from Woolwich we shall receive 230 annually, and we have also arranged with a firm at Armley, near Leeds—Greenwood, Batley & Co. —that they shall produce this year 80 instead of 20. That gives us 310, which leaves 470 to be obtained in the best way we can. As I have said before, we do not wish to go abroad for these things, but desire to keep the work in our own hands. I do not think there would be any difficulty in providing money for them next year. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Sir John Gorst) asked if any steps had been taken to redress the grievances of the warrant officers? In replying to the hon. and learned Gentleman, I wish to reply also to the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Buckingham (Captain Verney), who also referred to the question, which is one in which I know he takes great interest. I may say that up to the present time nothing has been done in the way of carrying out the promotion such as was contemplated by the Order in Council to which reference has been made. But I quite agree with those hon. Members who have mentioned the question that it does seem rather singular that we should have an Order in Council providing and allowing for promotion of these officers in the way which this Order does, and that no case should have been fully carried out. Nor can I say what justification there is for withholding promotion from men who hold the position of warrant officers in the Navy and granting it to men in the position of non-commissioned officers in the Army. It is said there are social reasons in the way. If such reasons do exist they will, of course, be discovered when the time comes to attempt to make any promotion. I do not suppose that any promotion has ever been attempted; but I have to say in reply to the remarks that have been made that my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Marquess of Ripon) is prepared to consider the question with the view of seeing how far he can make this Order a workable Order, and thus promote an improvement in the position of a very deserving class of men. A question has also been asked me in regard to the engine-room artificers. No doubt these men have a grievance, and I am sure the First Lord of the Admiralty will be perfectly prepared to consider any grievance which is brought before him. I must, however, say this, that the pay of the engine-room artificers is so exceedingly good that I do not think there is any probability of any increase in it being made. I do not know whether it is that their grievance is in respect to pay or pension. ["Pension."] Of course, there is no difficulty in getting any number of first-class engine-room artificers at the rate of pay given, and that makes it difficult to consider the subject. At the same time, I think that if there are any grievances affecting a large and valuable class of men such as the engine-room artificers which can be removed it is very desirable they should be removed, and the present Board will be quite prepared to take the matter into consideration and see whether anything can be done. Now with respect to the stokers. They have also, I believe, grievances, but I am not prepared to say that anything can be done to redress them. Only a short time ago the rank of chief stoker was created, and pay at the rate of 2*s.* 8*d.* a-day granted. Besides, there is to be some new arrangement with respect to gunnery and torpedo practice which will give additional advantages to this class, enabling them to obtain extra pay. Then, again, with regard to what was said by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) as to the large number of non-combatants carried in every vessel, I may say that the stokers and engine-room artificers will in future be trained in the use of the cutlass and pistol, and thus made available for really defensive work if it should be necessary to call upon them to do such work. Those, I think, are the principal questions which have been asked me in the course of the discussion; and I can only say that any other inquiries which hon. Gentlemen have to make will receive the attention of the Department which I have the honour to represent.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): Sir, I am sorry that I have the privilege of following, instead of preceding, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty. I think I must say that it would have been a little more courteous on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, when he knew that there were other Navy men who desired to speak—["No, no!"]—to have waited a short time longer before he rose. Hon. Gentlemen say "No!" but that is my opinion. I do not wish to take up the time of the Committee at any undue length. My object in rising is to draw attention to one or two points of importance and to obtain an answer upon them, and not to go into any discussion, of which, perhaps, there has been too much already. We have had an interesting speech from the late First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), and I think it would have been courteous to naval men if the late Secretary to the Admiralty had waited for an opportunity of answering some questions. Upon this Vote I wish to draw attention to the question of wages to petty officers and seamen, and to point out the invidious distinction which exists between different branches of the Service. There are some officers, perhaps, who think it a wise distinction; but there are a great many who are of a different opinion, and the invidious distinction I refer to is felt by the Coastguardsmen, whom it affects deeply. I ask that to-night it should receive the attention of the official Representative of the Admiralty on the Treasury Bench. The representations of the men in question upon this subject were approved by the Duke of Edinburgh, and forwarded by him to the Board of Admiralty. Well, Sir, the question I refer to is that of the Coastguard men not receiving the extra 2*d.* a-day in common with others in the Service who receive it after 10 years' service on re-engagement. There never was before any such distinction in the Service, and I cannot but think it unwise and regrettable that such an invidious distinction should be made now between those who serve ashore and afloat. Although the Coastguardsmen are not serving afloat, it must be borne in mind that they are the salt of the Service, and the best part of your Naval Reserve.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out that the Coastguard Service is provided for in Vote 4.

ADMIRAL FIELD: Mr. Chairman, I bow to your decision, of course; but I must try to deal with this question in another way. There is an invidious distinction between a portion of the Service afloat, and another portion of it which serves on shore. ["Order!"] Well, I will not press the point now.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): Mr. Courtney, I rise to Order. Is it not the case that the wages of the Coastguard are provided under Vote 1?

THE CHAIRMAN: I believe that the wages are included within Vote 1.

ADMIRAL FIELD: I am always very careful in endeavouring to avoid being called to Order. I was under the impression that I was right in dealing with this question under the present Vote, and I am glad to find that impression confirmed by the reply of the Chairman to the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport. I will proceed with this subject. The further complaint of the Coastguardsmen is, that when they are required to go for their month's cruise they are not allowed to draw this paltry 2*d.* a-day. That is their grievance, and I repeat that it is an unwise and invidious distinction to make between them and other branches of the Service. The grievance has been pressed by the former Head of the Coastguard Service, the Duke of Edinburgh, and the claim approved by the then Board of Admiralty. Under these circumstances, I trust that there is very little difficulty in the way of its receiving the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty and the present Board. There is another matter to which I desire to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee in connection with the Egyptian Nile Expedition, and the Naval Contingent which served in that Expedition. Captain Boardman, of the Royal Navy, was one of the officers who served in that Contingent, and for one year was in charge of the line of communication; he had men and officers under him. I say nothing as to the way in which he did his duty; but everyone knows that he did his duty well. Captain Boardman served in the Naval Contingent, and he was borne on the books of his ship at Malta; but I find that he is not allowed to count sea time for his service in Egypt. Well, Sir, I beg to tell the right hon. Gentleman who represents the Board of Admiralty that the Service is not satisfied with that Rule, and that they hope that the officers in question will be granted the right to count the time during which they were engaged on this hard and hazardous service. The other officer, whom I may now name because he is not present, was the noble and gallant Lord the popular Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford). He served in the Nile Expedition. If there is one man in the Naval Service of whom the Service is proud, it is that of the noble and gallant Lord whom I have mentioned. Everyone knows how that gallant Officer crossed the Desert; how he took his steamer up to Khartoum, and how, with a shot in her boiler, he repaired the damage under the enemy's fire; and now we are told that all that brilliant service is to count as harbour time. I say it is an insult to that Officer, and to the Service, that he should be so treated, and I believe the Committee will sympathize with me when I say that if the Rules do not allow these two officers to count the time spent by them in Egypt as sea time, it is the bounden duty of the Government to change the Rule. And I remind them that on a former occasion they found no difficulty in making an Order which brought about a great change in the constitution of the Admiralty. I hope I have said enough on this subject to convince the Government of the desirability of giving it their prompt attention, and that the Committee will perceive that I had a good reason for rising. Allusion has been made by the hon. Member opposite to certain grievances felt by the corps of Marines, and the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone also referred to the subject. We are all proud of that Corps, and we feel it has been very hardly treated in respect of its great service at Suakin, where they had to bear hard knocks with very little glory attached to them. A great many men were lost in garrisoning that place; but that is a fault which is not ours; it lies at the door of the Military Authorities. The next subject I wish to refer to is the subject of guns. It has been said that the present system is not economical, and that another system ought to be adopted instead of that under which the guns for the Navy are supplied by the War Department. After the remarks that have fallen from the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie), I am bound to say that I am sorry that when the late Government were in power they did not remedy the evil complained of. I always take a great interest in the utterances of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed), who is a warm friend of our Service, and whose opinions are so well formed upon this subject, that I have much pleasure in quoting him. The hon. Gentleman said, on the 20th of April last, that the Admiralty groaned under the delay of getting guns; that they should insist upon having them, and that he was sure the House would back up the Admiralty in freeing itself from the system under which the Navy of this country was made dependent on the routine of getting its guns made at Woolwich. Well, Sir, I would ask, will the hon. Member for Cardiff back up the Admiralty in getting rid of the present system? I think the hon. Gentleman and the Secretary to the Admiralty should have no trouble now in meeting this difficulty, and I can assure them that naval officers on this side of the House will support any action which they may take to bring about the desired result. The next subject I desire to touch upon is that of Dockyard accommodation for vessels on foreign stations, the importance of which will be understood by every Member of the Committee, although we have not heard much about it to-night. A little time ago, when the Bombay Flagship required some repairs, she had to leave the station to go to Malta. I may perhaps state that in Bombay Harbour there was a Dockyard containing four docks. At the time I speak of an Estimate was sent home for the purpose of getting permission to throw the two docks into one. All that was wanted for the work was £80,000; but the permission was not given, and, as I have said, the ship had to go to Malta. To show the advantage of having a dock on foreign stations when vessels are cruising about, I may refer to what happened at Bermuda. One of the vessels of the Squadron of Exercise damaged her screw and could not afterwards work her engines; permission was obtained to send the ship to Bermuda, which was accordingly done, and the defect remedied; but if it had not been for the dock at Bermuda the Squadron would have been hampered in every way. Therefore, I wish to draw attention to a subject that so vitally concerns the efficiency of our ships on foreign stations. Now, I intended to enter into a new subject, but will refrain from doing so now; I will merely say that it was hardly fair, after the Chairman of Committees had cautioned an hon. Member who went very near without crossing the border line of Order, that the late Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Ritchie) should have been allowed to speak on the subject. Sir, we have a rod in pickle for him and the noble Lord, and it will be in the shape of a discussion on naval matters. A former First Lord of the Admiralty, the Member for East Edinburgh, says, that while anxious for the efficient administration of naval affairs, it was of the utmost importance that "we should not do anything which would lead naval men to think that their views in these matters are entirely ignored." That is the very charge we bring against the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) and his Colleague—that they did ignore the views of naval men when it was of great importance that the efficiency of the Navy should be secured. Although I recognize the ability of the late Secretary to the Admiralty, especially when he is dealing with the question of sugar, I must confess that I have never had the same admiration for his speeches when he is dealing with "salts;" and I can tell the noble Lord that there are no two men who have done more to wound naval opinion and naval feeling than himself and his Colleague, since the day when they occupied the positions of First Lord and Secretary to the Admiralty. I venture to say, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had presided at the Admiralty, nothing of the kind would have taken place, and that there are men of great distinction in our Service who, if they had been consulted, would have given an opinion very different from that which has been expressed to-night. Sir, I conclude my remarks upon this Vote by expressing a hope that I have justified the statement with which I commenced—that I did not rise without having something of importance to say.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I desire to say one word before this Vote is taken with respect to what has fallen from the late Secretary to the Admiralty—that no strong protest against the increased naval expenditure has come from any part of the House. At least

I offer my protest. There is only one redeeming thing which we learn from the discussion which has taken place, and that is that the Naval Estimates are £540,000 less than they would have been but for the fortunate change of Government. Every increase of naval expenditure has been sought to be justified by referring to the examples of France and Italy; but I may point out that there are items of comparison which have been omitted. One is, that that the deficit in France, created by such extravagance of warlike preparation, has involved the contracting of a new loan, stated at £70,000,000 sterling; and the other is, that, as the best criticisms represent it, the state of Italian finance is one of chronic disorder, because naval officers have been allowed to say that money should be spent without stint, and without saying where that money is to be earned.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £964,400, Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines.

Sir JOHN GORST (Chatham): I wish to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department as to whether the amount of money that has been granted is not sufficient for the Public Service? I would remind the Committee that a Vote once granted can be used by the Admiralty as a provision for all other Votes. It is, in fact, a Vote of Credit; and the sum of money now obtained from the Committee—in round numbers £3,000,000—is sufficient to enable the Admiralty to conduct its business until the end of July. I think we ought to have a pledge from Her Majesty's Government, that if this Vote is obtained before the Committee report Progress, further application will not be deferred until the end of July or the beginning of August, when Members interested in the question of Admiralty administration have left, and when it is impossible to have matters discussed in the way they should be discussed. This question of the Dockyards is a very important one, and it will eventually excite a great amount of interest in the House, and it is one which I think the Secretary to the Admiralty ought to see is fully debated. Therefore, I ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, the present Leader of the House, whether an undertaking can be given that if another Vote is taken before the Committee reports Progress, the House shall have an ample and early opportunity of discussion?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Childers) (Edinburgh, S.): The inquiry of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham is not an unreasonable one. We will inform him when the Navy Estimates will be taken.

Sir JOHN COMMERELL (Southampton): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the large number of condemnations which have taken place in provisions and clothing during the past year? Is the right hon. Gentleman also aware that an officer of tried experience was appointed by the late Government to inspect the ship and victualling accounts, with an allowance of £100 a-year, and that since the advent of the present Government that officer, without any reason, has been displaced and his remuneration disallowed?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. Duff) (Banffshire): I shall be happy to receive a communication from the hon. and gallant Admiral on the subject, and to entertain, as far as possible, anything he has to say on the matter.

Vote *agreed to.*

CIVIL SERVICES.

(3.) £3,403,400, Vote on Account, Civil Services and Revenue Departments, viz.:—

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

Great Britain :—	£
Dover Harbour	200
Peterhead Harbour	5,000
Rates on Government Property (Great Britain and Ireland)	80,000
Metropolitan Fire Brigade	2,500
Disturnpiked and Main Roads (England and Wales)	10,000
Disturnpiked Roads (Scotland) ..	5,000
Ireland :—	
Public Buildings	30,000
Royal University Buildings	2,000
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin ..	2,000
Abroad :—	
Lighthouses Abroad	1,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings ..	6,000

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

England :—	£
House of Lords, Offices	6,000
House of Commons, Offices	6,000
Treasury, including Parliamentary Counsel	10,000
Home Office and Subordinate Departments	15,000
Foreign Office	10,000
Colonial Office	6,000
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	7,000
Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments	20,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	100
Charity Commission (including Endowed Schools Department) ..	7,000
Civil Service Commission	6,000
Exchequer and Audit Department ..	9,000
Friendly Societies, Registry ..	1,500
Land Commission for England ..	4,000
Local Government Board	40,000
Lunacy Commission	2,000
Mint (including Coinage)	20,000
National Debt Office	2,500
Patent Office	9,000
Paymaster General's Office	4,500
Public Works Loan Commission ..	1,500
Record Office	4,000
Registrar General's Office	8,000
Stationery Office and Printing ..	90,000
Woods, Forests, &c. Office of ..	4,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	8,000
Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid	10,000
Secret Service	10,000

Scotland :—	
Secretary for Scotland	1,500
Exchequer and other Offices ..	500
Fishery Board	2,500
Lunacy Commission	1,000
Registrar General's Office	1,000
Board of Supervision	3,000

Ireland :—	
Lord Lieutenant's Household ..	1,000
Chief Secretary's Office	6,500
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	300
Local Government Board	20,000
Public Works Office	10,000
Record Office	1,000
Registrar General's Office	3,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey ..	4,500

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

England :—	£
Law Charges	14,000
Criminal Prosecutions	30,000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	70,000
Wreck Commission	2,500
County Courts	20,000
Land Registry	1,000
Revising Barristers, England ..	- -
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	2,500
Metropolitan Police	150,000
Special Police	6,000
County and Borough Police, Great Britain	1,000
Convict Establishments in England and the Colonies	60,000
Prisons, England	60,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	70,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	5,000

Scotland :—	
Lord Advocate, and Criminal Proceedings	10,000
Courts of Law and Justice	5,000
Register House Departments ..	6,000
Police, Counties and Burghs (Scotland)	1,000
Prisons, Scotland	15,000

Ireland :—	
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	15,000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	15,000
Court of Bankruptcy	1,500
Admiralty Court Registry	200
Registry of Deeds	3,000
Registry of Judgments	500
Land Commission	10,000
County Court Officers, &c.	15,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts)	30,000
Constabulary	250,000
Prisons, Ireland	25,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools ..	25,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum ..	1,500

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

England :—	
Public Education	600,000
Science and Art Department ..	50,000
British Museum	25,000
National Gallery	1,000
National Portrait Gallery	600
Learned Societies, &c.	6,000
London University	2,000
University Colleges, Wales	- -
Deep Sea Exploring Expedition (Report)	1,000

Scotland :—	
Public Education	130,000
Universities, &c.	2,000
National Gallery	400

Ireland :—	
Public Education	160,000
Teachers' Pension Office	500
Endowed Schools Commissioners ..	200
National Gallery	300
Queen's Colleges	500
Royal Irish Academy	100

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

Diplomatic Services	50,000
Consular Services	40,000
Slave Trade Services	2,000
Suez Canal (British Directors) ...	400
Colonies, Grants in Aid	5,000
South Africa and St. Helena ...	10,000
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies ...	10,000
Cyprus, Grant in Aid	- -

Class VI.—Non-Effective and Charitable Services.

	£
Superannuation and Retired Allowances	120,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	1,000
Pauper Lunatics, England	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	60,000
Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland ...	4,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency	- -
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain	500
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland	600

Class VII.—Miscellaneous.

Temporary Commissions	6,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	3,000
Total for Civil Services	£2,733,400

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	100,000
Post Office	100,000
Post Office Packet Service	20,000
Post Office Telegraphs	350,000
	£670,000
Grand Total	£3,403,400

Mr. MACFARLANE (Argyll): I desire to call attention to the want of sufficient polling places in Scotch counties, and particularly in Argyllshire, at the last Election. I should be glad to postpone the discussion of this matter if the Government will give me an assurance that the question will not become one of practical interest within the present year. In October last I had occasion to call public attention, through the columns of *The Times* newspaper, to the question of polling places in Scotland, and especially in Argyllshire, in which I was then particularly interested. I also wrote to the Duke of Richmond, who was then Secretary for Scotland, and I pointed out to His Grace that in the Island of Tiree there were 156 voters and no polling place; that the polling place was in the Island of Mull, 23 miles distant by open sea, and that there was no accommodation for reaching that place except by fishing boats, and no accommodation if detained by stress of weather or other causes. The result was that the people were partially disfranchised in good weather, and absolutely disfranchised in bad weather. The case of the Island of Coll, where there were 80 voters, was all but identical, the polling place being 18 miles distant from Tobermory, in Mull, and the inconvenience was doubled by the appointment of two polling places for these two Islands in place of one, which might have been reached by one vessel. The people of these Islands petitioned in vain to the Sheriff of Argyllshire; but the Sheriff of Argyllshire refused to grant to 156 voters on one Island and 80 on another a common polling place, and the result was that a large portion of the voters were absolutely disfranchised, only about 70 voters from Tiree incurring the risk of going to the poll. In England it is the rule that where there are 100 voters it is compulsory to provide a polling place within three miles. But I have pointed out that in the case of Tiree the distance is 23 miles by open sea, and, in my letter to *The Times*, that it was like calling upon the electors of, say, Calais, to record their votes in Dover, and that they should be required to come over no matter what the weather was. That is what happened in this case, and the result was that a great many of them were disfranchised. In support of what I say I will quote the testimony of a newspaper, which is not supposed to be in favour of the opinion of these people. That paper stated that the *Hebridean*, which was the vessel I engaged, encountered very stormy weather, and the result was that I should be deprived of considerable support, as Tiree was noted for its strongly disaffected feeling. I should like to call attention for one moment to the word "disaffected." In England that word was taken to mean disloyalty to the Crown; but in Scotland it meant disloyalty to *The Scotsman* newspaper. I brought this matter before His Grace the Duke of Richmond. The next point I called His Grace's attention to was the case of another Island where there were 136 voters, and where the polling place was 25 miles distant. In the case of the Island of Jura, the voters of the North end had to go a distance of 40 or 50 miles to vote at Port Ellen. I think that is sufficient to show the system under which the spirit of the law is administered in Scotland. In his reply to me, I understood His Grace the Duke of Richmond to mean that he would make a representation to the Sheriff of Argyll, who, in conjunction with the late Lord

Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), was responsible for the arrangement. I have no doubt His Grace did so; but there was no change, and I am curious to hear from the right hon. and learned Gentleman what excuse he can possibly offer for practically disfranchising the people to a great extent. The people believe it was done designedly, and I hope the right hon. and learned Gentleman will be able to persuade the Committee that it was done accidentally. I grant there were difficulties. I do not think it is possible to administer the law in Scotland as it is administered in England, where each 100 voters are bound to be supplied with a polling place not more than three miles distant; but there is a wide difference between that and voters having to go 40 or 50 miles. Not only in England, but in Scotland, when Gentlemen become public servants, they are apt to assume to themselves the airs of public masters, and there is no class that err more in this respect than Scotch Sheriffs. They believe that they are above the law. They are a law unto themselves. They do as they please. They despise the Representatives of the people; and while both political Parties of the country were contending for the honour of giving the people the right of voting, the Sheriffs were doing all they could to prevent them going to the poll. In Argyllshire, out of 10,000 electors less than 7,000 recorded their vote, and there was open jubilation on the part of my opponents in Argyllshire, because the tempestuous weather prevented a number of my supporters from coming to the poll. One boat was actually swamped in leaving one of the Islands; but 90 electors from the same place were plucky enough to defy the elements, and came to record their votes in spite of all the efforts of the Sheriff of Argyllshire, aided by the late Lord Advocate. It may be said why should you like more polling places when they cost so much? The charge for each was £35 to £50; but I would rather pay for more polling places, even at a cost of £50, than that the people should be disfranchised. In England the law lays down a hard-and-fast line. I believe that the maximum that can be charged for a polling place is £7 7*s.*, but that does not suit those who are called the economical Party in Scotland. It does not suit the cliques in Edinburgh who profit by these transactions. There is a charge of £5 5*s.* a-day for a certain number of gentlemen who travel from Edinburgh on an excursion to become Returning Officers, when there were local men who would have been glad to do the work for £1 1*s.* each. I appeal now, first of all, to the late Lord Advocate to explain how these things come about, and I would appeal to the present Lord Advocate, who has the power to remedy this state of things before another election. It must be remembered that most of these voters are not young people, a large proportion of them are feeble people; but they are asked to tramp 30 or 40 miles to record their votes. How many people in London would tramp from Bow to Hammersmith to record their votes? There would be very few who would have pluck enough. What has been done in Scotland is this—a large percentage of the people have not been allowed to vote in consequence of the arrangements of the right hon. and learned Gentleman and the Sheriff. One other charge I have to make against the Sheriff of Argyllshire. By the Ballot Act it is the universal custom to allow candidates, on the day when the votes are counted, to be represented by as many, or nearly as many, agents as there are counters. ["Hear, hear!"] I am glad to hear that "Hear, hear!" because it confirms me in my belief as to the practice. Well, what happened in Argyllshire? I gave written permission to three gentlemen to attend on my behalf to scrutinize the action of 20 counters, and the Sheriff of Argyllshire, without the slightest hesitation, rejected two and allowed me one, because the other side had not demanded more than one. But why should they? Because all the counters were on their side, as was also the Sheriff. I got only one, but he was sufficient. Now, Sir, I complain of these things, and I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, for whom I have the greatest possible respect, to explain them. I charge the Sheriff of Argyllshire publicly and deliberately in this House with having done everything in his power by every possible means to defeat the Franchise Bill, and I ask the present Lord Advocate to make such arrangements for the future—whether it is in May or June, or five years hence—that we shall not be prevented by local efforts from obtaining a fair representation of the people.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I have no reason to complain of the hon. Gentleman having raised this question, because the style and manner in which he has spoken of me and the Sheriff of Argyllshire in this House corresponds with the way in which he has spoken of us elsewhere, and which has appeared in the Press, and I therefore think it is desirable that we should have an opportunity of making some remarks upon the subject. But I think the opportunity on my part would be very much abused if I adopted the same tone and the same kind of language as the hon. Gentleman has used in this House. It is not a very usual thing to make such charges as those the hon. Member has brought forward against the Sheriff of Argyllshire by mere verbal statements; and I cannot help thinking that if the hon. Gentleman had not disaffected constituents, as he has told us himself, he would not have thought it worth while to use such language as he has used to-night about a gentleman, whom, I venture to say in the presence of several hon. Gentlemen who know him well, that there is not a more honourable, more faithful, or more thorough gentleman than Mr. Irvine, the Sheriff of Argyllshire. I go further, and say that I am able to state to this House, I hope to the satisfaction of the hon. Member who has just addressed the Committee—a statement which I make upon my honour as a Gentleman—that in all my conversations and correspondence with Mr. Irvine on this question of the settlement of the polling places of Argyllshire, I never saw one single trace of Party spirit, or a single desire on his part to do anything but what he thought best under all the circumstances of the case. I am also aware that the hon. Gentleman has on more than one occasion expressed a very emphatic opinion as to my conduct, and as to my being actuated by the same motives which he now, in the absence of the Sheriff of Argyllshire, attributes to him; but I certainly think the Committee will excuse me from making any reply to any such statements. If the hon. Member, from the very slight acquaintance he has of me, believes me capable of such conduct, it would be vain on my part to attempt to disabuse his mind of that opinion. I think I shall best fulfil my duty to-night by getting away from these personal allusions and aspersions. One thing I may say—I am sure the House will congratulate the hon. Member upon the fact that the corruption practised against him has not prevented his taking his seat in Parliament; and I think I may also venture to say that it is not from any fear of the future position of the polling places in Argyllshire that he has made this statement. I thank the hon. Member for bringing forward the matter thus publicly, and in a manner so that it can be publicly replied too. I think it will be instructive to the Committee to know the difficulties of the Lord Advocate when certain duties are thrust upon him. This I can say—that the accusations which the hon. Member has made in regard to his county are exactly the opposite to those which have been made in regard to other counties similarly situated. In some counties, such as Ross-shire, where the voters were very scattered, the charge made against the Lord Advocate and the Sheriff was that they were corruptly using their position by appointing far too many polling places, for the purpose of placing expense upon the candidate. So that we have a double difficulty. In one place we are accused of appointing too many polling places, and in another too few. I will give the Committee an idea of the kind of arguments that are adduced against us. As the Committee is aware, in the county of Ross-shire there are a great number of illiterate voters, so far as voting on English forms with English instructions is concerned; and, therefore, without having a great many polling places, it would have been impossible to poll all the inhabitants. The accusations which are made against us, therefore, are based upon the most absurd ground. Then, again, I would refer for a moment to a more populous, to a more civilized locality, where the Sheriff, who happens to belong to the Conservative Party, and myself were accused of the grossest corruption at Whitewich, near Patrick, for which my hon. and learned Friend sits, but who has not brought the matter forward. We were accused of purposely not having laid down a polling place there, because it was said that the Tories were anxious, if it was a wet day, that the Liberal voters of Whitewich might have to go a mile or a mile and a-half to the polling place. Well, Sir, it so happened that I had a number of petitions, on the part of the Conservatives of Whitewich, requesting that a polling place should be put down there. I also had a petition from the Liberals; but neither of them were acceded to. The fact was, I was unable to interfere, because the petitions did not reach me until after the time fixed by the Statute. That was the sole difficulty, and these were the sort of difficulties we had to face. But not only so, even as regards the case of Argyllshire, I can assure the hon. Member that if it had not been that the Sheriff and myself stretched a point to keep the matter open rather beyond the statutory time, we should not have been able to make some of the alterations which we did make. If we had desired to do what the hon. Member imputes to us, we might have taken our stand on this—that the representations came in too late, and that the thing could not be altered. Now I may state what I hinted at the time the representations came to the Secretary for Scotland in this matter. I ask the Committee to observe this—that the letters which the hon. Member wrote to the papers were not inserted until the time had come for holding the Registration Courts; and at that time it was quite impossible to alter the arrangements without disorganizing the whole of the plans for the election.

Mr. MACFARLANE: May I correct the right hon. and learned Gentleman? After my first letter appeared in *The Times*, two new polling places were added.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I can assure the hon. Member that he is entirely mistaken. It may have come to the hon. Member's knowledge afterwards; but the deliverance by which the polling places were added was a deliverance given before the letter appeared. I can assure him that that is a fact. I refer to my own note on the matter, as it was written down without expecting that this question would come up before Parliament at all. Perhaps I may be allowed to read it—

> "The arrangement of polling places in these outlying districts is very difficult, and Mr. Irvine and I have done our best. Polling cannot be easy where a number of small Islands are concerned. If polling places are multiplied the result to candidates becomes expensive, and in other parts of the West Highlands the Sheriff and I have been severely abused for appointing too many stations, and thereby increasing expense."

The Committee will see, perhaps, the difficulty of our position. To refer to actual facts. So far as investigations are concerned, I myself saw reports from all sorts of officials in Argyllshire offering their opinions as to the best arrangements that could be made. I do not for a moment suggest that the work that we carried out was perfection. It was unlikely that it would be perfection, for there were many difficulties to be considered and many facts to be taken into account that the hon. Member does not understand. There was one difficulty above all others as regards the Island of Tiree and the Island of Coll. The hon. Member has especially referred to the matter. If a polling station had been established on them, and that stormy weather of which the hon. Member spoke as making it so difficult for voters to reach the main Island for the purpose of voting, had occurred, it would have rendered it impossible for the Presiding Officer to land. If he had not been able to do so at the proper time, it would have made the whole election null and void. We had to take it into serious contemplation whether it was better to put some 150 voters to some of these inconveniences, which it is absolutely impossible to prevent in such districts as Argyllshire, and which contain scattered Islands exposed to the Atlantic, or risk the chance of rendering the election null and void. We knew perfectly well that the voters could reach the Island of Mull if the weather permitted, and we did not lose sight of the fact that the rendering of the election void would have thrown all the expense of another contest upon the shoulders of the candidates. As regards Tiree and Coll, we divided them, so as to give as best we could the result of having a reasonable number of voters in each polling place, by sending the voters of one place to Mull and the voters of the other to Tobermory. We made the best divisions we could. I do not say it was the perfection of arrangements; but I do say, and I hope the hon. Member will try to believe me, that it was honestly done in the best interest of the carrying out of the election. Nothing that we have heard to-night has satisfied me that I was not right in the decision I took in the matter; and nothing I have heard has convinced me that, unless I had acted from corrupt motives, which I cannot realize to myself, I did not come to a right decision. Reference has been made to a place called Easdale and a place called Luing; and it is complained that the voters from Easdale were asked to vote at a place called Kilmelfort. Well, it is true that to follow the main road from Easdale to Kilmelfort, involves a journey of a considerable number of miles; but there is a very good bridle path, by which it takes only eight or nine miles to perform the journey. I am informed that that is so by people who know the district as well as the hon. Member; indeed, I venture to doubt whether the hon. Member has ever been in that district. If he has, I stand corrected. My information comes from the constable of the district. Then take the case of the inhabitants of Luing; they had only to go six or seven miles by land-locked water to record their votes. But if the people of Easdale had had a polling station near them, the people of Craiguish and Capel would have had to go 30 miles to vote. The Committee will see that, in a broken-up place like that, all you can do is to endeavour to get something like a central place as a polling station. No doubt most people who had to go a number of miles to vote would complain, and for selfish motives would desire to have a polling place near to them, regardless of the convenience of the inhabitants of other districts. It is plain, I say, that if the people the hon. Gentleman has referred to had had a polling station near them, other people would have been obliged to go 30 miles to vote.

Mr. MACFARLANE: Why did you not have two polling stations?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The hon. Member says why did we not have two polling stations. But I would ask how many voters does he mean to put to each?

Mr. MACFARLANE: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has quite misunderstood my argument. There are 325 voters in the parish in which Easdale is situated; and what I claim is that a voting place should be allowed to these 325 voters, and that does not seem unreasonable.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: If there had been a voting place for every 325 voters in the county, I do not think the hon. Member would be quite so comfortable in purse as he is at the present time. Then, again, it is all very well for these places to claim to be treated in the best possible way; but as it was, we increased the number of polling places from 14 to 24.

Mr. MACFARLANE: 20.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: 24.

Mr. MACFARLANE: 20.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I think the hon. Member, after the accusations he has made, might allow those on the other side to speak. Being in Committee, the hon. Member will have an opportunity to reply. With regard to Jura and Portaskaig, I am not very well prepared on that matter. If my recollection serves me aright, the great fact in connection with that incident was that there was no place that could be got suitable for a polling station, and that there were no workmen and materials to be got to knock up a booth; but so careful was I in that matter, that, before it was finally settled, I made inquiries to see if it was possible to get the desired accommodation. It was only after making that inquiry, and considering the matter most carefully, that our ultimate arrangements were made. Turning back for one moment to the original charge, I beg to point out again the position in which we were placed, with a General Election coming on and taking place under an entirely new franchise. I will suggest to the Committee and to the hon. Member, if he will allow me, that it would have been better if, on the first occasion on which efforts have been made to carry out an Act of Parliament of this kind, there had been a little more charity and belief that the officials intended to act honestly in this matter, and if the hon. Member and his Friends, whatever they might have thought privately, had tried to believe that we have endeavoured to do our best. If this had been the attitude of the hon. Member and his Friends, there might, perhaps, have been less difficulty in coming to an adjustment, and in, to a great extent, improving the arrangements we made. But, surely, it is not the way to deal with a subject of this kind in a Committee like this—to accuse the Sheriffs of Scotland of endeavouring to take up the position of public masters.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Breakers of the law as well.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: If hon. Gentlemen adhere to that statement, I beg to give it the most emphatic contradiction that is consistent with the Rules of this Committee; and I venture to say that hon. Members will not get any number of respectable inhabitants in Scotland, or Members of this House, to join with them in saying that the Sheriffs do not act honourably, and do not do their duty faithfully and honestly. I desire to treat this matter good humouredly, as regards myself; but, as regards men whom we honour and respect —[Dr. Clark: No!]— well, there is one inhabitant of Scotland who does not honour and respect them, and who thinks it is a worthy thing to say it in this House, and before this Committee. But knowing these men, and knowing that they are respected in Scotland, I repudiate altogether for them the suggestions hurled at them by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway; and I say that accusations like this should not be made, except on the strongest grounds, and supported by the most clear and distinct evidence. [Mr. Macfarlane: Hear, hear!] I say, that if matters of this kind are to be brought up in this way, there is no protection for honourable men in the carrying out of their duties. If such accusations are to be permitted, and such general aspersions are to be hurled by hon. Members, there is no protection for officials. Let the hon. Member make a real, straightforward, *boná fide* written accusation to the Secretary of State, and let it be fully examined. Do not let us have the honourable Sheriffs of Scotland accused and maligned in a manner which I do not use too strong an expression if I describe as disgraceful.

Mr. MACFARLANE: I am sorry that the right hon. and learned Gentleman has taken up the question in the manner he has. He has called on me to make my charge in the form of a written statement. Well, the very first step I took was to make a written statement to the Duke of Richmond. [Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald: Yes; in a letter to the newspapers.] No; in a letter to the then Secretary for Scotland, and the Duke of Richmond stated, in reply, that if my facts were correct—and they have not been refuted—has the right hon. and learned Gentleman refuted one of them? No, not one; he has wandered all over the world, but has never touched the gist of the whole matter. He has said they did the best they could; but he has never explained why they could not have done better. He says they could not find wood enough at Jura to make a polling booth. Was it not possible to import wood to Portaskaig, and make a polling booth there, so that when people landed they would not have had to go 12 or 14 miles further before they could vote? There has been no answer to my charge. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says—"Formulate your chage in black and white." I did so, to the highest authority in Scotland, and that highest authority, as I understand his letter, assured me that he would make representation to the Sheriff. But we have not heard what that representation was. I asked the right hon. and learned Gentleman the present Lord Advocate if he would lay the correspondence on the Table; but he refused to do so. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate has not said a word as to the nature of the representation made by the Duke of Richmond to himself and the Sheriff of Argyllshire in this matter. Why not? I have no doubt that the noble Duke did what he thought was right, and called on his subordinate officials to carry out what he thought to be justice; but they did not, and that, I suppose, is the reason we are refused a sight of the letter of the noble Duke. I ask those who have listened to this argument, so far as it has gone, passionate on the one side and cool and collected on the other—I ask this Committee to say if there has been one tittle, one pretence, one shadow of an answer made to the charges I have brought against these officials?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) (Clackmannan, &c.): As an appeal has been made to me, I will say a few words in reply to it. If the hon. Member refers primarily to the future, I need not say that if experience in the future should prove that there is any remediable inconvenience, it will be always open for anyone to make a representation, and have it most carefully considered; and I am perfectly certain that every Sheriff in Scotland will be most ready and willing to give it a fair and dispassionate and careful consideration. I can only say, as regards the general allegation which has been made, that I entirely concur in what has been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) on this matter. Having had to carry on the administration in regard to electoral matters for some years in Scotland, I have been put into communication with the Sheriffs on these as well as on other matters; and I can say, from experience, that without exception these gentlemen have taken a great deal of pains with the view to solving, if possible, the difficult problem of appointing a sufficient number of polling places, without unduly heaping up the expense. They have endeavoured to collect the best opinions and information and evidence they could from the localities, and have submitted schemes, and have tried to meet justice as well as convenience. I am certain, though I have not the actual official duty of carrying out the arrangements in Argyllshire, that that is exactly the spirit which is manifested there. I regret extremely that it has been thought necessary to make such a charge as this against the Sheriff of that county—to charge him with having acted for Party purposes. No one who knows him, as I have had the privilege of doing for years past, can have heard these charges without experiencing a feeling of something like rising indignation, and no one having the ability to do so would decline to get up and repudiate it in the strongest manner. Any representation for advancing the interest and convenience of electors will, I am sure, be as carefully considered by this gentleman in the future as it has been in the past. I have no knowledge of the representations which may have been made to the late Secretary for Scotland; but, so far as I know, I can only say that they did not contain a charge against anyone, but were merely representations bearing upon the number of polling places. That was the only matter which had to be considered, and I suppose it was considered so far as the statutory time would allow, though I rather think that October had then arrived. As regards the future, I can only repeat that any representation will be carefully considered. I know that some of the Sheriffs did remark upon the great difficulty they had experienced in consequence of their desire not to unnecessarily multiply polling places, inasmuch as complaints were made to them that the expense of unduly extending the number of booths would be intolerable. I hope we shall be able to remove these difficulties—or some of them—by legislation. With regard to Returning Officers' expenses, I think that in so far as by legislation or administration the cost can be kept within reasonable bounds, and at the same time the opportunity given to the largest number of voters to vote, it will be done.

DR. R. M'DONALD (Ross and Cromarty): If the Committee will listen to me for a few moments, I have an entirely different complaint to make against the authorities for the manner in which they managed the polling places in Scotland. My complaint is that I had a great deal more polling places than I wanted, the result being to make the election more expensive than it ought to have been; whereas the complaint of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Argyllshire (Mr. Macfarlane) is that in his district of scattered Islands there were not sufficient polling places, the lack of them causing the candidates to employ steamers in order to carry the voters from the Islands to the mainland. We have been told by the late Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) that he did the best that in him lay to make the polling places as reasonable as possible. Well, in Argyllshire, with its 10,000 electors, we have 14 polling places, whilst in Ross-shire, which is 6,000 acres less in extent, and which has 9,000 electors—1,000 fewer than Argyllshire—there are 39 polling places. We sent representations to the authorities at Edinburgh—to the Secretary for Scotland for the time being—and all the reply we got was that two places were taken from a little town called Stornoway, about a mile long, for which three booths had been arranged. So far as I can see, the late Lord Advocate has not dealt with the facts of the case. It was with the greatest difficulty that we got the slight reduction I am referring to; and I want to know on what ground can the late Lord Advocate say he did his best, when we see there were provided for 10,000 voters 14 polling places, and for 9,000 voters 39 polling places? And these are facts which cannot be gainsaid. Another point has been taken up, and it is one which I maintain it is important to urge. Instead of having local people put on as polling Sheriffs in the Island of Lewis, they came from Edinburgh. They had to start from there on Monday, and could not get back until the Monday following. They had £3 3*s.* a-day each, and their clerks £1 1*s.*, and all their expenses. There are men in the district who look after school board and other elections, and who are quite capable of conducting a Parliamentary election. It would be infinitely better to employ them than to employ gentlemen who run up a bill—as happened in one case—of £35 each. I object to the employment of briefless barristers in Edinburgh for this work; it is a mistake from beginning to end. I lay these facts before the Committee. They are not to be gainsaid, and I must say I think the Committee ought to see that in these matters we are not left to Lord Advocates or anyone else. A proper scheme of polling places should be drawn up so that we can get justice all round.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): If there is a feeling of lawlessness and disaffection in the Highlands of Scotland, some of us think that those who have caused it are not the agitators, but the men who represent law and order—the Sheriffs of the counties who break the law with impunity. I will not take up the time of the Committee to-night with a description of the various illegal acts of the Sheriffs; but, were I to do so, I could prove to you by a plain statement of fact that thousands of crofters and cottars have been disfranchised owing to the action of the Sheriffs. I will, however, point out in my own case two or three absolutely illegal acts performed by the Sheriff of my own county, who is probably one of the best of the Sheriffs. Hon. Gentlemen are aware that under the Ballot Act candidates have a right to be present to see the counting of the ballots. Well, in the case of my own election, I went to the Sheriff's Court to see the ballots counted, and was refused admission. I looked at the Act again and went back, saw the sergeant of police, and told him I had a right by Act of Parliament to see the thing done. I demanded that he should bring the Sheriff—I declared that unless he brought the Sheriff I would force my way in. The Sheriff was brought, and in my presence he ordered the policeman to keep me out. Here was an illegal act committed by the representative of the Crown, and I call the attention of the Lord Advocate to it. But, more than this, according to the Corrupt Practices Act, if a candidate pays an account after a certain date he commits an illegal act; and yet this Sheriff wishes to compel me to pay an account after that specified date. I cannot comply with his demand, for I should be breaking the law; but the Sheriff has £50 of mine in his hands, and I allow him to keep that rather than do what is illegal. There is no Schedule in the Act applying to Scotland, as there is in the case of Ireland and England, by which 1*s.* per mile is charged for carrying the ballot boxes. The Sheriff Clerk, therefore, charged me 10*s.* per mile. I thought this a preposterous charge, and desired to have it taxed; but the Sheriff tells me I cannot have it taxed. I will give the Committee another instance before sitting down. The night before the polling my agent sent down a man to act as a polling clerk at a distance of 13 miles from a chief town. He did not get him to sign the usual form. He charged me £22 for going down to act as my polling clerk. The matter came before the Sheriff Clerk, who allowed this polling clerk £4 4*s.* a-day, while the Act only allows polling Sheriffs £3 3*s.*, and polling clerks £1 1*s.* This is the kind of justice we get in the Highlands, and yet you expect us to fall down and worship these Sheriffs—men who commit illegal acts with impunity. The wonder is that, under the circumstances, the Highlanders have been so law-abiding as they have been for so long a time. As no reply has been given to the complaints of my hon. Friend (Mr. Macfarlane), I trust he will divide the Committee.

Mr. MACFARLANE (Argyll): I have waited patiently, expecting to receive some assurance from the present Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) that he would do what he could to redress the wrongs of which I complained, done under the late Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald); but, instead of that——

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): If I did not say, I meant to say, that if there is any representation or suggestion made, it will be considered most fully.

Mr. MACFARLANE: What I complain of is that, in many cases, the Scottish officials require to be told what their duties are. Are they not aware of the necessities of these counties? The late Lord Advocate said the case was not presented to them until it was too late to interfere. Did it not occur to the Government that they had better consider the question before representations were made to them? The same remark applies to the present Lord Advocate. This seems to have been made an occasion for the present and late Lord Advocates to compliment each other across the Table upon the excellent arrangements that they have made, and upon their being two honourable men. I do not dispute that they are honourable men; but I say they may be mistaken. In consequence of the completely unsatisfactory answer of the present Lord Advocate, who, if my eyes had been shut, I should have thought when he was speaking he was sitting on the Tory Benches, I shall divide the Committee upon this question.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): In dividing the Committee, does the hon. Gentleman mean to refuse the entire £3,000,000? I would suggest that the hon. Member should move to reduce the Vote by the amount of the salary of the Lord Advocate. If he were to do so, I should certainly vote with him.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.): It is quite clear that if the Government would give some fair and satisfactory promise to the hon. Member (Mr. Macfarlane), this matter might be settled. As we all know, there is a scale upon which we in England are charged for our polling places. There is no such scale in Scotland, and that is an obvious grievance. Again, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macfarlane) has shown that there are cases in which men have to travel 25 and 30 miles in order to record their votes. That, also, is an acknowledged grievance. Then it has been shown that men have, at the risk of their lives, had to cross stormy seas; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) said the Sheriff could not go over, as it might have been risky for him.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I said nothing of the kind. I said it so happened it was so stormy that no one could land from the steamer; the weather prevented a landing taking place.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID: The right hon. Gentleman said it was risky for the Officer to land from the steamer.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman does not know the coast of Argyllshire?

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID: Yes; I do.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Then he must know it is not a question of risk, but of absolute impossibility.

Sir JULIAN GOLDSMID: If it is a matter of absolute impossibility for the Sheriff to cross this sea, it ought also to be a matter of absolute impossibility for the voter. That is all the greater reason why the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macfarlane) was right in asking for additional polling stations. I trust that Her Majesty's Government will give a more satisfactory answer to hon. Members, and thus avoid a division.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) (Clackmannan, &c.): The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken cannot have been present the other day, when, in answer to a Question in this House, I stated that we were preparing to legislate on the question of Returning Officers' expenses. To that part of the the matter we are fully alive. In regard to the rest, I am afraid I have not succeeded in making myself plain. I shall make the very best effort I can to investigate the representations that have been made to-night, and any others that are in any shape or form made.

Mr. MACFARLANE: The last statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman is quite satisfactory.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Mr. Courtney, in this Vote on Account there is a small item for an Office in Dublin called the Registrar General's Office, Ireland. I have placed on the Paper, in regard to the ordinary Estimates, a Notice to reduce the sum for this Office by £200. My purpose in rising now is to obtain from the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley), or, if not from him, from the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler), an assurance that the scheme for the reorganization of that Office will not be definitely adopted until the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has had an opportunity of really examining the merits of the case. In reply to a Question I put some days ago, the right hon. Gentleman intimated that the proposed scheme had received the sanction of the Treasury, but that it had not been finally adopted; and I understood him to say that he was prepared to consider the question. But if that consideration is not given before the 1st of April next—that is to say, in about 10 or 11 days—the scheme will be in active operation, and it will be too late to interfere with it. The Estimate for the Office is not likely to come on until considerably after that date, and then it will be almost too late to raise the question at all. I should like, especially as there is sufficient money in hand to carry on the Office, that the operation of the scheme should be delayed until we can upon the ordinary Civil Service Estimates thrash the question out. I should not make this application unless I did not believe—and my belief is shared by almost all the Members from Ireland, whether they sit above or below the Gangway—if I did not believe that the very greatest injustice will be done to a considerable number of men by the proposed scheme of reorganization. I trust the Government will be willing to postpone the adoption of the scheme until its merits have been laid before the House.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The scheme has not come before the Treasury yet.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Oh, yes; it has received the Treasury's sanction.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I thought it was still awaiting the decision of the Treasury. If it has received the sanction of the Treasury, I apprehend there will be no difficulty in carrying it out. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary is not here. ["Yes."] Then I will leave the matter in his hands.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I was not in the House when the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor) made his statement; but I think we shall be perfectly ready to postpone the operation of the scheme until there is some chance of considering it.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) £595 12*s.* 1*d.*, Civil Services Excesses, viz.:—

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
New Courts of Justice and Offices ..	16	8	1

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Registrar General's Offices, Scotland	1	10	11

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Supreme Court of Judicature, Ireland	178	17	1
Dublin Metropolitan Police ..	398	16	0
Total	£595	12	1

(5.) £38,119 10*s.*, Navy Excess.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Postponed Resolution [11th March] *considered.*

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £62,216, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens."

Resolved, That the postponed Resolution reported from the Committee of Supply on the 11th March be re-committed to the said Committee.

Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY again *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in addition to the sum of £62,216 already granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, the sum of £50,403 be granted, making together the sum of £112,619."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Mr. Courtney, are we to have any statement upon this proposal from the Secretary to the Treasury?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I am prepared to give an explanation if my hon. Friend wishes it. I understood that the statement which was made by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), who I am sorry has been compelled to leave the House, was very clear, and that it was agreeable to, and accepted by, my hon. Friend (Mr. Labouchere). The statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was this—that he proposed that the House should vote for this year the entire amount set down for Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds, and that the Government should bring in a Bill for the transfer of the Parks other than the Royal Parks to the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Board of Works. That Bill is now in course of preparation, and will be brought in by my right hon. Friend (Sir William Harcourt) as soon as he can find an opportunity to do so. In pursuance of that arrangement, which seemed to meet with general consent in the House, I am now moving the completion of the Vote for this year.

MR. LABOUCHERE: That is as satisfactory an arrangement as can be come to. I merely want to point out that we were called perfect idiots for opposing this Vote, and we were told that we did not know our business. It seems that we did know our business, because, if we have not got the whole thing, we have got some of it. I do not quite agree with my hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) as to the Royal Parks; still I know there is a difficulty about them, and I think we must be satisfied if we get any portion of the expenses of the London Parks thrown on the rates of the Metropolis. But we have now to consider this Vote. On the last occasion that the Vote was before the Committee I gave Notice of two Amendments. I was not able to put the second Amendment, because of the way the first was put to the Committee. Now that the Vote has been re-committed, I shall take the liberty of moving my second Amendment. I have to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £2,150, which is made up of several items. The Bailiff of the Royal Parks receives annually £780. I have not the slightest idea who the Bailiff of the Royal Parks is; but the £780 is composed of two items—namely, salary £700, and £80 for travelling expenses—I presume between Richmond, Greenwich, and London. There is set down for the Ranger of Richmond Park, £109 10*s*., and for the Deputy Ranger, £63 10*s*. I observe that the Ranger and Deputy Ranger are military officers of high rank receiving pay from Army funds. Very likely they are very valuable as military officers; but the probability is that they know absolutely nothing about the Parks, and that the offices they hold are purely and simply sinecures. Well, now, I ask the Committee to allow me to say one word in regard to Richmond Park. I happen to know a little about the Park, because I am sometimes in the neighbourhood. We find, in the first place, that the Department of the Ranger of Richmond Park costs us £1,643, of which £711 is put down for salaries, and that is one of the items I object to. Then, we have in Richmond Park two keepers. Many hon. Members have keepers of their own; but they will hardly credit that the country pays two keepers £358 a-year, besides allowing them house accommodation. At Hampton Court Park there is a keeper who receives £150 a-year, and at Bushey Park a keeper to whom £200 a-year is paid. I reduce all these gentlemen to the sum of £100 per annum, although I have no doubt that my hon. Friends around me will say I am too generous even now. I find we have a keeper at Greenwich Park for £100 per annum; and although I should say that most probably these keepers are not necessary, if we can get a keeper at Greenwich Park for £100, it is very evident we are foolish to pay £358 for two keepers at Richmond Park. It is these small amounts which swell the Estimates. Now, besides the salaries of the Ranger, Deputy Ranger, head keeper, and under keeper, £2,036 is set down for the maintenance of Richmond Park, and £1,643 for the Department of the Ranger. I presume that Richmond Park must be somewhere about 1,500 acres in extent. Hon. Gentlemen know perfectly well that a park of 1,500, or even of 2,000, acres ought not to cost £4,350 and bring in nothing. I will tell the Committee why Richmond Park costs so much. It is that the Ranger, an eminent Gentleman—the Duke of Cambridge, in fact—makes the Park a shooting preserve for himself. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood are disgusted with what goes on in the Park. The place is full of rabbits and pheasants. The game is reared for the amusement of the Duke of Cambridge, and what happens? A poor man goes through the Park. I consider a poor man has a natural right when he sees a rabbit to take it. Now, who would think it reasonable to throw such temptations in the way of people, close to the Metropolis, in a populous neighbourhood like that of Richmond Park? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen laughed; but if there were rabbits in Hyde Park, for instance, it is well known that the people would not scruple to take them. I ask the Committee to remember that these Parks are the people's Parks; they are there for the people, and not for eminent Noblemen to turn them into game preserves for themselves. Then, again, Hampton Court Park is included in this Estimate; and I have learned something about the foals, about which I complained on a former occasion. It appears that Hampton Court Park is about 500 or 600 acres in extent, and that almost the entire Park is devoted to the maintenance of these foals. The foals, I believe, belong to the Crown; and they are sold for the benefit of the Crown. There is a house there which is inhabited by one of the Royal Equerries for a month or two of the year, and for its maintenance we are charged four hundred and odd pounds. I hope the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler), or whoever the matter concerns, will look into the case, and will, for the benefit of the people in the neighbourhood, see that Hampton Court Park is thrown open to the public. A person is told that he may, by applying and paying a sovereign every year, have a key to admit him to the Park. If you want to have your horses there have them by all means; but do not exclude human beings, who do not pay £1 a-year, from the enjoyment of the Park. I have mentioned the items on which I shall ask the Committee to divide. I do not think any human being can defend these items. Nobody can say that an eminent Military Officer ought to have a sinecure office worth £700 a-year, with £80 travelling expenses, that we ought to pay a Ranger of Richmond Park £109, and a Deputy Ranger £63, or that we ought to pay two keepers £358 a-year, in order that the Park may be converted into a mere preserve of game. I beg to move that this Vote be reduced by £2,150.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in addition to the sum of £62,216 already granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, the reduced sum of £48,253 be granted, making together the sum of £110,469."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The explanation that I have to give to my hon. Friend is shortly this. The salary of the Ranger of Richmond Park is, as he stated, £109 a-year; but the Ranger of Richmond Park is also the Ranger of the St. James's, Green, and Hyde Parks, and he receives no remuneration whatever in the latter capacity. The game in Richmond Park is preserved at the private expense of the Ranger, who himself pays for the rearing and feeding of the pheasants. With reference to the Bailiff of the Royal Parks, I have to say that this officer was appointed in pursuance of the recommendations of a Committee of Inquiry. His salary was originally fixed at £400 a-year; but subsequently it was increased to £700, in lieu of the officer's civil and military pay and allowances. The office is not a sinecure. Prior to 1880 there was a second Bailiff, at a salary of £160. The Treasury exercise a very strict supervision as to the number of men employed in the Department of the Ranger; and, having regard to the duties the men perform, the Treasury do not consider that the sum asked for is excessive. The only other point to which my hon. Friend referred was that concerning Hampton Court Park. I may inform him that the whole of the Park at Hampton Court was not surrendered to the country under the Civil List Act, and the enjoyment of the Park has always been regarded as a privilege of the residents in Hampton Court Palace.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I do not quite understand what the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) means by the Park not being surrendered under the Civil List Act. There never has been any surrender under any of the Civil List Acts. The first Civil List was granted to William III. for life, the second was granted to Anne for life, the third was granted to George I. for life, and the fourth was granted to George II. for life. In the Civil List Act of George III. words were introduced as if implying that some surrender was made, but of no specific properties and having no real value. The grants in each case have been to the Monarch for life, and there has been no surrender whatever.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): The amount of money involved in the maintenance of the Parks is a very small matter; but there is another aspect of the case, which I think ought to receive the attention of the Government, and that is the very large areas within such places as Richmond Park from which the public are excluded. The inclosures form a very large proportion of the Parks; and, as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has said, they are virtually game preserves for a very small privileged circle. It is perfectly true, as the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has said, that the pheasants are now fed at the expense of the Ranger, or, in other words, at the expense of the Duke of Cambridge; but I recollect that three or four years ago it required a debate of nearly two hours to induce the House to knock off, as it did on my Motion, the sum of £75 for the feeding of the pheasants in Richmond Park. As at that time the pheasants fed at the public expense covered a large portion of ground which ought to have been devoted to public recreation, I trust, now that the pheasants are fed at the expense of His Royal Highness, or somebody else, the people are not to be equally excluded. I say that this is a very much more important part of the question than the mere consideration of expense; and I think we have some right to a reply from the Government that some steps will be taken to obtain for the people free admission to the whole area of the Parks.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): The passing of the Vote would not preclude the raising of the question with regard to the Royal Parks on an early occasion. The Royal Parks in London are for the enjoyment of the London people, and the cost of their maintenance should be cast on the London rates; and while the Government have met the demand of the House to a certain extent, it will be necessary to relieve the country from a charge which manifestly belongs to the Metropolis alone.

MR. MOULTON (Clapham): I strongly object to any proposal which throws upon the Metropolitan Board of Works the maintenance of the London Parks, without requiring the City to bear in all respects its share of the expense of maintaining them.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): The hon. and learned Gentleman is perfectly incorrect as to the position of the City with relation to the maintenance of the Parks. It pays more than its proportion would be under the Board of Works.

MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury under what authority the Duke of Cambridge takes a portion of a public Park, paid for by the people of the country, and reserve it to himself as proprietor for the purpose of game preserving? I want an answer to that question, which is a very simple one.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: I think the hon. Member for King's County has raised a very large question. This Park has not been taken from the public; it has never belonged to the public. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members say "Oh, oh!" but it is as I state. The Park has for hundreds of years been Royal property. The House will see that that is going into the whole question of Crown lands, and that it cannot be competent to deal with that question on this Vote. What the Treasury have to do is to submit to the law as it finds it. The Treasury are carrying out the arrangement made with the Crown when the present Sovereign came to the Throne, and the provisions of the Act of 1870, under which provision was made for the maintenance of the Parks.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 65; Noes 141: Majority 76.—(Div. List, No. 37.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES BILL.

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

[BILL 120.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

SIR ROBERT PEEL (Blackburn): Before you leave the Chair, Sir, I would put it to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is not possible to postpone this Bill? I withdrew the block to the Bill, of course, thinking the right hon. Gentleman would bring it forward at a reasonable time.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): I do not know whether I could correctly answer the question of the right hon. Baronet as to its being possible to postpone the Bill; but I do hope we shall be able to go on with it to-night.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Childers.*)

SIR ROBERT PEEL: I must appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary as to whether he will still persevere with the Bill at this hour of the morning? I am very loth to trespass on the time of the House. It is a Bill of very considerable importance. I have received from various parts of the country representations urging upon me to oppose a partial Bill of this kind, which does not even extend to the whole area of the Metropolis. I do not see my right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary (Sir R. Assheton Cross) in his place, who told me that he was compelled to be absent when the Bill would come forward, but that I might say that he disapproved of the Bill, and that he thought it was one which ought not to have been brought forward at all. There are many hon. Members who disapprove of the Bill, and among them the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen)—who I do not see now—told me the other night that I might state that he represented a large Provincial town which was opposed to this partial legislation, which was of a character certainly not suitable to a Liberal Government. I do not want to prolong the discussion now, because in Committee—if we get into Committee—we shall have abundant opportunities of discussing the Bill. There is one thing affecting the Metropolis—the Preamble of the Bill does not state the case as it really is. It says it is a Bill for payment of compensation for damages in the Metropolis. Now, I understand that it is a provision for West End tradesmen receiving compensation for damages which occurred in a riot, owing to the scandalous mismanagement of the police. I do not want to debar them from compensation; but I want to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary that this Bill which he says is for the Metropolis is of a very partial character indeed. I want to see it made general. I have in my hand the reply which the right hon. Gentleman gave to the hon. and gallant Member for North Lambeth (Major General Fraser). The hon. and gallant Member for North Lambeth asked the Home Secretary whether he would not be prepared to include the district of North Lambeth in the measure for compensation for damages which occurred as the result of the riots which took place? But the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary informed him that he could not possibly extend the provisions of the Compensation Bill beyond the tradesmen of the West End. Now, I think that this is a very unfair Metropolitan Compensation Bill. I also hold in my hand a letter addressed to me by a tradesman in North Lambeth. It will be in the recollection of the House that after the disturbance of the 8th of February there were disturbances at various times up to the 21st of February. Let the House bear in mind that the question of compensation opens the whole question of police arrangements in relation to the riots which occurred, and we are perfectly in Order in discussing that question. The police drove the riotous people across Westminster Bridge into Lambeth, and the property of several tradesmen were injured. One of the poor tradesmen wrote to the Home Office, and I have here the reply which he received from the Home Office. I ask hon. Gentlemen whether it is possible to believe that in dealing with compensation for damages in the Metropolis at a time of riot that they should exclude North Lambeth and include Westminster? The reply of the Home Secretary was as follows:—

> "With reference to your letter, asking for compensation for damage done on the 21st ultimo, I am desired by the Secretary of State to inform you that it is impossible that special legislation should be undertaken to provide for every case of individual hardship, and each occurrence must, as a rule, be left to be dealt with by ordinary law."

Now, ordinary law does not deal with the question at all. I contend that the Act of 7 & 8 *Geo.* IV., c. 31, is of that character that it does not apply to these cases of momentary ebullition. In the case of country towns you cannot recover, because the Chief Constable of the district is obsolete, and you are thrown on the Common Law. I believe there are some trials going on, and it has been found impossible to recover unless where fire has been put to a building, or unless some bricks have been pulled out of a house with a view to commit a felonious act. I believe I am correct in stating that. Well, Sir, in reference to this letter of the poor tradesman in North Lambeth, I ask the right hon. Gentleman to make the Bill applicable to the whole Metropolis. I have here other letters, two of which I ask permission to read. One of them is from a person in Yorkshire, and the other from the Town Clerk of the borough which I have the honour to represent. The former says—

> "Allow me to thank you for drawing the attention of the Government to the unsatisfactory state of the law with respect to damages done by rioting, and to the unfair and unjust proceeding of the Home Secretary in compensating sufferers in London, and not doing the same for those who suffer under similar circumstances in the Provinces. There was a great deal of rioting here and in the neighbouring towns at the last Parliamentary Election, and much damage done. We feel our losses very keenly, and I would ask you, on behalf of myself and others, to do your best to alter the law as to future damage and that recently done, so that we may not feel that Parliament has less consideration for us than for London tradesmen."

I must say that that is a very fair letter. The letter from the Town Clerk of Blackburn puts the case in a way which I am sure will satisfy the House that the partial legislation of the Home Secretary is such as not to satisfy the country at this moment. The Town Clerk of Blackburn says—

> "The more we think of this Bill for the relief of the sufferers by the late riot, the more unfair the proposal appears to the general community."

That is the point which I take up. He continues—

> "The principle of past legislation is evidently unsound. In 1878, when riots took place in Blackburn, an enormous amount of damage was done and great loss inflicted on the shopkeepers and millowners, and compensation was only recovered in cases in which the rioters had used fire and pulled out some bricks. It was held that in all other cases there was only intention maliciously to damage, and that the latter class was not covered by the Statute. If the law were amended and made of general application it would have a tendency to prevent riot, because the hand of every ratepayer would be against the rioters. Let there be compensation by all means, but let the law apply to the whole community."

I think that fairly puts the case. I am sorry to have occupied the time of the House as often as I have done on two or three occasions in presenting this matter, in which I have, of course, no personal interest. I only stand here because I think that the proposed legislation of the Home Secretary is very illiberal. I recollect reading the Act of 1827. There had been riots throughout the country; and when the Tory Government of the day were asked to legislate in a partial manner for the Metropolis or Provincial towns, they declined to entertain the proposal, and brought in a Bill covering the general area of the country. This is what I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to do now. I ask him to give the House an assurance that he will introduce a Bill dealing with the Provinces—York, Nottingham, Blackburn, and many other places I could name—which are subject to momentary ebullitions of feeling on the part of the population of those Provincial towns, and have no means of recovering compensation on such occasions. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider what I have submitted to him, and kindly to give me an assurance that he will, as representing the Government, introduce a Bill to amend the Act of the 7 & 8 *Geo.* IV., c. 31, in such a way as to make it applicable to the circumstances of the country at the present moment, and that he will be good enough also to make the present Bill extend to the case of the tradesmen of North Lambeth, who have a perfect right to compensation. These riots were due to the unfortunate mismanagement on the part of the police; and I appeal to him to make this Bill applicable to the Metropolis generally, and not tax the ratepayers in North Lambeth without giving them compensation. But I understand that representations have been made to the police by wealthy proprietors and others asking for compensation which the Home Secretary denies to the people of North Lambeth; and this, I say, is not fair. All I ask of the right hon. Gentleman is to deal with the whole of this subject in a general and comprehensive measure.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): I will, in the first instance, refer to that part of the right hon. Baronet's speech in which he asks me to say what the Government propose to do in regard to this matter for the whole country. I do not think my right hon. Friend is quite accurate in regard to the history of the general subject. The general Act, which requires amendment, is not an Act of George IV., but one of the Reign of Edward III., which was supposed to provide compensation in case of damage done by riots. The fact is, however, that that Act was found to be altogether unworkable; for instance, it cannot be applied except when it can be shown than an effort has been made to entirely destroy the house or premises in question. The failure of that Act led me to consider, with the Legal Advisers of the Government, whether it would be possible to recast that Act, and make it applicable to the circumstances of the present time. Well, Sir, my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) has worked with me in the matter, and I may give my right hon. Friend opposite (Sir Robert Peel) this assurance—that great progress has been made with the amending Bill, and I hope that within a week or two I may be able to introduce it. But I may point out that there are a great many difficulties connected with the question. The subject is by no means an easy one when we come to deal with small towns and villages. I cannot postpone this Bill, which is very urgently required, until the general Act is ripe for introduction; but I will give this assurance, however—that I will, as early as possible, bring in such a general Bill as I think will be satisfactory both to the right hon. Gentleman and to the House. Then my right hon. Friend asks me why this Bill should apply to some places in the West End and not to North Lambeth? Well, I can only say that this Bill was brought in to deal with a particular state of things which occurred on the 8th of February, and which were of an exceptional character; whereas, in regard to what occurred on the 21st of February, there was really nothing but the damaging of a few windows. There was nothing, in fact, that could be called a riot, and nothing which would justify us in calling upon the Hundreds to contribute towards the damage. But the riot on the 8th was a very serious riot, and, as we think, justified us in bringing in this Bill. I cannot undertake to extend the provisions of this Bill, or the provisions of any other Bill, to such small occurrences as those to which glass to the value of only a few shillings, or even a few pounds, is broken. It is impossible that this Act or any other Act can apply to such occurrences as that; it can only apply, as I said before, to occasions on which something like a serious riot has occurred. No delay whatever shall take place in introducing the general measure that I have mentioned. I pledge my word to that. Some points have been very difficult to deal with, and, therefore, the Bill cannot be introduced immediately; and, under these circumstances, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will allow this Bill to go into Committee.

MR. BAGGALLAY (Lambeth, Brixton): The House will bear in mind that the proposal of the Bill is to charge the whole of this compensation upon the rates of the Metropolis; and Lambeth and the whole of South London will have to pay its part of the damage that was done in the West End only. Now, let me remind the House of what the burdens are in South London already. We have the parishes of Camberwell, Newington, Lambeth, and Southwark in the South of London, and these are four of the poorest parishes in the Metropolis; whilst in the neighbourhood where these occurrences took place we find the wealthy parishes of Paddington, St. James's, Westminster, St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields; so that the ratepayers of South London—the poor districts of Lambeth, Newington, and Southwark, where the rates are half as much again as they are in the West End—are asked to contribute to the damage which was done in the West End; but no offer is made by the West End to contribute towards the damage that was done in South London on the 21st of February. I must remind the House also that South London took no part whatever in the riots which occurred on the 8th of February. The people of South London are a law-abiding people. Throughout the whole of the General Election there was nothing approaching a disturbance or a riot. I venture to say, moreover, that the cause of the riot on the 8th of February in no way arose in South London; the damage was not done in South London; and I ask, therefore, why South London should be called upon to pay the cost of it? I do not think that South London should be called upon to pay for damage in which it took no part whatever. The House will not forget that without this Bill the law does not give any compensation whatever, and that we are being asked to grant compensation in a special case. I contend that this Bill is founded on a wrong principle altogether. I shall be very glad to see the West End tradesmen compensated for the damage they sustained; but let their neighbours in the West End pay for it. Let the principle of the Act of George IV. be carried into effect, and do not extend the area over which the compensation is to be levied. The Act of George IV. provided that the compensation should be levied on the Hundreds, so that it should fall upon the neighbourhood where the riots occurred. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to relieve in some manner the ratepayers of South London from the charge which he proposes to put upon them. I hope he will, in Committee, make such alterations in the Bill as will enable the rate to be levied solely upon the West End.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottingham, S.): We have had a general promise of the introduction of a general measure; but if that measure is not retrospective it will give no relief to Nottingham, Blackburn, and other places where riots have occurred. It may be said that retrospective legislation is objectionable; but, in that case, I would point out that the measure at present before the House is essentially a retrospective one. In Nottingham, at present, there are as many as 200 claims for compensation awaiting decision, because of the legal difficulties involved. The Corporation of Nottingham are willing to pay the claims; but the difficulty arises from the state of the law. I hope, therefore, that we shall not merely have a general measure, as promised, dealing with the future; but that we shall find that it deals out equal justice, and treats the Provincial towns where riots have occurred in the same way as it is now proposed to treat a portion of London.

Sir JOHN RAMSDEN (York, W.R., Osgoldcross): I wish, Sir, to add my appeal to that of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. On the day of election a riot occurred in the constituency I have the honour to represent. By that riot there were many sufferers, and I know that among those sufferers there is a feeling that a great hardship would be inflicted if, when the Government have admitted the defective state of the law, and are going to amend it, their cases were not brought within the scope of the measure. They do feel that they would be very hardly treated indeed if there is not a clause in the Bill which will give it a retrospective character. I hope, Sir, that the right hon. Gentleman will very seriously consider this matter.

Mr. CHILDERS: I have to say that we will very carefully consider the question as to what the operation of the Bill the Government propose to introduce shall embrace. It is not at all an easy question; but we will give it our most earnest consideration.

Mr. LIONEL COHEN (Paddington, N.): I should like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the suggestion that, if he merely left out of the Bill the particular day on which the occurrences took place, and simply referred to the occurrences of "the month of February last," that would give the Bill a general character. If the right hon. Gentleman can see his way to doing that, I am sure it will give great and general satisfaction.

General FRASER (Lambeth, N.): The House well knows that great injury was done to the shopkeepers of South London for a day or two after the disturbances on February 8, through excess of zeal on the part of the police, who told the people to shut their shops. Then on Sunday, the 20th of February, the mob was not allowed to come quietly down Whitehall, but was turned on to the Embankment, and then driven over the bridge on to the South side, where there were no adequate police arrangements for protecting property. I advised the people who had suffered damage in consequence to write to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers), and his reply has been read by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel). Directly that reply was received, however, it was stuck up in a shop window in South London with this heading over it—

> "The persons who threw milk cans down upon the people get compensation, while the poor people of Lambeth do not."

That way of dealing with the matter fairly indicates the feeling existing in South London on this subject. I do not wish to take up the time of the House; but I do earnestly hope that the claims of the people of North Lambeth will be considered.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.): The Act of George IV. restricts compensation to damage that is the result of riotous proceedings; and it cannot be given unless the property is wholly destroyed, or there is a felonious intent to wholly destroy. It is in no way contemplated by that Act to give compensation for anything except what can be described as the result of "riotous proceedings." I want to point out to the hon. and gallant Member for North Lambeth (Major General Fraser), therefore, that even if the area covered by this Bill were extended so as to include North Lambeth, and the period which it covers were extended to the 28th of February, it would not give compensation to North Lambeth unless it could be shown that the damage was caused by a riot. Now, the damage complained of in North Lambeth was very slight, and was not caused by what may be called a "riotous assembly." It was done by stone-throwing, certainly; but it was not the result of a riot.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.): In discussing this question the exceptional position of London ought to be considered. In Blackburn the people have power to protect themselves; but the people of London have not. The people of London are in the hands of the Commissioners of Police, who are only responsible to this House; and, therefore, the people of London have no control over the police. If this rate is to be thrown on London, the Metropolitan Members will do their best to see that it is thrown on the whole of London, including the City, and not only upon the Metropolis outside the City. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consider this matter, or that he will leave the Bill as it was originally drawn. I have indicated the opinion I believe many hon. Friends of mine who sit on these Benches hold of this Bill. If the Amendments which are proposed by the Government are persevered in, we shall certainly press for the cost to be thrown upon the whole of London—the City as well as other parts.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to move that you report Progress, Sir. It is far too late to proceed now.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir James Fergusson.*)

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): No doubt, half-past 2 is a late hour to go on with the Bill. I shall not oppose the Motion if it is understood that we proceed with it on the next available opportunity.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

TREES (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 30.]

(*Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Marum, Mr. Pyne, Mr. O'Hanlon.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to move that a new clause be added to the Bill after Clause 4.

MR. SPEAKER: That Motion will require Notice.

MR. CHANCE: Then I will move that the Bill be re-committed.

A Clause (Improvements under "The Landlord and Tenant (Ireland) Act, 1870,") *added.*

Amendment made.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member move that I now leave the Chair?

MR. CHANCE: Yes.

Bill *re-committed* in respect of New Clause; *considered* in Committee.

MR. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.): An hon. Friend of mine wishes to oppose one of the clauses of the Bill; therefore I move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Mulholland.*)

Mr. CHANCE: The clauses have received the assent of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes). If the hon. Member understood the meaning of this clause—the limited meaning of it —he would make no difficulty in allowing it to pass. Its object is merely to remove a doubt as to the 10th section of 23 & 24 *Geo.* III., c. 39. Owing to the defective construction of that clause, the landlord, where a tenant cuts down a tree, is entitled to have compensation assessed, and to take all the trees and cut them down and remove them. That has been thought unreasonable; hence this Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): So far as the Government is concerned we have no objection to the clause.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): Following the example of the Lord Advocate, I beg to move the third reading of the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: It must be reported before that stage can be taken.

Bill *reported;* as amended, *considered;* to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) *Resolved,* That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ended on the 31st day of March 1885, the sum of £38,715 2*s.* 1*d.*, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

(2.) *Resolved,* That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £8,256,018, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

TOWN HOLDINGS.

Select Committee on Town Holdings to consist of Twenty-four Members:—Committee *nominated* of,—Mr. Mellor, Mr. Wodehouse, Lord William Compton, Viscount Wolmer, Mr. Asher, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. Edward Russell, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Goschen, Sir Henry James, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Saunders, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Tyssen Amherst, Viscount Folkestone, Mr. Sidney Herbert, Mr. Gregory, Sir John Ellis, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Crilly, Mr. O'Dogherty, and Colonel Nolan:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Instruction to the Select Committee on Town Holdings to inquire into the expediency of giving to leaseholders facilities for the purchase of the fee simple of their property.—(*Mr. Lawson.*)

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS REPEAL (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stansfeld, Bill to repeal the Contagious Diseases Acts 1866 to 1869, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. James Stuart, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Burt, and Mr. Henry Wilson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 147.]

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Spencer, Bill to enable Her Majesty's Postmaster General to acquire lands in Birmingham for the public service, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Spencer and Mr. Henry H. Fowler.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 148.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 19*th March,* 1886.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order * (38); Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2)* (40).

Committee—Report—Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Continuance * (31).

Report—Lunacy Acts Amendment * (37).

SUNDAY (OPENING OF MUSEUMS, &c.) RESOLUTION.

Lord THURLOW, in rising to move—

"That whereas for many years past Parliament has voted, without comment or protest, funds to provide for the Sunday opening of Hampton Court Picture Galleries, Kew Gardens, the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital, and the Dublin National Gallery; that whereas a majority of the Trustees of both the British Museum and of the National Gallery have expressed a desire to open those institutions on Sunday afternoons; that whereas for many years museums, libraries, and art galleries have been opened free to the people on Sundays in many large provincial towns, with results of a highly satisfactory character; and further, seeing that no legislative impediment is offered to the Sunday opening of the Zoological Gardens in London to the wealthy classes of society, notwithstanding the much larger proportion of Sunday labour thereby involved as compared with a Government art collection; that, for the above reasons, this House is therefore of opinion that the time has now come when the principle already conceded should, in the interests of religion and education, be extended to the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis,"

said, that this was in no sense a Party question; and he was sure their Lordships would dissociate the question from all Party considerations. He had, he believed, as many supporters on one side of the House as on the other, and several on the Cross Benches; so that, in considering it, he must ask their Lordships to forget that he was in any way connected with Her Majesty's present Government, and assure the House that he brought it forward as a private and a very humble Member. It was no new subject, and needed no introduction. He only wanted to do for London what was done elsewhere. Why should London be excluded? He could not tolerate the inconsistency of a thing being laudable in Kew or Manchester, but wicked and sacrilegious in Trafalgar Square or Bloomsbury, where you were furthest removed from green fields, the fresh air, and pleasure of a country walk. If it were new he could understand opposition on the ground of the "small end of the wedge; but that had, happily, been inserted years ago. As it was, Sunday opening was the rule, and London was the exception. Then there was the further inconsistency that, year after year, moneys were voted, without comment or protest, to defray Sunday opening elsewhere. Would anyone dare to try to stop those supplies? As a fact, no one ventured on such a course; but when a few pounds were asked for opening the British Museum for a few hours on Sunday afternoons they were told it was quite a different thing. They also knew that the Trustees—at least, a majority of them, and the world was governed by the majority—he said the Trustees of both the British Museum and the National Gallery had officially expressed their desire to open those institutions on Sunday afternoons. Of course, there were difficulties; but difficulties always abounded, and were made to be overcome. He could not admit for a moment the existence of any financial difficulty. This country could find money to give £70,000 for a picture; it could surely find a few pounds to enable the public to see it—to enable the working classes to have access to it—on the only day in the week at their disposal for this purpose. Then they had the experience of Birmingham, Manchester, Wigan, &c. They knew that at Birmingham several free libraries had been open for years on Sundays, and had had their hundreds of thousands of readers annually. They heard of no difficulties there. He might add that now his noble Friend's (the Earl of Harrowby's) Motion had been accepted in favour of week-day evening opening, one, at any rate, of the difficulties vanished. More hands would have to be necessarily engaged, and the extra service on the Sunday could easily be apportioned so as to involve no more individual labour than at present. He entirely concurred in his noble Friend's proposal, and should not be content until those places were open, not only on three evenings in the week, but on every evening, and on Sunday afternoons as well. The question of employing a few extra hands just now was surely not one to be deprecated. The actual numbers required, and the exact additional Sunday labour, had been much exaggerated. It was dealt with, and practically disposed of, two years ago by the noble Lord (Lord Carlingford), when President of the Council, who stated in that House that he had made official inquiries, and found that the number of attendants that would be required at South Kensington Natural History Museum, in addition to the police, firemen, porters, &c., who were now on duty on Sundays, would not exceed a dozen. For his own part, he (Lord Thurlow) could not consider that that amount of extra labour, well paid for, could be taken into consideration by the side of the pleasure and profit to be derived by hundreds of thousands of working men. The old arguments in favour of Sunday opening existed as hideous as ever. The odious distinction between the rich and the poor—the rich might enjoy works of Art on Sunday because they owned them; but if you were not rich enough to possess ownership it was wicked to open a book or look at a picture on the Sunday. Then take the Zoological Gardens, open to the rich only on Sundays, employing hands enough to open every Museum and Gallery in London. There was Sunday labour for them; but you shut your eyes to it, and the poor man said, and not unnaturally, it was because it was for the benefit of the rich. Well, he knew he had only to convince the House of two things to carry the Resolution. First, that it was not a thrust at religion; secondly, that it was desired by the working classes themselves. First, then, as to religion. It was argued that this proposal was a blow aimed at religion; and he frankly admitted that if he failed to remove that objection his case must fall to the ground. He certainly should never have placed this Motion on the Paper if he thought it was adverse to the interests of religion. But that it was not so was proved by the fact that the movement was begun by ecclesiastics, and had been carried on by them. The late Dean Stanley, one of the most eminent divines of modern times, consistently advocated it. He was President of the Sunday Society, the object of whose existence it was to promote Sunday opening. Then they had a Canon of the English Church, Canon Shuttleworth, who was not only a Canon, but a hardworking East End clergyman. He was the actual President of the parent Society for promoting this object, the National Sunday League, of which the Sunday Society was an offshoot. Then he (Lord Thurlow) had polled the clergy of London, and he found over 200, or about one-half, of the clergy of the Church of England were in favour of it, and he believed the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church supported him almost to a man. Then, the other evening, they heard what the Bishop of Peterborough had to say of the English Sunday. He knew something about those things, and had the courage of his convictions. He told them, in his usual unrivalled eloquence of language, how the poor were now being divorced from the Church, how the great gulf between the rich and the poor was getting wider and deeper—he proved possibly more than he intended; he went on to say, what could the poor man do on Sunday afternoon? He told us of the

> "Weary and the dreary Sunday afternoon walk of the London working man, between monotonous brick walls, shops with all their shutters up, and only two doors open to him, the church and the public-house."

And he went on to say that the latter institution proved the more attractive of the two. He thought their Lordships would admit that the picture was faithfully and painfully accurate in all its details. Hear what Mr. George Ellis wrote on the religious aspect of this question, so far back as 1864, in a letter which appeared in the papers. He wrote—

> "I am inclined to think that, even in a religious point of view, the opening of the British Museum would prove spiritually beneficial to the semi-civilized class of the community; for such a collection of God's wonders cannot fail to strike the dullest intellect with awe and veneration for the great Creator, for there are 'the trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; also beasts, and fowls, and creeping things, and fishes;' and I believe it to be next thing to impossible for anyone to pass through the buildings without being solemnly impressed with a sense of his own insignificance and the transcendant glory of the Almighty Ruler above him."

So much for the thrust or blow aimed at religion. Then let them pass on to the next point, as to whether the working men themselves desired this thing. He took it there were two ways of ascertaining the views of working men on this point—first, by the use they made of such opportunities when they were afforded; and, secondly, by their expressions of opinion. If tried by the first test, he held the reply to be conclusive. Bethnal Green Museum had been frequently opened as a test, and had always been thronged by thoroughly appreciative crowds. Last year the Alexandra Palace was opened for seven Sundays, and visited by over 130,000 working men and their families. He went down to see for himself, and did see the genuine working men and their wives and families by the thousand thoroughly enjoying themselves, crowding the picture galleries, orderly and well-behaved, and listening to magnificent sacred music. The work of attendants and custodians was done by a few volunteers, and no injury was done to anything. The same thing happened, without variation, wherever this thing was tried. Then take expressions of opinion. He had polled the working men's clubs of London, and did not know of one in which he had not a large majority in his favour. He could produce resolutions and addresses from them by the hundreds, sent him officially, signed by the presidents and secretaries, and which he was bound to consider as good evidence. Then take the founder of workmen's clubs in London, Mr. Hodgson Pratt—he knew something of the feeling of London men, and he told a public meeting where he (Lord Thurlow) was last night that he believed them to be absolutely in favour of this thing by overwhelming majorities. He knew many societies, such as the Lord's Day Observance or Rest Association, had endeavoured to make capital out of what happened a few months ago at Southport, where the question was discussed for the first time by the Trades' Union Congress that met there. Well, on that occasion both sides claimed the victory. Their Lordships should decide between them—51 delegates, representing 233,050 working men, declared for, and 67 delegates, representing 189,827 working men, declared against Sunday opening. Well, those societies had said a great deal of their majority of 16 delegates, but had said very little—nothing indeed—of the majority of 43,223 of their constituents. But he must say a word more about these 16 delegates. Mr. Murchie, a delegate from the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, represented 25,700 members, and voted for Sunday opening; but his vote was cancelled by that of Mr. Richards, a delegate from some local society, and who represented only 11 members. He (Lord Thurlow) asked their Lordships which was the vote to guide them in that case—the one representing 25,700 working men, or the one representing 11? Then he wished to say one word about the London Trades' Council, of which Mr. George Shipton was the able political secretary. Well, they all knew Mr. Shipton—at any rate by name—and there were few more widely trusted men. Their Lordships might have seen a letter from him to himself (Lord Thurlow) that lately appeared in the newspapers. He wrote to him officially, forwarding a resolution of the London Trades' Council assuring him of their continued support. Could he reject that expression of opinion? But he had one more word to say on the point. He heard yesterday that the minority of, he thought, 54 of a branch trade society, consisting in all of 275 members, had forwarded a counter-Petition to a noble Lord opposite. He could not, of course, say whether he would use it or not; but this much he would say—that it was the Petition of a minority, and only represented the views of the 50 or 60 people who signed it. But there were other classes to be considered. There were the City clerks, the shopmen and women, and the tailors, and so on, who did piecework at home. From this class he had received thousands of touching letters during the last 18 months. Well, he would not say more. He trusted their Lordships would agree that, to some extent at any rate, he had made out his case that this was not a blow aimed at religion, and that the working classes wished for it themselves; if he had not, things must go on as they were—Sunday drinking must continue to increase, and Monday morning cases in the police courts must continue to increase also; but, whether he might be fortunate enough to have convinced their Lordships or not, he felt sure of one thing, and that was that he should meet, at any rate, with a large measure of sympathy and support. He, therefore, had the honour to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Moved to resolve—

"That whereas for many years past Parliament has voted, without comment or protest, funds to provide for the Sunday opening of Hampton Court Picture Galleries, Kew Gardens, the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital, and the Dublin National Gallery; that whereas a majority of the Trustees of both the British Museum and of the National Gallery have expressed a desire to open those institutions on Sunday afternoons; that whereas for many years museums, libraries, and art galleries have been opened free to the people on Sundays in many large provincial towns, with results of a highly satisfactory character; and further, seeing that no legislative impediment is offered to the Sunday opening of the Zoological Gardens in London to the wealthy classes of society, notwithstanding the much larger proportion of Sunday labour thereby involved as compared with a Government art collection; that, for the above reasons, this House is therefore of opinion that the time has now come when the principle already conceded should, in the interests of religion and education, be extended to the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis."—(*The Lord Thurlow.*)

VISCOUNT MIDLETON, on rising to move as an Amendment to the Motion—

"That it is not desirable to open the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis on Sunday,"

said, that in taking this step he was taking upon himself the duties which had been hitherto so ably discharged by the two noble Earls who were no longer with them. The question raised by the Motion of the noble Lord opposite was so grave and important that he could not allow it to pass unchallenged. Their Lordships who were opposed to this step had a right to complain that this subject was brought before the House year after year at a period of the Session when the attendance of their Lordships was known to be thin, and when those adverse to the proposal were forced to come down and oppose it at great personal inconvenience. His next ground of complaint was that this Motion should be made in the first instance in their Lordships' House, instead of in the House of Commons. It must be remembered that this proposal involved a money question with which their Lordships could not deal. It would be merely beating the air to pass a Bill in that House embodying the principle of the noble Lord's Motion. It was true that at a very small meeting of the Trustees of the National Gallery and of the British Museum a resolution was passed expressing their willingness to open those places of public instruction and amusement on Sunday in the event of Parliament agreeing to that step being taken; but in passing that resolution those Bodies had promised to do only that which it was their duty to do—namely, to submit themselves to the will of Parliament. The Zoological Gardens were already open on Sunday; but they were private property. The premises of the noble Lord he could not grant, and therefore the conclusion was also wrong. They were all agreed upon one point—that if the National Collections were to be opened on Sunday that step must be taken in the interests of the working classes, using that term in the widest sense, and not referring to those employed in manual labour only. But in what way had the wishes of the working classes been expressed upon this subject? The public could approach both Houses of Parliament by means of Petitions, and if they so ardently desired the opening of these places they had never taken the trouble to say so. The Petitions that had been presented to the House in favour of this proposal were only about 1 per cent as compared with those which had been presented against it. The noble Lord had assured them that a majority of the representatives of labour were in favour of this proposition; but he should like to know how the noble Lord obtained that information. His knowledge of the feelings of those persons on the subject had been gained from their public utterances, in which they had strongly condemned the proposal. None had more strenuously opposed the principle of this Motion than the noble Lord's Colleague in Office the Under Secretary for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst); and on the last occasion that the proposal had been brought before the House of Commons it was rejected by a majority of 125, only 83 Members voting for it. Mr. Lucraft, another representative of the working classes, had opposed the proposal, on the ground that he did not wish to do seven days' work for six days' pay. In September last a meeting of the Trades Unions' Council discussed the matter and rejected the Motion. Then, again, those who had always been the friends of the working classes were most strongly opposed to this change. The late Earl of Shaftesbury, who, in the prime of life, gave up all ambition and all hope of power in order that he might devote his long and useful life to the service of the working classes, had denounced this proposal in far more eloquent and forcible language than he could command. Then Mr. Mundella, the President of the Board of Trade, who had sprung from the ranks of labour, speaking in the House of Commons, said that no more fatal mistake could be made than for the working men to consent to the passing of a measure such as that now before their Lordships; and he also stated that the town of Nottingham, after full discussion, had decided by a large majority that institutions of that kind should not be open on the Day of Rest. Again, there was a remarkable consensus of opinion among the ministers of religion, to whatever denomination they might belong, against the wisdom and justice of the noble Lord's proposition. It was a fact, he believed, that Cardinal Manning, who was formerly disposed to favour the Motion, was now opposed to it on grounds which could very well be conceived. The Rev. Mr. Arthur, late President of the Wesleyan Body, the Rev. Newman Hall, and other eminent Nonconformist ministers, all took the same view of the impolicy, to say the least, of carrying any such Motion as the present one. All that surely indicated that the working classes and their friends could look a little below the surface and discern what would be the ultimate result of the adoption of that proposal. Almost all who had practical experience in that matter had come to the conclusion that even if it were not wrong it was impolitic, inexpedient, and unwise to take any further step in that direction. Mr. Mundella had told them that out of 154 towns in the United Kingdom which had an opportunity, if their Governing Bodies thought fit, of opening those institutions on Sunday five had done so and 149 had refused, and that several of those places which had at first decided to open them afterwards rescinded their original resolution. He had read the opinion of an intelligent French artizan, written at the time of the Exhibition, in which he spoke of the English Sunday as the most democratic of all the institutions of this country; while an eminent French ecclesiastic also declared that he had seen nothing so wise, so beneficent, so humane as the English Sunday. He was speaking himself the other day to a manufacturer who had two houses of business—one in England, and the other in France—and who told him that he was virtually compelled to run his mills during the whole of Sunday in France because, although some of the workmen were prepared to take a holiday, others considered it was their right to earn wages on that day. It was utterly impossible, if the present proposal became law, that though they began there they should end there. The next move would be to open the theatres and music saloons on Sunday; and then would come at no great distance, what Mr. Broadhurst said he so much dreaded—namely, that Sunday would be gradually whittled down, and that from Sunday amusements they would come to Sunday labour. In Manchester alone 30 men were on duty five or six hours every Sunday at the libraries and similar institutions to meet the needs of those who visited those places of resort. He knew it was suggested that the paid servants of the country should be replaced on Sunday by volunteers at those institutions; but it was obvious that any such proposal must be entirely nugatory. It was quite impossible, with the priceless treasures of Art they possessed there, that their proper custodians should be off duty while the Museums were open; and, therefore, if those places were opened on Sunday there must be either a considerable increase of the permanent staff or a large addition to the labour of those now employed there. He did not wish to press the pecuniary argument, seeing how much the nation had spent on works of Art; but he earnestly begged their Lordships to remember that, although just at the present moment, when there existed great depression of trade, it was possible that they would have no immediate proposals that manufacturers should be permitted, if they thought proper, to open their establishments on Sunday; but if a time of revival came, and they were again doing the roaring trade that they did 10 or 12 years ago, they would probably hear arguments in favour of not allowing machinery to stand idle for 24 hours together, and as to the loss of the capital employed in mills caused by squeamish scruples in regard to Sunday. Lord Beaconsfield once said in that House that of all Divine institutions the most Divine was the Day of Rest; and he fully agreed with him. All, too, who had made physiological researches held the opinion that the man who had an opportunity of enjoying one day of rest out of seven was in all moral as well as physical respects better than the man who had no such opportunity. He contended, then, first, that the noble Lord had shown no great or general want to exist that required to be supplied by such means as that Motion contemplated; and, secondly, that the whole weight of authority from all classes of society was distinctly opposed to the present proposal; and, although he did not deny that a certain minority were anxious to see that plan carried out, that minority was not of such dimensions, and the arguments were not such, as to justify the overriding what he believed to be the great majority of the working classes. Thirdly, he submitted that the opening of the institutions comprised in that Motion would lead to the opening of other institutions, the result of which would scarcely be deemed desirable even by the friends of the present proposal. Fourthly, he contended that from Sunday amusement they would go on to Sunday labour; and the end of it would be that the working classes of this country would be deprived of the most valuable privilege which they possessed. Lastly, another objection to this proposition was that it inserted the thin end of the wedge. If we were living in an ideal world, dealing with ideal men and women, such a Motion might not be productive of any harmful consequences; but their Lordships knew that this was not the case. They had stubborn facts to deal with. They had the experience of other countries; they had the authority of those who had studied this question in a practical form, who had arrived at conclusions diametrically opposed to those of the noble Lord. They had also the fact that if the law was to be changed the *onus probandi* rested emphatically on those who made the proposition, and not upon those who defended it. He asserted that the noble Lord had made out no adequate case for the Motion which he had submitted; and he asked their Lordships respectfully, but earnestly, to meet it with an emphatic negative.

Amendment *moved*,

To leave out all the words after ("That,") and insert ("it is not desirable to open the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis on Sunday.")—(*The Viscount Midleton.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, his views upon this matter were fully stated when this question was before their Lordships last year. The noble Viscount (Viscount Midleton) raised an objection to the Preamble of the Motion. The part of the Motion in which he himself was interested was that which came after the Preamble—

"That this House is of opinion that the time has now come when the principle already conceded should, in the interests of religion and education, be extended to the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis."

For his own part, therefore, he would willingly abandon the whole of the Preamble if their Lordships acceded to what followed it. The next objection raised by the noble Viscount was that the Motion should have been proposed in the House of Commons. No doubt; he would be glad if it could be successfully made in the House of Commons; but why not in their Lordships' House also? It was true that their Lordships had not the power to order the expenses incurred if this Resolution was carried; but it had to be remembered that their Lordships were not making a law, but expressing an opinion; and he should like to know why they could not express an opinion on this subject? The noble Viscount also cited the opinion of Lord Shaftesbury in opposition to the Motion. After the last occasion on which this question was discussed by their Lordships, that noble Earl had written him a letter in which he said that, though he should not think it right to make the Sunday a day of recreation or amusement, he could not blame others whose conscience did not forbid them doing so; and his objection to this proposition was that it would impose additional labour on persons connected with these Museums. Then the noble Viscount proceeded to say that he should be very sorry to see this day of rest taken away. So would he, and everyone else who had at all considered the subject and the absolute necessity for one day of the week being a day of abstinence from labour, but not from enjoyment. Everybody must desire to see the day of rest continue. After addressing their Lordships on the last occasion this question was before them, he had been told that he dealt too much with the religious part of the matter. He was perfectly satisfied, however, that it was the religious part of the matter which was at the bottom of the opposition raised to this Motion. England, Scotland, and our Colonies were alone in Christendom in the way they observed Sunday. The authority of Cardinal Manning had been mentioned as being opposed to this Motion; but if his Eminence objected to such a proposition he must naturally object to the way in which every Roman Catholic country in Europe conducted itself on Sunday. In Catholic countries, in Protestant countries, Calvinistic or what not, and even, he believed, where the Greek Church existed, the Sunday was observed in a different form from what it was in this country. He would most respectfully refer their Lordships to the Scripture text which prohibited labour, but which did not prohibit rational enjoyment. He could not but remind their Lordships that the Jews, to whom the Commandment was originally given, protested against our mode of interpreting it. He had received a letter from a distinguished Jewish gentleman in which he protested against its being supposed that the Jewish day of Sabbath was a day of gloom and inanity; it was a day of rational enjoyment on which they abstained from all labour, and on which they enjoyed themselves reasonably and properly. The English view of Sunday was a novelty. It had been in existence about 250 years. In the Reign of James I. a book was published called *The Book of Sports*, which did not enact or pretend to lay down new rules, but which stated what were then lawful games on week-days, and, among other things, what were the lawful games on Sunday. No doubt if the games mentioned were played now on Sunday the majority of Englishmen would be shocked. The Primate had argued, however, that such was the displeasure of the people at the publication of this *Book of Sports* that he suggested it had a great deal to do with the great Rebellion. He did not know whether that was the case or not; but he was surprised to find that those persons who disliked *The Book of Sports* should be cited as an authority, because they were the men who turned out 6,000 ministers of the Church of England from their benefices, who cut off the King's head, and, more shocking still, who abolished Episcopacy in the Church of England. Those were the people whom the Primate thought their Lordships should follow, and that, because they did not like *The Book of Sports*, therefore we should not like it. He did not think their Lordships would be of that opinion. His objection to the way in which Sunday was observed in this country was on the ground that it was a day wasted. Let there be an abstinence from labour; let people who thought it right to do so meet for religious worship; let the day be observed in all respects decorously; but he maintained that it was a day of recreation and enjoyment, which at present was not only worse than wasted, but was mischievous in its consequences. A child was told—and the opinion grew up with him to manhood—that the Sunday was to be observed as at present by virtue of a Commandment which was one of several Commandments against the prohibition of stealing, murder, and other crimes. Now, it was utterly impossible for any man to have the same disposition to observe a Commandment with which his conscience did not go, as one that he felt to be right. There was something in our natures which told us that it was wrong for a man to steal, to murder, or to commit other crimes; but there was nothing which told a man that it was wrong for him to enjoy and amuse himself on the seventh day. What was the consequence? The conscience of the man not agreeing with the Commandment, it was broken, and continually broken. There was not a man living who had not done something contrary to the common notion as to how Sunday should be observed. He was led by easy introduction into sin, and from the breach of one Commandment to the breach of another much more easily. It had also to be remembered that the well-to-do classes were in a different position altogether from those in whose interests they claimed the opening of these Museums. The rich were surrounded in their daily life by works of Art and other comforts which made life enjoyable. In contrast with the families of the rich, those of the poor spent melancholy Sundays. We might see at the corners of streets labourers lounging drearily, and not knowing what to do with themselves. Prince Bismarck had thus given his experiences of an English Sunday—

> "When I was in England I always had a painful and uncomfortable impression of the English Sunday, and I was always glad when it was over. I am sure, too, that many Englishmen had the same feeling about it, for they sought to accelerate the march of time, without witnesses, in a manner which I would rather not characterize. Whoever has been in English society will understand what I mean. On the other hand, if you go into the country around Berlin—if it does not exactly happen to be near a brewery—and look at the villagers, you are pleased with the appearance of the people in their holiday garb, and thank God we do not live under the yoke of an English Sunday."

He (Lord Bramwell) quoted that from a letter of the Berlin Correspondent of *The Times;* and those impressions were, at least, deserving of our consideration. The English Sunday, he believed, was largely mis-spent, and the result of it being so mis-spent was that men were led into temptation. It was said that the opening of Museums on Sundays would involve additional labour; but it would not involve so much as opening on week-nights. An extra number of persons would have to be employed, there would have to be a rota, and they would take their holiday in turns. That, it was said, would cost more money. Certainly; and why not? If places were worth while keeping open on six days, they were worth opening on the seventh day. If cost were to be an argument we might as well close the places on Saturday, and save one-sixth of the present outlay. It was surprising to hear that working men feared that the result would be that they would have to do seven days' work for six days' wages. Why, the tendency of the last few years had been to shorten the hours of labour, the Saturday half-holiday was general, and there did not seem to be any reason to apprehend that working men would allow their leisure to be invaded. If this were a proposal to compel working men to attend Museums, he could understand their objection to it; but as it was only a proposal to let them do so if they liked, it was a selfish and inconsiderate thing for those who objected to object that others should be able to do so. Besides, it was not working men only who were concerned. He had received letters from clerks and others praying that Museums might be opened on Sundays, because they could not visit them on week-days or week-nights, and the same representations were made on behalf of women, whose employments rendered it impossible for them to visit Museums at any time but on Sundays. There was nothing in the Commandments to prohibit Sunday opening, which, in many cases, would prevent Sunday being mis-spent; and, as to the extra labour required, it was a mere matter of expense and arrangement. He trusted their Lordships would agree to the Resolution.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, that if anything could reconcile them to this annual Motion it would be the good-natured and entertaining speeches of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell), who dressed up the old arguments in a new form for each debate. It was not surprising that the noble and learned Lord abandoned the Preamble of the Resolution, because it would not bear close examination. There was, as the noble and learned Lord had said, a total difference between the English and foreign Sunday. In foreign countries places of amusements and the Museums and Exhibitions were all open on Sunday; but there was another wide difference, and that was this—that in all the towns on the Continent of the Latin race the ceaseless sound of labour prevailed throughout the Sunday; whereas in English towns and towns belonging to the English race the sounds of labour were absent. Surely, under these circumstances, when they saw to what the opening of Museums and places of amusement led abroad, they might well be sensitive lest with the introduction of the one they should also bring in the ceaseless sound of labour. The noble and learned Lord had rashly quoted Prince Bismarck; but he would remind the noble and learned Lord of the description of a German Sunday given in that House three years ago by the late Lord Cairns. That noble Lord, on the authority of a German gentleman of eminence, said—

> "The day of rest and of most elevated joy is too often robbed of its honour. The forenoon of Sunday is given up to work and the afternoon to pleasure. That which can elevate man is often despised, but that which degrades him is sought after. On Sunday the policemen reap their most abundant harvest, children occasion the greatest anxiety, the wife anticipates the return of the husband with a foreboding heart, drunkenness and riotousness celebrate their greatest triumph, and most of the misdemeanours are committed. If Sunday acquires a different character the national life will rest on a securer basis."

After that he did not think the noble and learned Lord would continue to advocate the German mode of spending Sunday. The noble and learned Lord spoke of such gloomy Sundays, in which the enjoyment of pictures and flowers was forbidden; but one could only wonder from what homes his impressions had been derived. The noble Marquess who was now in Italy (the Marquess of Salisbury) had intended to speak strongly against this Motion, and had expressed to him his earnest desire that the Motion should not be carried. He could only wish that the noble Marquess were present to give his own reasons for opposing the Motion. He must put in a *caveat* against the way in which the noble Lord who moved this Resolution carried on his warfare out of the House. When it was considered that men of the eminence of the Marquess of Salisbury and of a former Lord Chancellor opposed this Motion it would be well that they should not be spoken of as—

> "Wealthy Pharisees who, clothed in purple and fine linen, see no harm in spending a leisure hour on Sunday afternoon in their private galleries and libraries, or even in the Zoological Gardens, but turn up the whites of their eyes at

the idea of satisfying the craving of the people for a share in those innocent delights."

If language of that kind were used it had better be used to their faces. The noble Lord should not endeavour to stir up the passions of those who had little against those who had much. He scorned the idea that they were preventing poor men from having enjoyments which they had themselves. They proved that it was not so by their Resolution of the other evening. They did not desire to deprive the working man of the infinite blessing of a day of rest. The Manifestoes of the noble Lord opposite presented all the signs of a failing cause. First, they appealed to the poor against the rich; then they made wild assertions as to facts; then, as a last resource, they appealed to the Temperance Body. The noble Lord talked of opening particular Collections of Science and Art. He meant only the National Collections, and specified the National Gallery and the South Kensington Museum. But this Motion was the pioneer of a great movement, and must not be treated by itself. The noble Lord did not himself dispute that the object was the opening of all places of amusement on Sunday. His speech at the Alexandra Palace sufficiently indicated his views. It would be remembered that in 1876 the Chairman of the National Sunday League had stated that in the future no sermon would be preached in the Metropolis except in competition with Museums and Art Galleries. Now, what did the working men think of that Motion? One hundred and fifty men employed on the Great Northern Railway signed a protest against the increase of Sunday labour which would be involved in the opening of the Alexandra Palace. Those men had expressed their opinion that the National Sunday League was a curse to the nation, and they thought it wrong that a lot of fanatics should rob them of their day of rest. Then in 1878 115 out of 120 employed at the Holborn Restaurant signed a Petition against the opening of Museums on Sunday. In 1882 an attempt was made to enforce Sunday labour at the Landore Steel Works at Swansea, and the men were offered an advance of 6*d.* in the pound in their wages. But the 1,000 men employed struck rather than consent to lose their day of rest. Then the noble Lord said no Petitions had been presented against the opening of Greenwich Hospital. Now, the fact was that from 1881 to 1883 Petitions were signed by 108,000 persons against the continuance of the present system. The total of Petitions in favour of opening Museums was about 80,000, so that there was no doubt in which direction lay the preponderance of opinion. Then much had been made of the Museums and Galleries in Provincial towns. But what were the many towns? Mr. Mundella had stated that out of 154 Provincial towns there were only four in which Libraries and Museums were opened on Sunday. He had been informed by the librarian of the Free Library in the large town of Stoke that the inhabitants were conspicuous by their absence, and that the Library was chiefly frequented on Sundays by children, who did more damage to the books than was done during the whole of the rest of the week. The noble Lord had spoken of the growth of public opinion in favour of his Motion. Well, he could not but remark that there were before the Dissolution 14 Members of Parliament Vice Presidents of the Society. But where were they now? Of that 14 only four had succeeded in gaining seats in the present House of Commons. Nor was that growth of opinion at all evident in the divisions taken in the House of Commons, for in the last division there were only 82 in favour of the Motion, while there were 208 against it. The opinion of the working men might best be gathered from the full discussion which the question received at the Southport Trade Union Congress, which represented 600,000 artizans. In the division taken at that Congress 67 votes were recorded against Sunday opening and only 51 in its favour. The opinions of the working classes on this matter were really of the utmost importance. The noble Lord had quoted a letter from Mr. George Shipton, Secretary of the London Trades Council; but he had received a letter from the Secretary of the same Council, stating that Mr. Shipton and his associates merely stated their own opinions on the subject, and that no instruction had been given to the delegates as to how they were to vote. He had likewise received a Memorial from the compositors employed in the printing works of Messrs. Harrison, in St. Martin's Lane, requesting him to use his best efforts to defeat this mischievous proposal. The noble Lord was of opinion that the acceptance of his proposal would do more than any other single measure to check the evil of Sunday drinking, which was so growing. It was amusing to find that in the City of Manchester the number of people taken up for Sunday drinking had increased by about 200 since the Museums were opened. That increase might be set down to the growth of population; but still, if the Sunday opening of Museums were such a panacea as was alleged, they might have expected to see some little improvement. The noble Lord had appealed to them to check the increase of Sunday drinking; but here, again, he wished the noble Lord would look to his facts a little more carefully. Comparing 1884 with 1885, there was a total decrease in England of 1,300 people convicted for drunkenness on Sunday, while in the Metropolis the convictions numbered 3,500 in 1884, and only 3,200 in 1885. The change proposed by the noble Lord was a great and an enormous one, affecting the whole habits of the population; and he trusted their Lordships, in the interest of the working classes, as well as in their own interest, would stand by the old lines and be content with the blessings which a quiet day of rest gave to those classes.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Earl GRANVILLE): My Lords, I have listened very carefully to the speeches of the noble Lord opposite (Viscount Midleton) and of the noble Earl (the Earl of Harrowby), and I have failed to catch any one new argument which has not been addressed to your Lordships before, excepting one argument of the noble Earl who has just sat down. He has told us a great many facts; but a great many of his facts require to be more rigidly examined into before we accept them. A great many of them seem to me to be fallacious, although the noble Earl may believe them to be accurate. The noble Earl spoke of a fact which happened in a district in which he and I are both interested. He said that there was a library and a collection of books there, and I am sorry to hear from him that they have not been made much use of on Sundays by the people of the Potteries. But because the people of the Potteries do not appreciate their collection of books, how is that any proof that the hundreds of thousands of artizans in this Metropolis would not visit the National Collections of Art on Sunday? There was one extraordinary fact which startled me very much—the extraordinary fact, as affirmed by the noble Earl, that in one colliery in Wales work goes on for seven days in the week. All I can say is that I happened to be next a Conservative Peer more interested in collieries than most men in this country, and who lives in Wales, and I have also had a message from a director of the large steel works, and they all utterly disbelieve that in any part of this country there is a work where men would pursue their regular labour, or would be required to pursue their regular labour, during seven days of the week.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: I quoted from Lord Shaftesbury's speech as to the details.

EARL GRANVILLE: I cannot admit that as a proof. I am perfectly sure that if it were true that there were works where they did seven days' regular labour in a week the whole country would protest against it, because it is absolutely opposed to the whole tendency of recent action with regard to labour, which has been to restrict, and not extend, the hours of labour.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY: The noble Earl thinks I was alluding to a colliery. What I referred to was Dr. Siemen's Steel Works, which were well known to the late Lord Shaftesbury.

EARL GRANVILLE: That may be so, and it happens to be these works in which the gentleman I named is a director. No one can deny that there is a great difference of opinion among workmen upon this question. I believe that the great majority of workmen in the Metropolis do desire that these Museums should be open; but be the number great or small, or even a minority, the argument of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) has great force when he says that we do not ask this for those who object, but we do not wish to deprive those who desire it of the opportunity of viewing our Collections on Sundays. With regard to one argument that has been urged, I may say that this question has for years been discussed as a purely social question with a certain flavour of religion—it has been not only a non-political, but a non-Party question. Several Peers on the other side of the House have voted for the opening, while several Peers on this side of the House have on former occasions voted against it. For the first time the noble Earl comes down to the House armed with a message from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) to his big battalions, desiring that the character of the question should be changed, and that it should not be considered any longer as a non-Party and a non-political question. He, therefore, desires his Friends to vote in the way that he individually thinks in the matter. That is an argument I cannot use. I believe this to be an absolutely non-Party question. I cannot use my influence as representing Her Majesty's Government, and I do not wish to ask your Lordships to vote one way or the other, and I trust your Lordships will exercise some liberty of action in the matter.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said, that as on previous occasions he had voted for the Resolution, he wished to be allowed to give his reasons for now voting against it. He could not reconcile himself to a Resolution which was supported by many unbelievers, whilst it was opposed by the majority of the right rev. Bench and by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster; and he was convinced that those supporters of Sunday opening had less desire to withdraw people from the public-houses than a desire to injure religion. Besides, after the repeated inroads made in other places upon the latter half of the Ten Commandments, it was necessary to make a stand on behalf of the Fourth. Their Lordships might complain of the inconsistency of the noble Lord who moved the Resolution, and of his blowing hot and cold with the same mouth; for 30 days ago, whilst exonerating the Home Secretary with respect to the riots, he told the House that the Home Secretary had received the Seals on the Saturday, and could not go to the Home Office on the Sunday. He said that, although riots were expected on Monday, and although, whenever it had been necessary, the Foreign Office had been in the habit of working on a Sunday. With respect to what the Resolution said of the Zoological Gardens, so far from more Sunday labour being involved, less was used on a Sunday, when from a fourth to a third of the keepers were off duty. The Resolution showed the result of "evil communications," and that the noble Lord who moved it had caught from Mr. Arch and Mr. Chamberlain, by dining with them, their clap-trap about the wealthy classes. As a matter of fact, the greater number of visitors to the Zoological Gardens on Sunday to whom tickets were given belonged to the poorer classes.

On Question, That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 78; Non-Contents 62: Majority 16.

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Essex, E.
Feversham, E.
Harrowby, E.
Iddesleigh, E.
Lindsey, E.
Nelson, E.
Powis, E.
Ravensworth, E.
Redesdale, E.
Romney, E.
Rosslyn, E.
Selborne, E.
Tankerville, E.
Waldegrave, E.

Bangor, V.
Cranbrook, V.
Eversley, V.
Hardinge, V.
Hood, V.
Sidmouth, V.

Bangor, L. Bp.
Lichfield, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Newcastle, L. Bp.
Oxford, L. Bp.
St. Albans, L. Bp.

Ashbourne, L.
Ashford, L. (*V. Bury.*)
Braye, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Chelmsford, L.
Congleton, L.
Cottesloe, L.
de Ros, L. [*Teller.*]
Denman, L.
Deramore, L.
Douglas, L. (*E. Home.*)
Egerton, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Gage, L. (*V. Gage.*)
Halsbury, L.
Lovel and Holland, L. (*E. Egmont.*)
Northbourne, L.
Norton, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Robartes, L.
Saltersford, L. (*E. Courtown.*)
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*) [*Teller.*]
Stanley of Alderley, L.
Templemore, L.
Teynham, L.

Resolved in the *affirmative.*

Original Motion *agreed to.*

LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 37.) REPORT.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that by some inadvertence this Bill had been put down that day for the Report stage, whereas it had been intended merely to adjourn the Committee stage with a view to the consideration of the postponed clauses. The best way out of the difficulty would be for him to move their Lordships to agree to the Report, and then to move that the Bill be re-committed next Monday with a view to the consideration of the postponed clauses.

Amendments *reported* (according to order); and Bill *re-committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Monday* the 29*th instant.*

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT (NO. 2.) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Electric Lighting Act, 1882—Was *presented* by The Lord Ashford; read 1ª. (No. 40.)

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 19*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — River Lea, Mr. Abel Smith and Mr. Joseph Howard *added.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* — *Resolutions* [11th and 18th March] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—*Resolutions* [March 18] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading* — Consolidated Fund (No. 2).*

Second Reading—Marriages (Hours of Solemnisation) [62].

Committee—*Report*—Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment [10]; Consolidated Fund (No. 1).*

Third Reading—Trees (Ireland)* [30], and *passed.*

Withdrawn—Land Purchase Facilities* [41].

QUESTIONS.

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LIABILITIES OF HARBOUR COMMISSIONS.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, having regard to the cases of the *Rosina* and the *Triumph*, recently decided in the Law Courts, imposing unforeseen liabilities on Harbour Commissions, which have already had the effect of placing the revenues of two such Commissions in the hands of receivers, the Board of Trade will take legislative or other steps to prevent the losses of individual shipowners from becoming a charge upon Harbour Dues levied upon ships in general; and, if not, will the Board of Trade consent to increased rating and borrowing powers for Harbour Commissions in the hands of receivers, in order that they may discharge such liabilities?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. C. T. D. ACLAND) (Cornwall, Launceston) (who replied) said: The Board of Trade are quite
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alive to the hardship imposed on harbour authorities, and through them on the shipping using their harbours, by such liabilities as those incurred in the cases of the *Rosina* and the *Triumph;* and while they see great difficulty in altering a general rule of law which makes public authorities liable for damage caused to individuals by the negligence of their officers, they will be prepared to consider, when opportunity offers, whether the enforcement of such liabilities ought not to be postponed and limited as not to interfere with the due maintenance and improvement of the harbour. The Board of Trade can only help to increase rating and borrowing powers by means of Provisional Orders, prepared and submitted to them by harbour authorities. Any such Orders they will carefully consider, and will view with favour any proposals made to them for assisting the funds derived from the dues on shipping. I would direct the attention of my hon. Friend to the Provisional Order for St. Ives, which will very shortly be laid before Parliament, by which the Corporation of St. Ives will be enabled to tax the ratepayers for the assistance of their otherwise insolvent harbour. A Report on the subject will be found in Parliamentary Paper No. 57 of the present Session.

TRINITY COLLEGE (DUBLIN)—TENURE OF HOLDING OF LANDS.

SIR JAMES CORRY (Armagh, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table of the House the application made by Trinity College, Dublin, in or about the year 1848, for Letters Patent to permit the Board to pay themselves their salaries out of the general funds of the College, and the subsequent Correspondence between the Government and the Board which culminated in a change of tenure of the lands of Trinity College, Dublin; and, whether the intervention of the Government has been sought in the present crisis by the holders of those lands?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): There is no objection to laying on the Table of the House the document in question, if the hon. Member will move for it. Intervention was sought by Memorial addressed to the Prime Minister. I am not aware of any other application.

POST OFFICE—RURAL TELEGRAPHS—POSITION OF THE GUARANTORS.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he would consider the equitable claim of those guarantors of rural telegraphs who, having entered on an agreement with the Government on the assumed basis of the one shilling tariff, now find the actual charge falling upon them materially increased, in consequence of the Postal authorities having introduced a lower tariff without consultation with such guarantors?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): In reply to a Question put to him on the 26th of April, 1883, Mr. Fawcett stated that it would be only fair, in the case of guaranteed telegraph offices then in existence, that the guarantors should not be allowed to suffer any pecuniary loss from the proposed reduction of telegraphic charges; and they would not be called upon to pay any more than the payment made in the last year of the average payment of the last three years. This arrangement is now being acted upon.

POST OFFICE—COLONIAL POSTAGE.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that the postage of letters from France, Germany, and other European Countries to our Colonies is only one-half what it is from this Country; and, whether he will take any steps to draw closer our connection with our Colonies by putting an end to such anomaly?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): I am aware that in France, Germany, and a few other foreign countries, a uniform charge of 2½*d.* is made for all letters addressed to places within the Postal Union; while in this country the charge made for letters to the same places is in some cases 4*d.* and in others 5*d.* The rates now in force here are rendered necessary by the fact that the cost of the ocean packet services devolves upon this country. Having regard to the very heavy loss now being sustained by this country with reference to Colonial postage, the Postmaster General is not prepared to increase that loss at present by reducing the rates.

POST OFFICE—POSTAGE STAMPS.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Departmental Committee which in March 1885 was carefully considering the question of the great inconvenience caused in consequence of the postage stamps being all printed in one colour, has yet made its report; and, whether he is now prepared to prevent the loss to the Revenue which takes place, by returning to different colours for different denominations of stamps?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The Committee to which the hon. Member refers has made its Report, and no time is being lost in the preparation of the new stamps. The importance of distinctiveness of colour has been carefully kept in view.

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACT—THE WEST CLARE RAILWAY.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the following Resolution, passed at a meeting held on the 11th instant at the Mansion House, Dublin, presided over by the Right honourable the Lord Mayor, M.P., and at which His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was present, and took part in the proceedings:—

> "That in our opinion the best means whereby relief may be afforded to unemployed and destitute persons at the present time is the inauguration and carrying out of works of public utility; and we earnestly urge upon the Government the necessity of instructing the Departments which have the control of public funds to afford all reasonable facilities for the prompt commencement of such undertakings;"

whether he has heard that the works of the West Clare Railway, already partially suspended, in consequence of the delay in obtaining the loan which has been subject of negotiations with the Irish Board of Works since June last, are now for the same cause about to be stopped altogether; whether he is aware that the proposed security consists of shares guaranteed four per cent. interest in perpetuity by the county of Clare, in addition to a mortgage of the undertaking; whether certain technical legal obstacles raised by the Board of Works were declared by three eminent Counsel (all of them present or past Law Officers of the Crown) to be either non-existent or easily overcome; and did those Counsel in November last agree on a scheme to enable the matter to be carried out; whether satisfactory evidence has been given that the Railway will be duly completed if the loan is granted, and has the personal bond of the directors been offered to secure its completion; whether practical effect will be given in this instance to the above quoted resolution; and, will this work be at once resumed?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): My attention had been previously called to this resolution passed at the Mansion House meeting. I am not aware that there is any danger of the works of the railway being stopped for want of funds. The question of the security for the loan is one for the Board of Works. The sufficiency of the security for the completion of the loan is, and has been, for some time engaging the attention of the Treasury; and, as far as is consistent with their duty, there is no desire to throw any obstacle in the way of this railway, and there will be no unavoidable delay in coming to a decision about it.

CERTIFIED INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS AND VOLUNTARY TRAINING HOMES—ASSISTED EMIGRATION OF CHILDREN.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What has been the result of the communication with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, promised in July last to a Deputation from the Central Emigration Society, on the subject of the assisted emigration of suitable children from certified industrial schools and voluntary training homes in the Mother Country to British Colonies willing to receive them?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST) (Birmingham, Bordesley) (who replied) said: The Colonial Office reported that if Her Majesty's Government decided to bring in a Bill authorizing the expenditure of public or local funds for this purpose, the Colonial Office would communicate with the Canadian, Australian, Cape, and Natal Governments, and ascertain whether they would be willing to co-operate. The matter will be considered in connection with the subject of Industrial Schools and Reformatories, on which it is desirable to legislate at the earliest opportunity.

ROMAN CATHOLIC REFORMATORY SCHOOLS (IRELAND) — CASE OF CHARLES M'CLINTOCK, OF ARDSTRAW, CO. TYRONE.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) (for Lord ERNEST HAMILTON) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is customary for Protestants to be detained in Roman Catholic Reformatories; whether it has come to his notice that Charles M'Clintock, of Ardstraw, county Tyrone, a Protestant, and the son of Protestant parents, has for three years been detained in the Glencree Roman Catholic Reformatory; whether an application from the parents in January last to the late Lord Lieutenant, to have him transferred to a Protestant Reformatory, was refused; and, whether, in consideration of the unusual nature of the case, and the anxiety of the parents on the subject, he will give directions to have him transferred to a Protestant Reformatory?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The boy who is the subject of this Question was a tramp wandering about the country, neglected by his parents, and entirely free from parental guidance and restraint. He was convicted of larceny in the county of Meath, and as he represented himself to be a Roman Catholic he was sent to a reformatory school in connection with that Church. He was there for more than two years before any question as to his religion was raised. It has been ascertained by very discreet inquiry that he wishes to be a Roman Catholic, and is determined, if discharged, to continue in that faith. He is old enough to have an opinion of his own, being in his 17th year. In these circumstances it does not appear to me that it would be likely to tend to the boy's welfare to transfer him against his will to a Protestant school, or to send him back to the parents who neglected him in his childhood.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND)—POSITION OF NEW ROSS INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Wexford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the present position of the Industrial School at New Ross; whether there is in this school accommodation for a considerably larger number of children than that certified for by the Government; whether the Inspector has reported most favourably of this school; whether a memorial signed by all the local magistrates, of all creeds, was presented to the Government last year, praying that a larger number of children might be certified for; and, whether, in the event of his being precluded from proposing to increase the grant now in consequence of the Estimates for the year having been made up, he will give any undertaking that the matter will be duly considered in time to have the additional sum included in the Estimates for next year?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have, in reply to this Question, to state that this case, with others, will be considered in October. The hon. Member will understand that, of course, I cannot give any promise to extend that certificate. I am informed that the present certificate is a fairly average one, and that the county of Wexford is well off already in the way of industrial schools.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS, LIMERICK DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Limerick County, West) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the vacancies on the Board of Governors of the Limerick District Lunatic Asylum, caused by the death of the Most Rev. Dr. Butler, Bishop of Limerick, and the Very Rev. Dean O'Brien, will be filled immediately by the appointment of Catholic ecclesiastics?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): What the hon. Member suggests appears to me to be a very proper thing to do, and I will communicate with the

Lord Lieutenant about it. Some little time will necessarily be occupied in making the usual inquiries.

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—SELECTION OF TEACHERS FOR MODEL SCHOOLS.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) (for Major Saunderson) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a principle in the management of the model schools under the control of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland to select teachers belonging to the various Churches, so that their number may be in proportion to the number of pupils belonging to those Churches, who attend the model schools; whether the Government is aware that, in the Belfast Model School, there are five Roman Catholics in the Teaching Staff to nineteen Roman Catholic pupils, and only two Methodists in the Teaching Staff to one hundred and fifty-five Methodist pupils; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to have this inequality remedied in future appointments?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that it is their practice to be guided by the principle enunciated in the first paragraph of the Question. The undue proportion of Catholic teachers to pupils in the Belfast Model School is due to the fact that some years ago there was a very large attendance of Catholic pupils at the school, as many as 600 appearing on the rolls. I am, however, assured that advantage is taken of every opportunity to remedy the existing inequality. I should add that, besides the two Methodist teachers referred to, there are two resident Methodist pupil teachers in the school.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THREATENING LETTERS — CASE OF MR. ROBERT TESKEY, CURRAHEEN, CO. LIMERICK.

Captain M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the fact that Mr. Robert Teskey, of Curraheen, county Limerick, has received a letter threatening the life of his wife, who gave evidence at the recent assizes against the men charged with making an attack on his house, upon which occasion Mr. Teskey was severely injured; whether, at the trial in question, the jury acquitted the prisoner, notwithstanding his identification by Mr. and Mrs. Teskey, and the strongest circumstantial evidence against him; whether the Judge who presided at the trial has been asked to make any report thereon to the Government; and, if the trial of the other prisoners has been postponed; and, if so, for what reason?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Mr. Teskey received on the 12th instant a letter threatening his own life and warning him to leave his home. At the trial on the 6th instant Mr. and Mrs. Teskey identified the prisoner, and there was also circumstantial evidence, as well as some suspicious circumstances, against him; but the jury, acting on evidence of an *alibi* submitted to them, found a verdict of acquittal. In consequence of that decision, the Crown counsel did not think it desirable to proceed with the cases against the other prisoners at the present Assizes, and they were accordingly admitted to bail to stand their trial at the next Assizes. The Judge has not been asked to make a Report on the case. It is not the practice to ask for such Reports in cases of the kind.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—MR. CRAWFORD, SHERIFF CLERK OF BERWICKSHIRE.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to a memorial presented from the Solicitors and Procurators of Berwickshire, complaining that Mr. Crawford, recently appointed sheriff clerk of the county, holds a number of public appointments, and was and still practically continues to be a partner in a firm of solicitors practising in the district; and, whether he has made any inquiry as to the truth of the statements contained in the memorial; and, if so, whether he purposes taking any action in the case?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) (Clackmannan, &c.): I have seen this memorial, and made inquiry in regard to the allegations which it contains. The information which I have received is, that Mr. Crawford does hold a number of public appointments, and although these constitute a large concentration of offices in the same hands I cannot say that his tenure of them is a violation of the terms of his commission or of the general law. The commission contains a stipulation that Mr. Crawford shall not practise as a solicitor or law agent, or be a partner of any firm of solicitors or law agents; and I am informed that he is complying with this condition—that he is not practising as a solicitor or law agent, either personally or through anyone else, and that he is not a partner of any legal firm.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT, 1880—THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he will cause inquiry to be made whether, after the passing of "The Employers' Liability Act, 1880," the London and North Western Railway Company induced their employés to contract themselves out of the Act; whether, since the introduction of the Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill, the same Company have called upon their employés to sign another document to the effect that they are satisfied with the Act as it stands; and, whether the men signing this document are doing so under the understanding that it will be worse for them if they do not?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside): I have no information on the subject of the hon. Member's Question; but such as has been furnished by the officials of the Company, who state that in 1871, prior to the passing of the Employers' Liability Act, the workmen in the employ of the Company had established an insurance fund to meet cases of accident. In 1881, after the passing of the Act, the Company offered considerable advantage to the men forming that society by making a large contribution to its funds, on the understanding that it was to cover all risks that might arise under the Act. Fifty-three thousand men in the service of the Company voluntarily acceded to this arrangement. Subsequently, it was made a condition that all new workmen should enter into a similar arrangement. The Company state that the insurance society has acted very advantageously to the interests of the workmen, and that its accounts show a large balance. With regard to the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, I understand that the workmen are petitioning Parliament in order that their representatives may be heard before the Select Committee to which the Bill is referred, when there will be an opportunity for a full statement of their case.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he had any information to the effect that certain *employés* who had refused to contract themselves out of the Act had been dismissed?

Mr. MUNDELLA said, that he had no information on the subject beyond what he had stated.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—WICKLOW HARBOUR—LOAN TO THE COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, under secs. 13 and 14 of 43 and 44 Vic. c. 14, the provisions of sec. 14 of 43 Vic. c. 4, apply to the county cess levied for repayment of the loan made to the Wicklow Harbour Commissioners under sec. 6 of 44 and 45 Vic. c. 38; and, whether it is a fact that, up to this, the landlords have made no allowance to the tenants in respect of the sums levied for repayment of the loan; and, if such is the case, how should they act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, he had applied to the Attorney General for Ireland, who informed him that this question affected private rights, and sufficient materials did not exist to enable him to answer the Question. In any case, the Question was one that ought to be addressed to the Secretary to the Treasury.

Mr. W. J. CORBET gave Notice of a further Question on the subject.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE SUMMONING OF JURORS.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Law as to summoning jurors in Ireland requires that the panel should be exhausted before any juror is summoned twice; whether it is the fact that in Antrim and other Irish counties some jurors are summoned frequently, and others not at all;

and, what steps will be taken to secure the even and impartial operation of the Law?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The Juries Act contains a provision for the purpose stated in the Question. I am not aware whether any such practice exists as that stated in the second paragraph of the Question; but if the hon. Member will kindly furnish particulars of what he complains of, I will see that careful inquiries are made. The law is, that if any juror was summoned out of his turn he can make a complaint, and if it is proved the returning officer is liable to be fined, and the fine might be paid to the juror to recoup his personal expenses.

IRELAND—DISTRESS IN DUBLIN.

DR. FOX (King's County, Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the urgent need of employment caused by existing distress, the Irish Local Government Board will immediately communicate to the South Dublin Board of Guardians their decision as to the drainage of Lower Rathfornham, concerning which one of their inspectors, Mr. R. O'Brien Smyth, held an inquiry about two months ago?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): What the hon. Member suggests has been done.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (SCOTLAND)—GIRVAN HARBOUR.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the condition of the harbour of Girvan, in Ayrshire, and to the complaints of fishermen that heavy dues are exacted from them under the Provisional Order granted for the construction of the harbour; the original condition being that a depth of four feet would be maintained at low water, whereas the depth at low water does not now exceed two feet, that portions of the quay have fallen in, and that the harbour is in an unsafe condition; and, if he would take immediate steps to inquire into the case, and have the defects complained of remedied?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): I have communicated with the Girvan Harbour Commissioners, respecting the complaints that have been received from certain fishermen as to the condition of the harbour, and the following is the substance of their reply:—The rates levied on fishing boats are those authorized by Parliament. The depth of water required in the Parliamentary plans is 3 feet, and not 4 feet. In November last there was from 18 inches to 2 feet of water in excess of this. The bar and entrance is a shifting one, and during the winter the depth of water has been somewhat reduced; but the first flood or scour will probably remove the accumulated silt, which cannot be dredged in the winter months. A small portion (about 35 feet) of the old boulder wall—600 feet in length—has been undermined in consequence of dredging operations; but this will be rebuilt when the weather admits. The fairway is in no way obstructed and no accidents have occurred, the fishing boats going in and out every day that weather admits.

MR. MACFARLANE said, that the complaint of the fishermen was as to the small depth of water at low water, which compelled them to lie to at half-tide at the entrance. He would ask, if it was possible for fishing boats to enter the harbour in safety at low water?

MR. MUNDELLA said, he had sent the complaint to the Harbour Commissioners, and he had given exactly their reply. Anything further that the hon. Gentleman desired he would be happy to forward to the Commissioners, and he would show the hon. Gentleman any Correspondence that might take place. But he would point out that the Board of Trade had no power to compel them to adhere to their arrangements. That could only be done by Courts of Law.

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS, HOUSE OF COMMONS—THE CONTRACT.

MR. B. KELLY (Donegal, S.) asked the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, Whether the refreshment contractors receive five hundred pounds per annum for plate; five hundred pounds per annum for servants; pay no rent, no rates; have firing, light, and table appointments free of charge; whether they charge higher prices to one class of customers than to another; and, whether he would consider the desirability of throwing the contract for refreshment open to competition on the next vacancy?

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford), in reply, said, that, for a great number of years, a subsidy of £500 had been granted by the House to the refreshment contractor. In 1882 an exhaustive inquiry was made by a Sub-Committee into the whole financial condition of the undertaking of the contractor, and their Report contained a strong recommendation to the Treasury that the subsidy should be increased to £1,000. It was true that the refreshment contractor had no liability as regarded gas, rent, rates, and firing, and that table appointments were found free of charge. As to the objection that higher prices were charged to one class of customers than to another, there was a very slight change made in the charge to officials of the House; in other respects the prices were absolutely uniform. As to the last paragraph of the Question, he believed that whenever a vacancy had occurred in the past the contract had been thrown open to competition; but on the last occasion very few offers had been sent in.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —THE NEW CODE.

Mr. BOYD-KINNEAR (Fife, East) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether the New Code will form the basis of school examinations in Scotland after the 31st March 1887, or what date?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Trevelyan) (Hawick, &c.): The New Scotch Code will form the basis of examination in Scotland in all schools of which the school year ends on the 31st of March, 1887, and any subsequent date.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEER FORCE—VACANCIES FOR SUBALTERNS.

Mr HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, How many vacancies there now are for officers on the established regimental strength of every branch of the Volunteer Force?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling &c.): The deficiencies are—in the Light Horse, four; Artillery, 325; Engineers, 48; Rifles, 849; giving a total of 1,226. As a set-off, there are in certain corps 130 supernumerary subalterns, leaving a net deficiency of 1,096 officers.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON ACCIDENTS IN MINES—THE REPORT.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Reports of the Royal Commission on Accidents in Mines will be in the hands of Members?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Broadhurst) (Birmingham, Bordesley) (who replied) said: I hope it will be possible to lay the Report upon the Table of the House on Monday next, and it will probably be in the hands of Members on the next day.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE — DISTRIBUTION OF PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS.

Mr. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will consider the desirability of making arrangements that copies of all Parliamentary Papers be issued gratuitously to the accredited agents of the Incorporated Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): If it should be still possible to make the necessary arrangements, I think that Chambers of Commerce might be granted the same advantages in this respect as free libraries, which I explained in my reply to the hon. Member for Birmingham.

THE IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE—MEETING OF THE KILBRIDE BRANCH.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a meeting of the Kilbride Branch of the Irish National League was held on Sunday, February 21st 1886, at the house of James Creighton, Ballinderry, county Roscommon; whether John O'Connor, herd to Mr. Keegan, was directed to appear before this meeting, and explain why he allowed some cattle, the property of Patrick Hunt, of Ballinderry, to graze on Mr. Keegan's farm; whether Mr. Keegan has been, and is now, boycotted; whether two head of cattle belonging to Patrick Hunt have since been removed from Mr. Keegan's farm;

and, whether the Government intend to take steps to secure freedom of action in county Roscommon?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): As the Question infers, the meeting alluded to was a private one, and the police were not present. I am informed that John O'Connor was directed to appear at the meeting. He declines to give any evidence of what happened. It is the case that Patrick Hunt removed his cattle from Mr. Keegan's land a few days afterwards. Mr. Keegan is stated to be "Boycotted" in consequence of the raising of certain conacre rents on the property on which he is bailiff being attributed to him. He is under police protection. I am not aware of anything in the circumstances of the county of Roscommon calling for isolated action with respect to it.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman could give any information as to what statement had been made to the police in connection with this matter?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I gather that no statement has been made—that those who could have made it declined to give it.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE (DUBLIN)—THE COLLECTOR GENERAL OF RATES.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that Mr. Perry, chief clerk in the office of the Collector General of Rates, Dublin, has this year made an alteration in the rate books which is calculated to deprive of their franchise rights persons occupying premises rated to the relief of the poor under the annual value of eight pounds; whether the chief clerk is a member of local Conservative clubs; and, what the Government will do to prevent illegal tampering by officials with the franchise rights of occupiers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that any changes which have been made in the Dublin rate book this year were made by direction, not of Mr. Perry, but of the Collector General, acting on the legal advice of the late Attorney General for Ireland and Mr. Carton, Q.C. The Collector General reports that every person has been rated who is entitled to appear, so far as the collectors of the various wards have been able to ascertain. It does not rest with the Collector General, nor with anyone in his Office, to decide who is entitled to the franchise.

BANKRUPTCY COURT (LONDON)—APPOINTMENT OF MR. GIFFARD AS REGISTRAR.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, By whom was the appointment of Mr. Giffard as head of the Bankruptcy Court in London lately made, at a salary of £2,000 a-year; and, whether he was entitled to the appointment as being next on the rota for promotion?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Broadhurst) (Birmingham, Bordesley) (who replied) said, the appointment of Mr. Giffard as one of the Bankruptcy Registrars (not head) was, by virtue of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, made by the then Lord Chancellor. The salary is the same as that of the then existing Registrars—namely, £1,500, not £2,000. The concluding paragraph of the Question it is not necessary for me to answer.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM asked, whether it was the case that Mr. Giffard was a brother of the late Lord Chancellor?

Mr. BROADHURST said, that he could not give any answer to that Question.

POLICE (SCOTLAND)—DISMISSAL OF JAMES MARTIN, POLICE CONSTABLE, ABERDEEN.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether he has received a memorial from James Martin, lately in the police force in Aberdeen; whether the circumstances of the dismissal of James Martin are correctly set forth in the following statement made by him:—

> "At Whitehall Road, where my beat was situated, early in the morning of the 29th October last, a young man named Corbett was suffering from a severe attack of asthma, and had been under the care of a doctor for a considerable time. When going my rounds I heard several times the shouts of the sufferer. A little after five o'clock in the morning one of his female attendants asked me to procure some

brandy for him. As they had no doctor's prescription for it, it was with a considerable amount of hesitation that I said I would endeavour to get it. Mr. Craighead, grocer, lived not far off, so I went to his house, rang the bell, and explained the state of matters. He gave me a bottle of brandy on the condition that I would replace it next day along with a doctor's line, certifying that Mr. Corbett was really in want of it. I duly replaced the brandy, along with a line from Dr. Wyness, who was attending the sufferer. Next night I explained the matter to my sergeant, Daniel Ross, the consequence being that Superintendent Wyness dismissed me from the service without any further investigation ;"

whether it is the practice when a policeman has been dismissed from the force in one place to consider him ineligible for appointment in any other place ; and, whether he will consider the propriety of proposing such a change in the law as will give dismissed policemen a right of appeal to the Watch Committees or similar authority?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): I have received the memorial in question, and think it right that the superintendent of police should have an opportunity of furnishing me with an explanation of the case, which I have asked for. The practice referred to in the third part of the hon. Member's Question is laid down as a rule of the Police Force by an Order of the Secretary of State under the Scottish Police Act of 1857. The Police Act of 1862 gives the superintendent of police the right of appointing and removing constables at his pleasure; but I will consider the question of providing for appeals in such cases in connection with the Police Bill now before the House of Lords.

LOCAL TAXATION—THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON TOWN HOLDINGS—TAXATION OF RAILWAY STOCKS.

Mr. MILNES-GASKELL (York, W.R., Morley) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If the Select Committee on Town Holdings has, under its enlarged powers, authority to take into consideration the expediency of rendering all Corporation Stocks and all Debenture Stocks of Railways in the United Kingdom liable to local taxation; and, if not, whether the Government would consent to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the subject?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby), in reply, said, it was his impression that this question would not come within the scope of the Committee on Town Holdings, but that it rather referred to the question of local government, with regard to which Her Majesty's Government intended introducing a Bill.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—CIRCUIT ARRANGEMENTS.

Mr. MORGAN HOWARD (Camberwell, Dulwich) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, by reason of existing Circuit arrangements, many of the Judges of the High Court are withdrawn four times yearly from the Metropolis to the Provinces, where much of their time is occupied in disposing of criminal cases, of which a large number are within the jurisdiction of Courts of Quarter Sessions; whether the consequent diminution of judicial strength in the Metropolis leads to a serious arrear of untried causes, and to loss and detriment to suitors; and, whether the Government contemplate an early alteration of present Circuit arrangements, or intend otherwise to provide for more speedy and continuous trial of actions in the Metropolis?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. BROADHURST) (Birmingham, Bordesley): In reply to the hon. and learned Gentleman I have to say that the Secretary of State has made inquiries, and he does not find that much of the time of the Judges on Circuit is spent on Quarter Sessions cases. New Circuit arrangements have very recently been made with a view to the best distribution of judicial time between the Metropolis and the Provinces; and the Lord Chancellor and the Judges keep the subject always under their attention with a view to any alterations which may from time to time appear desirable and practicable.

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—COALING STATIONS.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will state what provision is made in the Estimates for 1886-7 for the defences of the coaling stations, the military ports and the commercial ports respectively, and the specific purposes in each case to which the money already voted and now asked for has been or will be applied; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Paper showing the original Estimates for the several defences, and the progress made in providing them?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I have already stated in answer to Questions the sums proposed for coaling stations. As regards military and commercial ports, we do not intend to go beyond the normal provision, excepting in submarine mining defences, for which £40,000 will be provided under Vote 13. With regard to "the specific purposes in each case," as to which my right hon. Friend inquires, I will ask him to allow me to follow the example set by himself last year, and to decline, in the interests of the Public Service, to give details of the precise places and manner at and in which the money should be expended.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—GERMAN ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY BELONGING TO ZANZIBAR.

MR. J. F. HUTTON (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government has received any information confirming or contradicting a telegram in *The Times* of the 15th instant, that Lieutenant Andersen, on behalf of the German East African Society, had acquired the Sabaki territory lying between the Zanzibar Coast and Kilima-Njaro, and that the expedition had been fired on by the soldiers of the Sultan of Zanzibar; and, whether Her Majesty's Government has received any information relative to a telegram in the daily papers, dated Vienna, 16th instant, to the effect that the Sultan of the Comoro Islands, who hitherto had been under the nominal protectorate of the Sultan of Zanzibar, had accepted the protectorate of, and had concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with, the Government of the French Republic?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): As to the first part of the Question, no information of any sort has been received. No official information has reached Her Majesty's Government of the reports which have appeared in various newspapers as to the extension of the Protectorate of France, which has for some time existed in Mayotte, over any other Island of the Comoro Group.

INLAND REVENUE — TAXATION OF DOGS—EXEMPTION OF LIFE-SAVING DOGS.

MR. MILDMAY (Devon, Totnes) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that the fishermen on the coast of the Start Bay, South Devon, having no harbour accommodation of any kind, and having, in consequence, to beach their boats, in all kinds of weather, on their return to shore, have a special breed of Newfoundland dogs, trained to swim out and meet these boats in rough weather, and to bring ashore ropes, without which it would be impossible to beach the boats; and, whether, seeing that sheep dogs are exempted from taxation, on the plea that they are labour-saving, he will consider the expediency of exempting these life-saving dogs from a tax, the strict enforcement of which threatens to cause the extinction of the breed?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): The subject is a new one to me, but it is a very interesting one, and I will make inquiry into the matter.

THE BISHOPRIC OF JERUSALEM.

MR. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Bishopric of Jerusalem is still vacant; if so, whether the appointment to it rests with the German Government; and, if it does, whether he can tell the House the reason why the German Government have not filled up the vacant appointment?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I believe the state of the facts to be this—In the first place, the Bishopric in question is still vacant; and, in the second, it is the turn of the Emperor of Germany, under the existing arrangement, to nominate a successor to the late Bishop. But His Imperial Majesty has made a communication to this country, that he desires the arrangement made in 1841 to be either modified or abrogated altogether. Under these circumstances, I understand a communication has been recently received from the Archbishop of Canterbury consenting, on behalf of the British Trustees to the British deed of endowment, that the present arrangement should be abrogated. What will be put in its place I am not in a position to say.

IRELAND—POLICY OF THE MINISTRY.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS - BEACH (Bristol, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as the most urgent matters of Supply will probably be disposed of by Monday next, he can now state when he will be in a condition to make that further indication to the House as to the whole or some part of the proposals of Her Majesty's Government for dealing with the question of the state of Ireland, which, on the 18th of February, he hoped to be able to give by the 22nd of March?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The terms used by the right hon. Gentleman are not, I think, quite precisely accurate. On referring to my words, I find that they are, "that after the Votes in Supply are concluded"—for which date I named the 22nd, as to be, in fact, the probable and necessary day for the Votes of Supply to be taken—"by that time I shall be able, I hope, to make some announcement." I have no change to make in the statement I then made before the House. Next week I hope to name a day for the purpose of redeeming the pledge I then gave. Perhaps I may be permitted to repeat the caution which I ventured to impress upon the House on a former occasion, and to recommend, in regard to current rumour upon matters—the truth of which it is impossible to make known at the present time without a breach of an honourable engagement—that, with regard to those rumours, they should exercise a prudent reserve. I may even venture to say a wholesome scepticism. Another word I have to say is this—it would be a comparatively simple proceeding for myself and my Colleagues, if we had nothing to do but to announce the day when that statement could be made in a speech to the House. But, Sir, it would be most unsatisfactory, I think, to the House if, upon any particular day, I were to rise to make a statement, and, at the same time, were not able to inform the House that the Bill for giving effect to that statement had been drawn, and would be very promptly in the hands of the House. It is quite evident that a statement of that kind itself may be important and interesting, notwithstanding the defects of the Speaker; but, however important and interesting it may be, it cannot form an authentic basis for the judgment of the House. It is the Bill itself that can only become that. The drawing of Bills upon a subject such as may be in prospect is a matter of considerable delicacy as well as importance, and therefore it cannot be carried beyond a certain point. I can, however, assure the House that since I spoke to them on the subject I can really say with truth that not a day has been lost, and that not a day will be lost.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will be in a position to answer the Question on Monday? I would also ask him what Business he proposes should be taken on Thursday next?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I cannot add anything to what I have said. That is, that some day next week I hope to name a day. On Thursday next I propose to take a measure which is really urgent—the Crofters' Bill—which has been delayed somewhat beyond our expectations.

IRELAND—THE DISSENTING BODIES AND HOME RULE.

MR. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the Address presented by the representatives of the Methodist Church in Ireland, which comprised over two hundred Ministers, and more than fifty thousand adherents, to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, protesting against any legislation in the direction of Home Rule; and, if the Right honourable Gentleman would direct a Copy of the Address to be laid upon the Table of this House?

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.): In connection with this Question, might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he is aware that my hon. Friend the Member for West Clare is one of the 50,000 Methodists who are referred to in the Question?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle - on - Tyne): My right hon. Friend has asked me to answer this Question. As I stated in reply to a similar proposal or suggestion by the hon. Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston), I confess I see no use in producing and placing on the Table of the House a document which has been already directly accessible to the public in the newspapers. The other day my right hon. Friend stated his intention to lay before the House various pieces of information laid before him. I think it is very likely that this particular document will find its place amongst these.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — THE PROPOSED NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Mr. RAIKES asked, Whether the document that had appeared in that morning's papers, purporting to be the Government scheme, was genuine; and, if so, how it was that it had been communicated to the newspapers before being circulated to Members of the House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby), in reply, said, if the right hon. Gentleman had attended the first meeting of the Committee yesterday he would have got a copy of the proposed Rules, as other Members did. He (Sir William Harcourt) thought it was desirable that the public and the Members of the House not on the Committee should see these Rules; and, therefore, with the full assent and consent of the Committee, they were sent to the newspapers.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF THE ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Mr. RAIKES (Cambridge University): I wish, Sir, with your permission, to put a Question to you. I wish to ask whether, in your opinion, the Orders of the Day, as they appear upon the Paper, have been properly made out? Until this morning a Bill which stands in my name—the Tithe Rent-Charge Recovery Bill—stood first on the Orders of the Day. It was, in fact, an unopposed Bill until this morning. I now find that there are on the Notice Paper seven Orders before it, including Supply. Six of these Orders are Government Orders, as to which, of course, there is no question, as this is a Government night; but I find, Sir, that among the Orders the second on the list is the Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill, which is not a Government Bill, but a Bill introduced by a private Member. Standing Order No. 96 is as follows:—

> "The Orders of the Day are to be disposed of in the order in which they stand upon the Paper; the right being reserved to Her Majesty's Ministers of placing Government Orders at the head of the List, in the rotation in which they are to be taken, on the days on which Government Bills have precedence."

Now, I do not see in that Order any power given to Her Majesty's Government to give precedence to one private Member's Bill over that of another private Member; and as it appears to me that this is a matter of very considerable importance with regard to the Business of the House, I venture, very humbly, to ask your opinion on the subject whether this Order Paper to-day has been properly made out, seeing that it gives precedence to one private Member's Bill over that of another private Member, which stood first on the Order Paper until this morning?

Mr. SPEAKER: There have been repeated cases in which the course objected to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge has been taken. For instance, the University Tests (Dublin) Bill was put down as the first Order of the Day in 1873, taking precedence of other Orders which originally stood before it. There have been other instances, to which, however, I have not had an opportunity of referring.

Mr. RAIKES: Do I understand you to rule, Sir, that it is competent to the Government to give precedence to any Bill they prefer over the Bills of other private Members?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes; on the days on which the Government have the disposal of the Business, that is so.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—THE COMMITTEE.

In reply to Mr. Magniac,

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, some delay had occurred owing to the necessity of communications with the other House with regard to this Committee, in consequence of some doubts as to its constitution and numbers; but he hoped it would be nominated in two or three days. When they were informed of the Members to be appointed by the House of Lords, there would be no serious delay in completing the nomination of the Members.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

CROWN DUTIES.—RESOLUTION.

Mr. GREGORY (Sussex, East Grinstead), in calling attention to the position of trustees, executors, and others liable to the payment of duties to the Crown, said, that the existing law was based upon the old principle, that "*Nullum tempus occurrit regi;*" but that principle had already been departed from, particularly with reference to the claims of the Crown to real property, which, by statute, were now limited to a period of 60 years. No exception to it, however, had been made in the case of Succession, Probate, or Legacy Duties, which were, consequently, the subject of claims by Revenue authorities for an indefinite period of time. Nor was that all. The Crown could claim interest at 4 per cent on unpaid duties, and the right to such interest accrued from the moment when the duties were legally due. It was obvious that this must be the cause of great hardship—he might say of injustice—to many persons; and he had in his hand numerous instances of this, with the whole of which he did not propose to trouble the House; but he would give one or two illustrations. Isabella Campbell died in October, 1807. She directed her real estate to be sold on the death of Isabella Gilmore. The Legacy and Probate Duties were duly paid on the personalty. The real estate was sold in 1840, and the duty was demanded in 1880 upon it. Thomas Ledwell died in 1803, bequeathing the interest of £1,710 Reduced to an illegitimate daughter for life. Trustees of the will were appointed by the Court of Chancery in 1805. In 1829 fresh trustees were appointed, and the present trustees in December, 1852. The daughter died in May, 1885, and duty was claimed on the dividends paid to her from 1803. The claim was compromised by the payment of the duty from 1852. A. and B. settled £14,000 in 1833 upon trust to pay the income to a sister C., and on her death for her children D. and E. D. married in 1849, when her share of the fund was settled. E. married in 1852, when her share was settled. C. died in October, 1853, when the funds were transferred. The Succession Duty Act came into operation in May, 1853; the duty was claimed in 1885. Lord Pomfret died in 1833. A claim on jointure was made in 1865 under his will, executed in accordance with a power in his brother's will. Accounts of both estates passed, and the estate of Lord Pomfret was administered in the Court of Chancery. Duty was claimed at 10 per cent, and the claim was settled for £1,024. Those, he thought, were sufficient to support his view of the harsh operation of the present law; but there was another and very important aspect in which it had to be regarded—namely, the title to real property. As the law stood, it was necessary for a purchaser of any property to ascertain whether and how it had become liable to Succession Duty at any time since the passing of the Act of 1853; and whether all such duties had been paid. If he did not do so, he might be liable at any time to have a claim for such duty sprung upon him; and any solicitor passing a title liable to it would be personally responsible to his client for having done so. It was evident, therefore, that all their efforts to limit or shorten the title to real property would be in vain whilst the claims to Succession Duty remained in their present position. He hoped that he had shown enough of the operation of the law as regarded individuals, personal property, and real estate, to justify his calling the attention of the House to the subject. He would conclude by moving "that a limitation in point of time should be applicable to liabilities for duties to the Crown."

Mr. DODDS (Stockton), in rising to second the Motion, said, that the fact that it emanated from his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Gregory) was sufficient to commend it to the House, for he never made a proposition in the House that was not worthy of consideration, and generally of adoption. He was quite sure that if hon. Members would look into the facts with reference to this matter they would be satisfied that this Motion ought to be adopted. The time within which the Crown should prosecute its claim ought to bear some reference to the time to which individuals were limited for taking action. He had no hesitation in saying that in agreeing to this Motion hon. Members would be taking a step towards the cheapening of the transfer of land. He was very glad it fell to the lot of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) to reply to the hon. and learned Member opposite, as from his extended experience in these matters he would understand the value of the Motion. If the hon. Gentleman was not prepared to accept the Motion absolutely, he trusted that he would be able, in conjunction with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to introduce into the Budget the suggestion he had made in 1879 that there should be but one duty payable ou the death of the testator. He commended the Motion heartily to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a limitation in point of time should be applicable to liabilities for duties to the Crown,"—(*Mr. Gregory,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.), in supporting the Motion, said, he did so with special pleasure, having regard to the fact that he was acquainted with a case in the county he represented (Donegal) which raised the point at issue. A man named M'Donnell bequeathed his property, a small one, to the Most Rev. Dr. Murray, then Bishop of the diocese, for charitable purposes, giving, however, a life interest to his widow. The latter outlived Dr. Murray, and the property came to his successor, Cardinal Cullen, who, yielding to the representations of the then Bishop of Raphoe, handed over the property to his Lordship to be used strictly in charity, but always having regard to the claims of an old priest, Father Brady, a relative of the testator. For a very long time the Inland Revenue officers appeared to have taken no steps whatever, though they had had full information. After the lapse of a considerable period of time, however, they suddenly unearthed this old priest and came on him for a large amount of Succession Duty. They not only charged the Succession Duty, but also a large amount of interest in respect of the years during which they had neglected to collect the duty. As he, however, was not in any way legally the owner of the property and not liable, they then unearthed the Most Rev. Dr. Logue, the present Bishop of Raphoe, and compelled him to pay £168 Succession Duty — the nominal value of the property was about £100 a-year—but in consequence of the necessary reduction of rents the actual amount was only £60. His Lordship had, by the exercise of very great economy, put together enough money to build a much-needed school-house for the tenants. The ground for this was marked off and the materials got ready for the schools, when down came the Inland Revenue, and not only demanded £168 Succession Duty, but interest for the many years in which they had been lying idle to the amount of £51 in addition. The consequence was, that the Bishop was obliged to communicate with the priests of the parish that all his economy had gone for nothing, had been in vain, and that the school so badly needed could not be built, as he had not one farthing left, having to surrender all he had to pay the Inland Revenue claim. He believed, however, that the Revenue authorities had a legal claim to the money; but, whether that was so or not, their conduct in the matter was harsh in the extreme. Considering the lapse of time that had taken place, this was really most inequitable; and he believed that the proposition of the hon. Member for Sussex would prevent the recurrence of such injustice. Such cases as these showed that the law was not in a satisfactory state, and he was of opinion that the Motion ought to be accepted.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby), in supporting the Resolution, said, the risks to which trustees were exposed were often at the hands of those whom they sought to benefit; and he thought that, though what was asked was a small instalment, it was worth giving. He hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would speak on this subject as a member of the Profession, and not merely as Secretary to the Treasury.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.) said, that the high authority of his hon. Friend (Mr. Gregory), and the uniformly fair way in which he always stated his case, invested his opinions with a weight which attached to few hon. Members of the House, and made it difficult to answer him. His hon. Friend had laid before the House the case of the executors and trustees, but did not state the case of the Government. No one knew better than his hon. Friend that hard cases made bad law. And it would be impossible to administer any law which did not entail some hardship of which the taxpayer might properly complain. He would explain how the question stood, and show that it would be unwise to agree to such a limit as his hon. Friend would propose. The Duties to which his hon. Friend referred were Death Duties, and to these he would confine his observations. There were four descriptions of duties levied under that head—namely, Probate Duty, Account Duty, Succession Duty, and Legacy Duty. As to the first, the Probate Duty, there was no difficulty about its collection. It was bound to be paid within six months of the testator's death. The Account Duty, which was not generally known to the public, but which had been introduced within the last few years, was practically a sort of subsidiary Probate Duty, and was intended to touch property made the subject of voluntary settlement or given in anticipation of death to evade the payment of Probate Duty. In that case, also, the executors were bound to pay the duty within the proper time. Coming, then, to the Legacy and Succession Duties, when was the Legacy Duty payable? His hon. Friend the Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds) would have one uniform rate levied totally irrespective of the devolution of the property, and no Legacy or Succession Duty should be afterwards charged. It was not for him to anticipate the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he was bound to admit that there was a great deal to be said in favour of that view, and if such a tax could be imposed so as not to create a loss to the Exchequer it might recommend itself to the House and the country. In 1881 the Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) made a change approved by the country generally, in which he substituted an uniform Probate Duty of 3 per cent, and where the property descended to the children or lineal descendants no further duty was imposed. But at present they had to deal with a most complicated system under which legacies were bequeathed. The Legacy Duty was not payable until the legacy itself was payable. It might possibly be in 12 months after the testator's death; it might possibly be not for years afterwards. Suppose a man left property to his widow, then to his married daughter, and then to her children. No Legacy Duty accrued until after the death of the widow. It would be impossible to ascertain what the duty was until the time of its payment had arrived; but how could they fix a date of that kind? His hon. Friend said 30 years might be fixed. But in a recent case the tenant for life survived the testator 60 years, a sum of £100,000 had to be divided, and 99 estates to be grappled with. The whole of his argument rested upon this—that the duty ought to be paid before the legacy was paid, or before the property was divided, that the only person who had control of the property was the executor or trustee as the case might be, and if the executor or trustee did not pay, but divided the property, the executor or trustee ought to be liable to pay the duty which the Crown had lost. If the Legislature was prepared to extend the legislation of 1881 and say that the whole might be commuted by an additional ½ per cent, a settlement might be made, and perhaps the country might be a gainer. The Inland Revenue had between 80,000 and 100,000 cases waiting the death of various persons upon whose death the duty would accrue, and the 1 per cent payable by the children or their descendants was estimated at not less than £2,000,000 payable to the Crown. He did not mean £2,000,000 on which the duty had to be paid, but £2,000,000 of duty. A great point had been made with reference to the Succession Duties; and he thought that the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment must have forgotten that the Commissioners were bound to certify that the duty was paid, and that, therefore, there was no difficulty in showing that it had been paid. Whether it was real or personal property, if the trustee did his duty and paid the tax there would be no question or difficulty. But they were asked to say that they would give the executor a certain number of years in which he might or might not pay the tax, and if he did not pay the tax then he was to go scot-free, and the Crown was to have no opportunity of following him. There was another serious question in which the Revenue was concerned. If a Statute of Limitations were passed the effect would be that the duties would not be paid until the period had run out, and then the Crown would find that the parties had gone. The broad principle upon which the law rested was this—all property under settlement under intestacy was in the legal hands of trustees, or executors, or administrators, as the case might be. It was their duty before they parted with property to see that the taxation which the Legislature had imposed upon it was paid. If they discharged that duty they were subject to no further liability or risk; if they did not they ran a risk. Then it was said that the period within which the payment should be made ought to be limited. He contended that a statutory limitation of this description would be an incentive to fraud, a premium on carelessness, and would seriously affect the whole working of the duties and injure the Revenue. On these grounds he asked the House to negative the Amendment.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, that he could not help thinking that the hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had really lost sight of the case put forward by his hon. Friend the Member for Sussex (Mr. Gregory). He did not understand that his hon. Friend had any objection to proper provisions being made to protect the Revenue. What he did understand him to say was that the Crown should not have an unlimited period during which they might come down on innocent parties for sums of money for which they were not liable morally and scarcely legally. A number of cases had been put by the hon. Gentleman as to the length of time during which executors had been administering estates; but his hon. Friend did not suggest that the time of limitation should run for any period before the day on which the duty became payable. His point was, however, that, assuming the duties had become payable, there should be some time, he did not say what time—a long time if they liked—but some period of limitation as against the Crown. The Secretary to the Treasury had referred to a life interest lasting over 60 years, at the termination of which period the duty became payable. As he understood the hon. Member for Sussex, he suggested that when the duty became payable at the end of the 60 years, or at any other period, there should be a time within which the duty could be recovered. He desired to say that he would not willingly be a party to any scheme which would open a door to fraud; and his hon. Friend would agree that in any scheme such as that which he had put forward proper provisions should be inserted to protect the Government in case of fraud. He could not but think that it was for the protection of the Government that there should be a period within which claims could be recovered. The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had said that the result of adopting such a proposal as that suggested by his hon. Friend would be that the duties would not be paid until after the day fixed by Statute had elapsed. That meant that the law would be evaded; but, as a matter of fact, the Department did find people out who had not paid the duties; and in cases which had come under his notice proceedings had been taken and money recovered. He submitted that some limitation should be fixed, under proper safeguards, within which the duties should be paid to the Revenue.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir Richard Webster) had stated that his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had not met the question as put by the hon. Member for Sussex (Mr. Gregory). He (Mr. Gladstone) was rather tempted to retaliate, and to say that the hon. and learned Gentleman had not met the point of his hon. Friend's speech. The Government could not accede to a Resolution of this nature on the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair. They could not give a promise to deal with a subject of this kind until they saw the manner and form in which it was proposed to be dealt with, and until they were themselves prepared with a satisfactory form. They had not yet reached that stage. He would suggest this to the hon. Member for Sussex—that if he raised a substantive Motion—and he did not say it was at all imhis recent work on *Popular Government*, speaking of the change that, in this respect, has come over, if not our Constitution, at least our habitual practice—

> "At present the Sovereign can make neither war, nor treaty; he can appoint neither Ambassador, nor Judge; he can do no executive act. All these powers have gone over to what is a sort of Committee of Parliament, calling themselves the Cabinet,"

who are practically irresponsible. That was not always the case in this country. Our ancestors were extremely jealous of intrusting these formidable powers to an irresponsible Executive. For many generations, scrupulous care was taken to associate the Great Council of the Nation, or Parliament, with the Sovereign in regard to war-making and Treaty-making. Mr. Freeman, in his *History of the Norman Conquest*, tells us that, in Anglo-Saxon times, the Great Council of the Nation had its active share in those branches of Government which modern Constitutional theories mark as the special domain of the Executive. He says—

> "The King and his Witan, and not the King alone, concluded treaties, made grants of folkland, ordained the assemblage of fleets and armies," &c.

And far further down than that in our history, in those periods when we are apt to imagine that the King was without Constitutional check, Mr. Toulmin Smith, in his learned publication, *The Parliamentary Remembrancer*, has adduced a series of precedents, extending over several centuries, to prove that it was a well-defined rule, which our boldest Kings dared not violate, that the consent of the Great Council, and afterwards of the Parliament, was necessary to a war, or a Treaty. I will not weary the House by reciting the many cases which he quotes from the Rolls of Parliament, and other authorities, in proof of this. I will mention only, as a sample, one case, which seems to me to be one of singular interest. In the fifth year of Edward III., the King's Chancellor, addressing Parliament, said that he—

> "Summoned the Parliament in order to make peace or other issue to the dissensions between the Kings of England and France." . . . "The said Chancellor," says the Rolls of Parliament, "on the part of our Lord the King, asked of all the Barons and great men then assembled whether the King should take the way of arbitration, as the King of France had proposed, or should make war. The Prelates, Earls, Barons, and other great men counselled as the best, that the King should make a friendly treaty with the King of France on the aforesaid matters."

Now I want to know, why this House and the "Prelates, Earls, and Barons" of the other House should not have the opportunity, as their predecessors had, of recommending arbitration, as a substitute for war, in some of the many quarrels in which this country gets involved in all parts of the world? After a while, the power and the right of counselling the Executive Government on matters of peace and war, seem to have been gradually devolved upon the Privy Council, at a time when that Body was a reality, and not, as it is now, a sham. I believe that this continued until the Reign of Charles II., when the King, as Mr. Hallam says, "wanted to be absolute, for which both he and his brother had a great predilection." I have no doubt they had. [*Laughter.*] There were many bad things done in the Reign of Charles II., and this was one of them; after which, Mr. Hallam says there is no tangible character to which responsibility is attached. That learned historian has some instructive remarks on this subject, to which I venture to ask the attention of the Prime Minister, who smiled rather incredulously just now, when I spoke of the Cabinet as an irresponsible Body. Mr. Hallam says—

> "It may be that no absolute corrective is practicable for this apparent deficiency in our constitutional security; but it is expedient to keep it well in mind, because all Ministers speak loudly of their responsibility, and are apt, upon faith of this imaginary guarantee, to obtain a previous confidence from Parliament which they may, in fact, abuse with impunity. For should the bad success, or detected guilt, of their measures raise a popular cry against them, and censure or penalty be demanded by their opponents, they will infallibly shroud their persons in the dark recesses of the Cabinet, and employ every art to shift off the burthen of individual liability."

We may be told that Parliament has a check upon war-making, because it holds the power of the purse, and the Government must come to this and the other House for a Vote of Credit, which they may refuse. But that power is perfectly illusory, because almost invariably the war is already made. Our ships of war are in active operation, shelling the enemy's coasts, bombarding towns, and committing generally all the havoc they can, and our troops have marched to the frontier, and are in the field, before the Ministers come to Parliament and ask for money. And then, if there is any demur, we are met with such exclamations as these—"What! are we now to draw back, after we have commenced hostilities? Right or wrong, we must go forward, and not forsake the brave men who are fighting for us." I can give a practical illustration of this. When the question as to the source from which the expenses of the last Afghan War was to be defrayed was first mooted in this House, my late right hon. Friend (Mr. Fawcett) moved an Amendment, to the effect that it would be unjust to apply the Revenues of India for that purpose. I believe there was no man in this House, or the country, more strenuously opposed to that policy of aggression, which led to the Afghan War, than Mr. Fawcett. But he was very careful to disclaim any intention of wishing to stop the supplies for the war. These were his words—

> "Before Parliament met, he declared to his constitutents . . . . that when war had once been commenced, nothing was so idle as to suppose that the House of Commons could stop the expenditure which had been incurred. . . . The soldiers who were in the field must be paid, the stores procured, or ordered, must be paid for. . . . Indeed so absolutely impossible, when a war had had once begun, was it to stop Supplies, that the House of Commons could practically exercise no control; and he felt this so strongly that he had no hesitation in saying that he did everything in his power to get Parliament summoned before war was declared; and he felt that had that been done, and if, before the war, they had only had the information they now possessed, this war would never have begun."—(3 *Hansard*, [243] 886.)

Just so; but we never do get the information that would guide our judgment, before the war breaks out. And it appears to be a received maxim of our national morality, that when war has broken out, it must be prosecuted to the bitter end, however unjust it may be, even in the estimation of those who encourage and promote it. I know of only one instance in our history, when war, having been commenced, it was suspended because the Government in power had become convinced that it was an unjust war. That was the war in the Transvaal, when the former Ministry of the right hon. Gentleman, discovering that they and their Predecessors had been grossly misled by the representations of their own officials, as to the circumstances which led to hostilities, deemed it right to arrest the war even in the face of defeat. And I am glad of this opportunity to declare that, in my opinion, that was one of the noblest acts of courageous Christian statesmanship recorded in our annals. But, as a rule, our principle is, when we have once embarked in war, to stick to our work; and nothing is more vain or hopeless, than to appeal to this House, to use what is called the power of the purse to put a stop to the enterprize. How was it with regard to the Egyptian War? When the Government asked for the first Vote of Credit, on that account, the war was already begun. Alexandria had been bombarded, and that great city of 170,000 inhabitants had been destroyed; not directly by us, it is true, but entirely in consequence of what we had done. It is true there was opposition to the Vote. There were a few English and Irish Members who had the courage of their convictions, and were determined to wash their hands of all complicity in that war, and to divide against the Vote, if it were only as a protest. I was one of them, and I never gave a vote in this House to which I look back with more unqualified satisfaction. But how many did we count? Just 21 against 277. It is true that there were 125 Members of the Liberal Party who abstained, or, at least, were absent; which showed that there was some remnant of conscience left to them. For, obviously, they were not satisfied with the justice of the war. But I have no doubt that, if they had any apprehension that the Vote would have been refused, they would not have been absent. But they trusted to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and trusted not in vain, to support the Government in that warlike policy, as they may be always trusted to support any policy tending to war. The Prime Minister, in a speech recently made—and if I venture to impugn any opinion of his, I beg him to believe that I do so with the utmost hesitation and deference—stated his belief that, in respect of war and warlike preparations in all parts of the globe, we have a tolerably effective control. But the only illustration he gave, from his vast stores of Parliamentary experience, was the Motion of Mr. Roebuck, to inflict retrospectively a Censure of this House on the

Government respecting the first Afghan War. But that was three or four years after the event. And if Mr. Roebuck could have carried his Motion, and had even impeached Lord Palmerston, or whoever was responsible for that war, what satisfaction would that have afforded for the unspeakable atrocities and horrors endured and inflicted in that war, and for the £17,000,000 of money spent upon it? No doubt, there are cases where the Executive may not be able to wait for Parliamentary sanction, cases of invasion or sudden attack, in regard to which there must be large discretion intrusted to the Government. But I contend that, in the immense majority of cases, the wars in which we get engaged are not of that nature. If we look at those wars in which we have borne a part, during what I may call the present generation—and Heaven knows they are numerous enough—the first Afghan War, the Syrian War, the Scinde War, the first Burmese War, the Chinese War, the Persian War, the war in Japan, when we destroyed Kagosima, the war in Abyssinia, in Ashantee, and our almost countless wars in South Africa, our second Afghan War—none of these can be said to have been occasioned by sudden and urgent necessity. Indeed, in the great majority of them, they were not, in any honest sense, wars of self-defence at all; for, in almost all of them, we were the aggressors. There was ample time and opportunity, without doing harm to any interest involved, to examine and discuss the merits of the case, and to consult the nation how far it was willing to embark on that sea of blood. We now come to the question of Treaties, or engagements contracted in the name of the nation, and involving grave national responsibilities. Here, again, Parliament is absolutely helpless. In other countries, the right of making Treaties is subject to the approval of the Legislature. In the Constitution of the United States, it is enacted—

> "That the President shall have power, by and with the advice of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur."

In the Constitutional Laws of the French Republic also, we find an Article to the effect that—

> "Treaties of Peace and Commerce, Treaties which engage the finances of the State, &c., are binding only after being voted by the two Chambers."

We have no such control over engagements made in our name, and which may commit us to serious and illimitable obligations. In my opinion, the fewer Treaties there are between our own and other Governments the better. Mr. Cobden had a maxim, which he frequently enforced, to this effect—

> "The greatest possible contact between peoples and the least possible contact between Governments; because the contact of peoples promotes peace, and the contact of Governments endangers peace."

I believe there are far fewer of those entangling engagements than there were in former times, though there are too many still. In the year 1859—I was not then a Member of this House—my friend (Mr. Hadfield), the then Member for Sheffield, at my suggestion, moved for—

> "Copies of such parts of all Treaties and Conventions now existing and still obligatory, under which the Government of this country is engaged, separately or in conjunction with any other Power or Powers, to interfere by force of arms, or by armed demonstration, or by the contribution of any military contingent or pecuniary subsidy, to attack or defend any Government or Nation with reference to its internal arrangements or foreign relations, or on any other contingency whatsoever."

The Return forms a notable monument of the folly of our ancestors. It relates to only one class of Treaties—namely, Treaties of Guarantee. There are, in all, 37 different Instruments binding Great Britain to onerous obligations in all parts of the world. Well, in 1871, Lord Salisbury moved, in the House of Lords, that this Paper should be reprinted, with the addition of any Guarantees contracted since that time. In making this Motion, he delivered a long and powerful speech, in which he said—

> "We have been accused of being a shop-keeping nation. Now, I want your Lordships to examine your ledgers, and see what is the condition of your obligations—to see in commercial language what are your liabilities and what are your assets. I want you just to look and count up the obligations you have incurred in the past, to calculate the results of those obligations, and to look round and see what are your means of satisfying them. Now, my Lords, what are those liabilities? . . . . Our guarantees extend over the whole of Europe, and even into the other hemisphere. I will not follow them beyond the Atlantic, but will simply ask, what are the guarantees which we have undertaken in this quarter of the world? Be-

ginning from the Westward, we have guaranteed the territory of Portugal, the territory of Belgium, of Switzerland, of Greece, of Turkey, and of Sweden."—(3 *Hansard*, [204] 1361-2.)

Some of these are very ancient, extending back to the 14th century. But by far the larger number are modern, and all were contracted absolutely without the consent, and, generally I believe, without the knowledge of the nation. Now, I do ask, is it not a monstrous thing that the blood and treasure and moral responsibility of a great nation like ours should be pledged for all time behind our backs? Now, I come to the third point referred to in my Motion, which relates to new annexations of territory to the Empire. And it is all the more necessary to dwell upon this point, as there is really a perfect mania for annexation among our countrymen in all parts of the world. It is estimated that we already possess one-fifth of the surface of the Globe. We have, in Canada, in Australasia, and South Africa an extent of territory which affords scope enough for the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon race for 1,000 years to come. But our earth-hunger is insatiable, and reminds one of the ironical stories told at the expense of some of the earlier Puritans—that to justify the grabbing propensities which began even then to be developed by men of our race, they adopted this convenient logical formula —"It is said that the saints shall inherit the earth; resolved, first, that we are the saints, and therefore, secondly, that the earth belongs to us." If anything can exceed the eagerness with which we covet the extension of territory, it is the righteous indignation with which we denounce the iniquitous rapacity of other nations, and seems to justify the sarcasm of Mr. Froude, the historian, who says—

> "The English nation is the most conscientious in the world in judging of the faults of its neighbours. If France, or Germany, or Russia annexes territories belonging to other people, we cannot express our disapprobation too strongly. We ourselves have swallowed more territory than all the other nations put together, but we only do it for the benefit of mankind."

There are some who believe that our Empire is already large enough; that we possess as many territories, in all parts of the world, as we know how to administer wisely, and to defend effectually. Many years ago, the Duke of Wellington said of India, what seems applicable to our whole Empire. He said—

> "In my opinion, the extension of our territory and influence has been greater than our means."

But I can give the House another more modern authority on this point, to which I am sure the House will listen with the greatest deference. In an article which appeared in *The Nineteenth Century*, in 1877, the right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister used these words—

> "It is my firm conviction, derived, I think, from my political pastors and masters, and confirmed by the facts of much experience, that, as a general rule, enlargements of the Empire are, for us, an evil fraught with serious, though possibly not with immediate, danger. I do not affirm that they can always be avoided, but that they should never be accepted except under circumstances of a strict and jealously examined necessity. I object to them, because they are rarely effected except by means that are more or less questionable, and that they tend to compromise British character in the judgment of the impartial world, a judgment which, I hope, will grow from age to age more and more operative in imposing moral restraint on the proceedings of each particular State. I object to them because we already have our hands too full. We have undertaken responsibilities of Government such as never were assumed before in the whole history of the world. The cares of the governing body in the Roman Empire, with its compact continuity of ground, were light in comparison with the demands now made upon the Parliament and Executive of the United Kingdom. . . . . . We who hail, with more than readiness, annexations and other transactions which extend and complicate our responsibilities abroad, who are always ready for a new task, yet leave many of the old tasks undone."

In my opinion, these are wise words, worthy of a sagacious, far-seeing, and patriotic statesman. But, whether it is expedient or not to add indefinitely to our Dominions, one thing seems to me perfectly clear—that those additions should not be made without the distinct knowledge and deliberate consent of the nation. I hold that opinion on this simple principle—that all such annexations involve national responsibilities, and generally responsibilities of a very grave character, and that, therefore, the Representatives of the people ought to have a voice in deciding whether the nation should incur those responsibilities. At present, it seems to be in the power of any petty officer in the Service of the Government, or, indeed, of any private adventurer, to take over large territories, and saddle the duty of maintaining and defending them on the British people, so lax has often been the acceptance of these acquisitions by the Governments of the day. I have often spoken in this House before on these and kindred questions. I am afraid my voice was too often like that of one "crying in the wilderness;" but I speak to-night with more hope than I ever did before, because I believe there is a much larger number of the Members of this House who are in sympathy with the principles I have tried to advocate than there has been in any former Parliament. Indeed, as regards all questions of this nature my hope is in the Democracy. I have lost all faith in the Governments; they seem to have delivered themselves up, bound hand and foot, to the power of the rampant militarism, which is the curse of Europe. The one topic which seems really and supremely to interest them, is to make preparations for fighting. At this very time, when bitter destitution and distress prevail in every country of Europe—when there are millions of men, not belonging to the worthless, improvident, vicious classes, but honest and industrious men, who desire nothing more than to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow—who are trembling on the verge of starvation, what do the Governments do? The one thing that pre-occupies their mind, and on which they are squandering the millions wrung from the hard hand of toil, is to add to their armaments on a system of insane rivalry to which there is no limit. So that the condition of Europe may now be described by two words—arming and starving. I hope that the increasing power of the people will tend in favour of peace. I think I can see some significant symptoms that the great body of the working men, and especially of the more educated and intelligent among them, are coming more and more to abhor war, and the warlike armaments by which they are crushed to the ground. There are some facts in the recent history of France which are full of hope. For we have seen Government after Government overturned in that country, because the people object to a warlike and fillibustering policy. In 1881, the Chamber upset the first Ferry Ministry by a majority of 355 to 68, on account of the Expedition to Tunis. In 1882, the Freycinet Ministry was defeated on the Vote of Credit it asked to enable France to join England in armed intervention in Egypt. In 1885, the second Ferry Ministry was overturned by a majority of 306 to 149, on a question arising out of the Tonquin Expedition. Much the same has been our own experience. The Conservative Government of Lord Beaconsfield, which came in with so overwhelming a majority, was utterly routed in 1880, on account of its aggressive foreign policy; and, I am sorry to add, that the former Government of the present Prime Minister fell on the same ground. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] Well, I am quite convinced that the late Ministry of the right hon. Gentleman would not have been overthrown, if it had not been for the unfortunate Egyptian business. I devoutly hope that, as time goes on, the Democracies throughout Europe will lift up their voices, and show their determination no longer to support the present system—that they will make the Governments understand that if they want fighting, they had better do it themselves, and so fulfil the words of the old song—

> "Let the men that make the quarrels
> Be the only men to fight."

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "in the opinion of this House, it is not just or expedient to embark in war, contract engagements involving grave responsibilities for the Nation, and add territories to the Empire without the knowledge and consent of Parliament,"—(*Mr. Richard,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. RYLANDS (Burnley) said, they must all be agreed that it was desirable that the House of Commons should have the opportunity of controlling the policy of the Government with regard to the making of Treaties, the declaring of war, and the annexation of territory. But, under present circumstances, that control was very slight, or could only be brought to bear when it was too late to effect any good purpose. Party ties gave the Government of the day an enormous power in forcing the House of Commons to accept any decision, however unjust and however dangerous, at which they might have arrived in their secret Cabinet Councils. No doubt, the Government were responsible, to a slight extent, for their decisions; but their responsibility was now a very different thing from what it was in former times. He knew they would be met by the Prime Minister with the answer that whilst it might be desirable that the House of Commons should have this control, it was impracticable. On a former occasion, when he brought forward a Motion similar to this, the Prime Minister said it was altogether impossible to have open diplomacy. But this Motion did not recommend open diplomacy, which would have the effect of inflaming public feeling. The Prime Minister also urged that there would be great difficulty in carrying on negotiations if the Government had to consult Parliament during their progress. Of course, there would be a difficulty in that course. But his hon. Friend (Mr. Richard) did not advocate that while negotiations were in progress between a Foreign Government and our own they should submit to Parliament the result of the negotiations as far as they had proceeded. All he contended for was that when the negotiations had reached a conclusion, and before ratifying a Treaty, the Government should come to Parliament and lay the provisions of the Treaty before them. In the Congo debate, on April 3, 1883, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, the then Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, disputed the general proposition that the Crown had the absolute power of making Treaties, and that those Treaties were ratified before the House of Commons had the opportunity of expressing an opinion upon them. He said—

> "What generally happened was this, that a Treaty was negotiated with the consent of the Cabinet and through the medium of the Foreign Office, and that at some stage, which varied in regard to time and place, and according to the gravity of the situation, Parliament had, as a rule, an opportunity of expressing an opinion before it was ratified. In all those cases which were of real importance Parliament had an opportunity of expressing, if not directly, at least indirectly, an opinion. A misconception appeared to arise in regard to the term ratification. The ratification did not take place at the time of the signature, but at a later stage."—(3 *Hansard*, [277] 1301-2.)

Of course, the House did not require to be told that the signature of Treaties preceded their ratification; but that fact, practically, made no difference. Occasionally, no doubt, Parliament did become acquainted with the provisions of a Treaty before it had been ratified; but the accident of its doing so did not in any way give Parliament the right of preventing the ratification. There was the instance of the Washington Treaty in 1871, which was laid upon the Table of both Houses before it was ratified. Lord Russell took the opportunity, on the 12th of June, 1871, in the House of Lords, of moving an Address to the Crown, praying Her Majesty not to ratify the Treaty—and how was that Motion met? The House of Lords felt itself barred, by the terms under which our Plenipotentiaries were appointed, from interfering in the matter. A noble and learned Lord of very high authority (the late Lord Cairns) put the case very strongly. He contrasted the credentials of the Commissioners of the United States, which consisted merely of an authority to discuss and sign a Treaty subject to the ratification ot the Senate, with the credentials of the Commissioners of Her Majesty conferring Plenipotentiary powers. Those credentials were in the usual terms; but the noble and learned Lord thought them so important that he quoted them at length, and called attention to the fact that the Queen "engaged and promised upon the Royal word" that the acts of the Commissioners should be "agreed to, acknowledged, and accepted" by the Crown in the "fullest manner," and were to be taken with "equal force and efficacy" as if done by the Queen herself. Lord Cairns added—

> "I refer to these words for this purpose. I am as jealous as any of your Lordships can be to preserve intact and in full the proper power of Parliament; but I maintain that when a Treaty has been signed, as this Treaty has been, by Plenipotentiaries possessing the powers I have read, the mere accidental circumstance that the ratifications have not been actually exchanged makes no difference to the substance though it may to the form; so that, to all intents and purposes, this Treaty is at this moment, in honour and honesty, as binding upon this country, according to the Constitution of the country, as if the ratifications had been actually exchanged."

The House of Lords were evidently impressed with this view of the case, and there was no division on Lord Russell's Resolution. The Prime Minister had more than once pointed out that Treaties most solemnly entered into often meant very little, because a great deal of discretion was left to the contracting Powers; and the right hon. Gentleman had referred to Lord Palmerston's *dictum* to the effect that though the contents of some Treaties might give a Power the right to interfere in the concerns of another, they did not impose any absolute obligation to interfere. John Stuart Mill had laid down that Treaties were not eternal; and George Washington had left it on record that nations did not respect Conventions when it ceased to be to their interest to observe them. But, admitting that Governments were not bound to recognize a duty of interference when Treaties were set at naught, interference, according to existing notions, was possible, and, as there was no knowing what Government would be in power at any particular date, such a possibility constituted a danger. When Russia proclaimed her intention to disregard the stipulations of the Treaty of 1856 with reference to the Black Sea, this country acted at first in a manner which might have resulted in war. Lord Odo Russell was sent specially to Germany; but though he threatened that England would fight Russia if the stipulations of the Treaty were broken, he failed to secure Germany's co-operation. In the end, but only after much excitement, Russia was relieved from the humiliating restrictions imposed upon her by the Treaty. That same Treaty of 1856 contained the understanding of the Great Powers to maintain the integrity of Turkey; and when the subject came before Europe in a practical form in subsequent years, it was only after this country had almost reached the verge of war that the claim to maintain the integrity of the Sultan's Dominions was abandoned. In 1878 he brought forward a Resolution in the House of Commons in favour of the submission of Treaties to Parliament, and on that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, then on the Front Opposition Bench, replied that there was a great safeguard in the determination of Treaties in consequence of their only being made in accordance with recognized public opinion. But a very short time after that discussion the country was astonished by the Anglo-Turkish Convention, which had been secretly negotiated at the instance of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, and in which this country was committed in a most serious manner. The right hon. Gentleman the present Prime Minister very properly condemned that Treaty as an abuse of Treaty-making powers. In 1883 there was an important debate in the House on the Congo Treaty; and in the course of that debate, in reply to Mr. Jacob Bright, who brought forward the Motion, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister referred to a former speech of his objecting to any interference with Treaty-making powers on the ground that no Government would ever venture to make Treaties on serious matters behind the back of Parliament. And the right hon. Gentleman said that, owing to what had happened, he was not prepared to repeat that assurance; and, consequently, he undertook that any Treaty made by the Government with reference to the affairs of the Congo should be made known to Parliament in such a way, and with the intervention of such an interval, that Parliament should be enabled to exercise an independent judgment upon it. That was an important advance on the part of the Prime Minister in recognizing the right of Parliament to consider effectively the terms of a Treaty before ratification, and he (Mr. Rylands) trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would give the House some assurance that further progress would be made in the same direction.

The FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE): (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said: Before I make any particular remarks on the subject of debate, I venture to offer a few preliminary observations. In the first place, I am extremely glad that my hon. Friend (Mr. Richard), in making this Motion, has entirely detached it and kept it apart from any particular subject of controversy. It raises a general question of the utmost importance; and it would undoubtedly have been interposing an obstable in his own way if he had approached the subject in a controversial spirit, with the intention of either directly asserting or indirectly insinuating that there has been in recent periods any particular case of abuse of the Treaty power enjoyed by the Crown. So far as we are concerned the matter stands sufficiently detached from any polemical considerations to enable us to look at it—as we ought to look at it—in the abstract, and any illustrations that are necessary may be drawn from a period sufficiently remote not to raise any difficulties of that kind. Secondly, I hope I may express the expectation, upon two grounds, that my hon. Friend has had it for his object to raise a discussion on this important matter, and that he does not mean to endeavour to pledge the House to the proposition he has put before it—were it only on the ground that inasmuch as it has become almost a stereotyped rule to deal by way of negative with the first Motion on Friday night's Supply, and as it was only owing to quite exceptional circumstances that that rule was not observed on the present occasion, there would be no expectation on the part of the House generally that the proposition of my hon. Friend would become the subject of a vote of the House; so that any vote which would be obtained would not probably be a satisfactory expression of the deliberate judgment of the House. I may also observe that the extreme breadth of the proposition itself would, in my opinion, make it exceedingly unwise for the House to commit itself after an incidental discussion—such as this must necessarily be—to changes of such range and such vast importance, entailing consequences so manifold and so remote that we can hardly measure them; and we ought not to be asked to commit ourselves to such a proposition at what I may call a moment's notice, or rather without any practical notice at all, on account of the consideration to which I have referred. But, in saying that, it appears to me I leave to my hon. Friend an ample margin and justification for raising a discussion of this kind; because it is very well that the minds of hon. Members, apt to be occupied from day to day with the particular cases that are continually pressing themselves upon us for notice and decision, should be occasionally brought back to the consideration of general rules and practices, which are undoubtedly in themselves of vast importance. Looking, therefore, not at the proposition as put to me with a demand for its immediate acceptance, but looking to the general principles on which my hon. Friend stands and the objects he has in view, I confess that I have always regarded them with a certain amount of sympathy, and that I do not find as I grow older that sympathy becomes in any degree less. I desire so much that the powers that are exercised by the Executive Government should be exercised, not only with general moderation, but also with a very strong and full sense of what is due to Parliament and the country; and I am very sensible that through the necessary infirmity of human nature, and without the smallest reference to the acts of any one Government or another, the present system cannot possibly be defended as an ideal system—that is to say, we cannot say that in every instance the maximum of security is afforded to the country against either its going wrong or its being betrayed into acts which, whether right or wrong, are acts of which it has no cognizance and on which it has had no opportunity of pronouncing its judgment. But I would observe that here we have before us three cases which are entirely distinct from one another, but which my hon. Friend—for the acquittal, no doubt, of his own conscience and for the full expression of his views—has combined in one single proposition—the cases of territories, Treaties, and war. Many of the important considerations which apply to one case do not apply, or do not apply with equal force, to the others. For example, take the case of territorial annexations. These are subject to revocation by this House. I have often said that this is a power which, in the abstract, is greater than it is in practice. But why is it limited in practice? Not because of what belongs to the annexation itself; but the difficulty arises in consequence of the political considerations which have grown, not out of the mere act of annexation—I do not know that a single case can be quoted where a difficulty has arisen simply out of an act of annexation—but on account of the liberty which has been assumed by the Executive Government in political and warlike proceedings antecedent to the annexation. That is what makes it difficult to deal with an annexation. If I refer to the case of Burmah—I have not heard it named in the way of censure, and I am not going to refer to it in that sense—it is simply because it happens to be the last act of annexation. It would be a difficult matter at this moment to revoke the annexation of Burmah. Irrespective of the question of the fulness of the justification for the annexation, there would be difficulty in doing it, for the difficulty there arises out of the warlike operations which preceded it and not out of the act of annexation itself, so that the matter resolves itself very much into the consideration of that part of the Motion which relates to war. With regard to Treaties, it is true that in very rare cases Treaties, and important Treaties, have been made, as it were, behind the back of the country; but these cases are exceedingly rare. In the main the Treaties made by the Government over a long series of years have been agreeable to the sense of the country. I take as an illustration of my argument the instance quoted with much force by my hon. Friend the Seconder of the Motion (Mr. Dodds). My hon. Friend greatly disapproves of the Black Sea Clause, as it is called, in the Treaty of 1856. As far as I recollect, I disapproved of it at the time; but I think it was irrelevant and unfortunate to introduce that subject in reference to the argument my hon. Friend had to support. The country was perfectly cognizant of that clause. The proceedings in connection with the Treaty of Paris were, according to my recollection, a subject of very long discussion in Paris, conducted by the Representatives of many Powers, and extending over such a considerable period of time that it was impossible that they should remain secret. They were matter of notoriety to the whole world before the Treaty was concluded. If Parliament had been consulted upon the subject and asked to give a formal judgment upon the clause, I have not the smallest doubt that it would have given its full consent. Therefore, it is impossible to derive an argument from that in support of my hon. Friend's contention. I do not think my hon. Friend has been too severe upon that clause. It was a clause impossible permanently to maintain. I believe I stated in this House many years ago that Lord Palmerston, who was more responsible for that clause than any other statesman in Europe, had no idea that it could be permanently maintained; but he thought it a valuable provision to maintain for a certain time, the great object of the Treaty of Paris being to give a breathing time to Europe. There was never any idea of threatening Russia with war upon the subject. My hon. Friend referred to a passage in a despatch of Lord Odo Russell, whose services are unhappily now lost to the country; but that passage had no connection with any instructions he had received from the Government at home. I have quoted that Treaty as a very remarkable instance of a European negotiation, where it was quite true that the Crown made the engagement without the formal assent of Parliament; but I am bound to say I believe it was a Treaty which was made with the thorough cognizance and in accordance with the prevailing and general feeling of the country, and therefore in faithful execution of the powers committed to the Executive. Now, with regard to war, my hon. Friend wishes to commit the House to an opinion that it is neither just nor expedient to embark in war without the knowledge and consent of Parliament. Does my hon. Friend use the word "war" in its technical sense, as describing a state of things known to International Law? No; he means to include warlike operations. I am not sure that any instance could be quoted in which the Queen has engaged in war in any technical sense without the consent of Parliament. Now, is it possible for the House to commit itself to such a proposition as that warlike operations are not to be engaged in without the full knowledge and consent of Parliament, or that Treaties are not to be concluded without the full knowledge and consent of Parliament? If a proposition of this kind were adopted by Parliament, there are no persons who would profit so much by it as the Ministers of the Crown. It would be an enormous lightening of their responsibility, as it would throw over the responsibility to other shoulders; therefore, they have every reason for favouring the adoption of such a rule if it could be safely adopted and acted upon. My hon. Friend asked me, if I am not mistaken, whether some progress in that direction has not been made by the course adopted in the case of the Congo Treaty. Well, wherever it can be done, I think it is desirable that the Government of the day should take the country into its confidence; but we cannot make a general rule to that effect. It is impossible to do so. If it were the judgment of Parliament that it was necessary to impose some wholesome restrictions upon the proceedings of the Executive Government in this important respect, how would Parliament have to proceed? My hon. Friend is perfectly right when he says that in other times such restrictions did prevail. As late as the last century, undoubtedly, it was the practice of the Crown to hold prior communication with the Houses of Parliamenton Treaties which were about to be concluded. Would the hon. Member like that practice to be revived? No doubt he would. What would be the consequence of that? You must go back to the state of things which existed when these communications were made and when the debates of this House were not reported to the country. You must have a secret organization in this House; you must have another Cabinet within the House. I am not objecting to that; but I beg my hon. Friend to consider what difficulties that would entail and what sort of confidence would be given to the judgment of the House upon the resolutions adopted about war and Treaties by a Secret Committee of the House. No; I do not think my hon. Friend would accept such a Committee. How is it possible to carry on whole negotiations in the face of the world and subject to the comments of the Press —invaluable for every purpose of domestic policy, but as regards such matters of public policy totally unfit for the purpose of carrying on such negotiations? It would be totally alien from our ideas of a free Parliament, where everything is spoken out and nothing is concealed, if the House determined to have such a change in the relations of the Executive and Parliament. After all, my hon. Friend does not get out of his difficulty. What does he say took place in respect to the bombardment of Alexandria? It was quite open to Parliament to censure the Government, so said my hon. Friend. He said there were 121 hon. Members disposed to do so, though they had not sufficient awakening of conscience in them to induce them to take one side or the other, like the angels of whom the great Italian poet speaks in the war in Heaven who were neither for God nor Satan. Two hundred and twenty-seven hon. Members came down and voted against my hon. Friend, so that, after all, my hon. Friend's instance did not seem to do much for him. I, for my part, would be delighted if it were practicable to associate the Executive more with the Legislature in these great and responsible proceedings, but I do not see how it can be done. If it can be done, let my hon. Friend show me the mode, and I, for one, am quite ready to consider it. In the case of the Senate of the United States you have undoubtedly a most efficient control over the Executive; but you have it associated with the power of secrecy, which is freely used in America, but the introduction of which would be contrary to the spirit of this House, and would be a matter of the greatest difficulty even to persons anxious to limit the powers of the Executive. With regard to warlike operations it is quite impossible it could be done. The check upon the Executive, I am sure, with regard to warlike operations would be very feeble. Let me take a case, not without interest, as sufficiently remote to be referred to without passing feeling. I refer to the case of the lorcha *Arrow* in connection with the difficulty with China in 1857. That was a case in which it would have been perfectly possible for the Executive Government, if they had been so minded, to communicate the proceedings to the House; but they did not think it necessary to do so. It was not like the conquest of Scinde, and many others. They might have disowned it, but they did not. The late Lord Derby had the strongest feeling upon the subject. He raised the question in the House of Lords and moved a Vote of Censure; but the House of Lords supported the Government. The question was raised here, and I took a strong part with persons of various political shades of opinion, and we beat the Government. But what happened? When we went to our constituents a great many of us lost our seats, and the country determined to support the Government in that very case. So I am afraid it would be in other matters, and that you would not be able to attain the object you had in view. It is, however, with the utmost satisfaction that I see both here and elsewhere the sense of the people much less favourable now on various occasions to wars than it used to be; but there is still great danger. The case of the China War is rather a remarkable one in that sense. Now let us suppose that Lord Palmerston was quite right and that military operations were necessary. Evidently it was a case in which there was no choice. If the thing was right to be done it was right to be done then. You could not refer to Parliament, you could not even obtain the judgment of the Government by telegraph before Sir John Bowring took action. Or to take another instance—I hope the last of all possible apprehensions of war, though one must not be too sanquine, between us and our kinsmen on the other side of the Atlantic—I mean the case of Mason and Slidell. The apprehension occurred when Parliament was not sitting. The Government of Lord Palmerston thought, as the Government of the United States afterwards admitted, that it was a clear case of violation of International Law. The Government immediately made their demands, and the sending of 10,000 troops to British North America showed that they were in earnest. Although that was not strictly the case of warlike operations, it undoubtedly committed the British Government and the country to war if the Government of America had not concurred in their view. That was in itself a breach of International Law inadvertently committed. But does anybody think it would have been possible for the Queen to have summoned Parliament on that occasion and to ask the two Houses, one of which might have voted one way and the other the other way, whether it was right for the British Government to make a demand for the release of Mason and Slidell, and if they made the demand with what practical and executive measures it was to be accompanied? I go with my hon. Friend with all he says against the militarism state of Europe, and when he says he has lost his faith in Governments and places it in the people, to a considerable extent I go with him. If we can in any way adopt any rational and practical rule that will enlarge the discretion and power on the part of Parliament towards the Executive Government, I shall be glad to listen to any such proposition if it is of a practical nature. But my hon. Friend, in endeavouring to induce the House to support a Motion of this kind, is practically endeavouring to do what is in the nature of things impossible—namely, to make the Legislative power the Executive. The Legislative power and the Executive power are essentially distinct. In this great country and its complex Empire, ramified all over the globe, you cannot avoid giving great confidence and great discretion to the Executive. If you give that great confidence and discretion you must be prepared for its being occasionally, through error of judgment, misused. It is very sad that the nation should be subjected to such a risk; but it is in the nature of things, and cannot be rooted out, and any attempt to confound together these two great provinces of Government — the provinces of the Legislature and of the Executive—will only produce confusion worse confounded and be liable to bring about an enormous extension of practical mischief. The hon. Gentleman expresses feelings and propositions in his speech to which I heartily wish well; but I trust he will not expect us, or ask the House, to accept a Motion involving results which, I think, he is hardly able to measure, and which I am sure the House is not able, after an incidental discussion, adequately to appreciate, and which, I am afraid, will produce many consequences not only not agreeable to the views of my hon. Friend, but the very reverse of those views, and calculated to be detrimental to the high and sacred purposes which he so justly advocates and has at heart.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said: I will not trespass for more than a few minutes upon the attention of the House, especially as the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) who has just sat down deals absolutely with the views of the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard), who brought forward this Motion, and as he said nothing with which we on this side of the House would be disposed to disagree. But it is absolutely impossible for us on this side of the House to sit quietly and patiently while hon. Members opposite, below the Gangway, choose to occupy on this great question of State policy a high moral position, and choose to assert by their expressions, and to insinuate by their motions, that everybody on this side is far below them in high moral wisdom, and, in fact, that they are persons for whom is reserved the "blackness of darkness" for ever. I am quite familiar with the attitude of the hon. Member for Merthyr on this great question of peace and war and international arbitration. I have often heard him make very much the same speech; but I have never known him to take a single practical step towards carrying out the policy which he advocates. To a great extent, I go with the hon. Member for Merthyr in the Motion he has moved. And, more than that, I say that it is not possible, practically, for the Executive Government either "to embark in war," or to "contract engagements," or "add territories to the Empire" without the consent or knowledge of Parliament. What are the three principal engagements which govern our foreign policy at the present moment — engagements to which the hon. Member for Merthyr and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) have been consenting parties? The first is our engagement to the Ameer of Afghanistan, entered into by the Prime Minister in 1880 to defend, under certain circumstances, the territory of the Ameer against Russia. That is an engagement which at any moment, by some unfortunate circumstances, may involve this country in war. What is the second engagement? It is an engagement to the Government of the Khedive, the sacredness of which has been dwelt on over and over again by the Prime Minister, and which has been recognized by Parliament and by hon. Members below the Ministerial Gangway. The third engagement is that entered into with the Powers of Europe that we will, if necessary, prevent Greece by force from disturbing the European peace. Mark the position! These are the three practical engagements which the present Government is carrying out. Every one of them may at any time involve this country in warlike operations. Under these circumstances, if the hon. Member for Merthyr wished to carry out his policy, why did he not take a practical step in that direction by moving a specific Resolution to the effect that these are engagements which may involve the country in war, and that in the opinion of this House it is the duty of the Government to take steps to withdraw from all of them? That would be a practical Motion which the House could assent to if it agreed with it. I hope, before the debate closes, that one of the hon. Gentleman's Friends will answer my question. Suppose something took place under these engagements which did involve this country in war, you could not say that you were unable to assent to that policy being carried out. The Motion of the hon. Member is a thoroughly unpractical and abstract Motion, and it is purposely unpractical and abstract. It has been moved in order to enable the hon. Member and his Friends to occupy a high moral position before the constituencies, and to go about the country on various platforms and say—"Here are we bringing forward these Motions, which, of course, are opposed by those warlike Tories who are always crying out for war." The public is not always going to be blind. If the Radical Party are so strong in Parliament—strong numerically and intellectually—why do they content themselves by moving abstract Resolutions, and absolutely shirk the practical issue? It is shirking a plain and practical issue when Motions of this kind are made and direct and practical Motions are avoided. Why do not hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite move that this country withdraw from the particular engagements I have referred to, which may involve us at any time in war? That is the question that we ask those hon. Members; and until they take up a plain, straightforward position of that kind, and bring forward a practical Motion which may have some practical effect on the Government of the country, the House of Commons will not believe in their sincerity, and I am certain also that it will always be easy to dispute the sincerity of their motives before the country.

MR. OCTAVIUS MORGAN (Battersea) said, he believed that in the treatment of inferior races no country in the world had been so just, on the whole, as this country. He regretted to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister say that he did not see his way to establish a Committee which would have, to some extent, the control of foreign affairs. He thought that it was most desirable that this country should have a continuous foreign policy; and he should like to see, in addition to the Foreign Secretary and the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, a Committee containing a certain number of experienced Members of both Houses of Parliament charged with their supervision. He should like to see foreign and Colonial affairs kept altogether free from Party politics in this country. He believed that we had suffered in the past and, no doubt, would suffer in the future by changing our policy with every change of Administration. He rejoiced to see, however, that of late years there had been a desire on the part of one Government to pursue the policy pursued by its Predecessors. While he regretted that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury insisted in the Treaty of Berlin that Roumelia should be separated from Bulgaria, he was now glad to see that Lord Salisbury, when lately in Office, had the wisdom to adopt a policy in connection with this matter which might be described as the Liberal policy. We had seen that in Greece also the Liberal Government had followed the policy of the Conservative Government. He felt the greatest possible interest in the welfare of Greece, and he believed it would have been the greatest possible misfortune if Greece had gone to war with Turkey single-handed. He was glad when it was decided to do what we could to prevent Greece commencing military operations against Turkey, and also when Lord Rosebery, on acceding to the Foreign Office, determined to continue the policy of his Predecessor. It was fortunate for Greece that there had been a change of Administration in this country, because the Greeks had great confidence in the Liberal Party in England. He listened with satisfaction the other night to the speech on Egypt made by the hon. and gallant Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan). Two or three years ago it would hardly have been possible for such a speech to have been delivered from the Conservative side of the House. We had, to some extent, now arrived at a continuity of foreign policy. Since the General Election Parliament had been able to take new departures in home affairs, and surely it could do something of the same kind in foreign affairs? He believed it would be wise to appoint a Committee upon foreign affairs. No doubt it would have to be a secret Committee; but if such a Committee existed he should feel more confident that foreign affairs were being conducted with more advantage to ourselves, and perhaps with more fairness to other nations. He should certainly feel more certain that continuity was being maintained in our foreign policy. It had been mentioned by the Prime Minister that in the United States the Foreign Secretary took advice and instruction from a Committee of the Senate. Certainly the United States had been remarkably successful in their conduct of foreign affairs. It was at their instigation that the French withdrew from Mexico. If the United States could carry on their foreign affairs by means of a Committee, why should we not do so? There was no validity in the excuse that it was easier to adopt a new course in a new country than it was in this. He was satisfied that we could learn much that would be of advantage in social legislation even from the smallest of our self-governing Colonies. They had made experiments, and we should not hesitate to do so.

MR. BOYD-KINNEAR (Fife, E.) said, the noble Lord had called upon Members who supported the Motion before the House to prove their sincerity by moving a Resolution to upset certain Treaties which had been entered into. They did not move any such Resolution as that, because they did not disapprove of those engagements. If it were the case that they disapproved of these engagements, then, indeed, a case would arise in which they would challenge the opinion of the House upon that point. The Prime Minister had stated that it was in the power of the House to have interposed in the case of annexations which had taken place, but that it had failed to take advantage of that power, because the annexations had been the natural result of circumstances that had occurred previously. He ventured to say that in the case of Burmah that was a disputable proposition. For a long time after the war in Burmah had been successful it was absolutely uncertain whether annexation or withdrawal was to be the issue. Far from its being a necessary consequence that annexation should take place, it was quite possible that the Government of India might have come to the conclusion that annexation was not a legitimate, a satisfactory, or a beneficial conclusion to their operations. If that were a proper matter for the Government of India to consider and decide upon, was it unreasonable that they should say it was a proper matter for the House to express its opinion upon it? And there was no emergency, or anything calling for instant decision, to prevent or hinder the sense of the House being taken upon the question. The Government of India had hung up the matter for several weeks. Instead of being a case in which the House could not have interposed, it was precisely an instance in which the House should have interposed to express its opinion. The Prime Minister had made some remarks on the Treaty of Paris. He said that if the provisions of that Treaty had been brought before the House they would have been approved of; but that was surely an argument to show that the House was a perfectly proper tribunal to be consulted before such engagements were entered into. It was the first time the suggestion had been made that those engagements were intended to be temporary. They had been under the belief that those engagements were intended to be permanent, and that the States of Europe who accepted them were bound by them. It appeared now, however, for the first time, that there had been a previous understanding to the effect that these engagements were only temporary. Why should there be secret Treaties and secret understandings at all? The Prime Minister said that if the power of the Government to negotiate in secret were abolished we should have to return to the conditions which prevailed when Parliamentary debates were not made public. But at the period the right hon. Gentleman referred to there were literary men who attended the House, and who gave publicity to its proceedings. So eminent a man as Dr. Johnson, trusting his memory to a great extent, did publish a Report, in which he put better language into the mouths of hon. Members than they had themselves used. How could there ever have been secrecy in the consultations of 600 Gentlemen? Who ever heard of a secret that was confided to 600 Gentlemen? Though the debates of that time were not published, there was a real communication of them through the Members to their constituencies; and the opinion of the country was in some measure expressed upon them. Why, he asked, should there be secrecy? What was there in the engagements that we desired to enter into which called for secrecy? Who had been the most successful Treaty-maker of modern times? Everyone would answer Prince Bismarck, whose doctrine and practice had been to make an open declaration of what he intended to do, and what he meant. Had not many of the dangers into which we had run risen from the practice of secret diplomacy? Had they not arisen because the country had not been aware of the actions and intentions of the Government, and so could neither control them nor sanction them? The Ministers were not able to speak with the authority of the country to foreign nations. Many a time, when the Ministers were threatening war, foreign nations believed that war would not be tolerated by the country; and the result often was that we drifted into war. That was the case in the Crimean War. The Emperor of Russia did not believe that this country would allow Ministers to carry out their threats, simply because, as he was well aware, the country was not allowed to know what was going on. If Ministers were to state openly what they intended to do, and if we did away with this system of secrecy, then the nation would feel the responsibility in which it was involved; it would make up its mind calmly and deliberately, and would not be hurried away by passion, because it would not be misled by false rumours as to what had been done in its name; but, above all, it would be able to strengthen the Government, and give it a power which it did not possess just now, and it would make our negotiations infinitely more advantageous and successful to the country than they had been in the past. The consequence of it might be that hon. Members might be turned out by their constituencies, as the Prime Minister had said they were in the case of the China War; but if they should make mistakes he thought the sooner they were turned out by their constituencies the better. Reference had been made by the Prime Minister and others to the necessity which might occasionally arise for the Government taking a sudden resolution; but no one wanted to interfere with that. In common life sometimes they had to take the law into their own hand, though, if there was time for it, they had always to seek the sanction of the law in the proper way. In precisely the same manner, there was no desire to interfere with the legitimate exercise of the power of the Executive in all cases of emergency; on the contrary, they should trust the Executive, and confirm its action, whenever the occasion arose for them to do so. But what they asked in the Motion now before the House was that where there was no emergency, and where there were negotiations and transactions going on for a considerable period, the Government should not conclude those negotiations finally until they had submitted them to the consideration of the House. He hoped his hon. Friend would not yield to the appeal that had been made to him to withdraw his Motion. There were a number of hon. Members who were pledged to the opinion that such questions as were embraced in the Motion should for the future be dealt with as matters belonging to the nation, and should be brought before the nation for its decision, instead of being settled behind the back of the nation.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, Lord Beaconsfield, on a well-known occasion, gave expression to a memorable saying when he said that the expenditure of a country is governed by its policy. In that maxim he (Mr. Handel Cossham) thoroughly concurred. It would be a happy day not only for this country, but for the world at large, when the same principles of honour and justice governed our International relations as governed the private lives of most of us. There was, it would scarcely be denied, hardly anyone who would, in his private life, act upon the immoral principles on which we had gone filibustering and annexing territory all over the world. He contested the principle that extent of territory made a nation either rich or great. A country was great not in proportion to the extent of its territory, but to the happiness and comfort and progress of its people. If, indeed, extension of territory could render a country great and powerful, Russia, which owned one-seventh of the world's surface, would be the greatest and most powerful country in the world. The history of the world showed that there were two great things that led to national disaster and ruin—one was the neglect of the poor, and the next was extent of territory. He asked the House to put a stop to that excessive military expenditure and extension of territory, which had created that gigantic National Debt now weighing so heavily on the industry and commerce of the country? He could not help observing, even in that House, that there was a great desire to spend large sums of money derived from the taxation of the country in keeping up great armaments. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), in the speech he delivered that night, had sneered at his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard). He would venture to remind the noble Lord that his family had received more money, and had done less for it, than any other in the country. He wished to remind the Prime Minister that it was the public opinion of that day which prevented this country joining the Southern States; and the case of Slidell and Mason, so far from supporting, told against the right hon. Gentleman's argument. The hon. Member was proceeding to enlarge on this topic, when——

Mr. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member was travelling from the Motion.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM concluded by saying that what he wanted to see was a check put upon the tendency to enter into foreign wars and complications. He hoped that public opinion would put an end to a filibustering policy in any part of the world.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) said, he should support the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Richard) if he went to a division. It seemed to him that the noble Lord (Lord Randolph Churchill) was very unfortunate in the instance he had quoted as to the Treaties he suggested they should move to repeal. Two of those Treaties certainly were entered into long before there was time to protest, and some of them had protested as soon as they had a chance of doing so. It was impossible to answer the arguments of the Prime Minister; but under the hon. Member's (Mr. Richard's) Resolution there was a great truth lying, condemning the policy of entering upon wars which involved great expenditure of blood and money before Parliament had any opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject. With regard to Burmah, the policy might be right or wrong; many thought it was wrong; but it was all over before Parliament could say a word. He considered that before the country was entirely committed to any annexation of territory or any war, and before steps were taken from which there could be no retreat without disgrace, the House and the constituencies should on every possible opportunity have the satisfaction of expressing their opinion.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, the country would be indebted to his hon. Friend (Mr. Richard) for bringing forward this matter. To many hon. Members it was really refreshing to have a night's debate of this sort after they had seen Parliament within the last few days spending money with the greatest lavishness, and had heard hon. Members speaking as if the only thing for which they lived was to complete instruments of destruction. In many points the case of the Prime Minister was unanswerable; but this was not a technical question. It would be lamentable if, after the extension of the suffrage, an improved feeling were not manifested in that House. He admitted at once that the House of Commons might have failed in its duty in several of the instances mentioned by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Randolph Churchill). There were difficulties in the way; all of them were influenced more or less by Party considerations, and it was not pleasant for them to assail their Leaders; but really, if they could not insure to the House of Commons the security indicated by his hon. Friend, they would be bound to have a still higher regard than hitherto as to the composition of Governments. No speech could have been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister which would have touched Parliament or the country more than the speech which he had made that night. Many of them felt that it was only for a comparatively short time that he would occupy the position he now occupied in that House; and he had left them, in the utterances he had made that night, his latest conviction upon this most solemn question. He hoped that what had been said in that debate would make such a deep impression on both sides that the spirit of levity, and almost of callousness, with which they had entered on great International engagements would not be so readily adopted in the future. He was not one of those who could look with unconcern upon the continual extension of territory for which Parliament was responsible. Mere considerations of prudence should make them hesitate; and if Parliament could not directly control the Government in any specific case the only alternative was to lay down a general policy. Many hon. Members were subject to the reproach of want of patriotism and pluck; but he said that they on his side were proud of the Empire, and of the position which it occupied, and wished that position to be maintained. He was sorry to hear the noble Lord impute to his hon. Friend (Mr. Richard) the motive of Party considerations. He believed there was no purer-minded man in that House, or one freer from considerations of that kind. During all the time he (Mr. Illingworth) had had a seat in that House he had taken the side of abstention from meddling too readily in foreign affairs; and he was one of the seven who in 1870 refused to support the Government when, during the Franco-German War, they yielded to the panic-mongers and brought forward a Vote for an increase of 20,000 men and £2,000,000 of money. That was his answer to the noble Lord, who charged him with acerbity, for it was his duty then to vote against his own Party. What he desired was that the House of Commons, and particularly the peace Members, should be continually on their guard, and should work superior to Party considerations. It was true that in several cases where protests had been made against the interference of the Government, as in the case of the Chinese War, the constituencies went against the peace Members; but it must be remembered that there was then a limited suffrage, and that while the governing classes supported a mischievous foreign policy there was an overwhelming majority of the masses of the people who did not commit themselves to or encourage interference. It was the working classes of this country, the working men of Lancaster, and Yorkshire, and the Midlands, that prevented our middle and governing classes from having any share in the war between the Northern and Southern States of America. Although some classes might at times be carried away by passion, he asserted that the feeling of the Democracy was not in favour of a war system. They were hoping and panting for a better condition of things. War had been the pastime of the governing classes of this country, but the masses of the people had been the sufferers; and he warned the present Government, and any successive Government, that with an intelligent Democracy finding expression for its opinion, they would be mistaken if they did not rely on calm judgment and moral feeling to restrain them from wanton aggression.

MR. SPICER (Islington, S.) said, that he hardly knew a war since he took an interest in political life that we were right in going into; and, though strongly sympathizing with the object of the Motion, he could not support it, for he thought that it would rather tend to bring about than to prevent war. During the recent Russian scare, for instance, when the Opposition were urging the Government to take warlike measures, any debate in the House would have done immense harm.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said, he was persuaded that if this Motion was not carried to-night a similar one would be carried before long, for it touched a subject very near the hearts of the working men of the country. He believed it was generally admitted that it was the unenfranchised masses which prevented this country from being plunged into war with the United States of America, and also that it was the same class who, six or seven years ago, prevented us from going to war with Russia. This class was now enfranchised, and he believed they still held the same views, for amongst the multitude of questions that were agitated during the late General Election none found more favour than that which was involved in the Motion of the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard). He was of opinion, however, that there was no desire on the part of the Democracy to lay down any hard-and-fast line in this matter, because they recognized that exceptional circumstances might arise which would justify the action of the Executive Government without having obtained the assent of Parliament. If the fire-eating journalist, bondholders, and unprincipled capitalists were to leave the people to themselves no country would think of invading the territory of its neighbour. He had no doubt that if the country had been consulted as to the annexation of Burmah before the Expedition started an immense majority would have declared against it. But the House was not consulted until the money had been expended, the blood shed, and the honour and reputation of the country more or less involved. It was in the hope of preventing the repetition of this kind of thing that he would support this Motion.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.) said, he desired to say a few words in answer to those hon. Gentlemen who had spoken since the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. There could be no doubt that the extension of our Constitutional rights that had been continually going on had resulted in giving Parliament a greater control over the Executive as far as related to the foreign affairs of the country. He did not believe that there was any Party in this country—and he said this as much of the Party opposite as of that behind him—who were anxious to go beyond the necessities of the case in making troublesome engagements with Foreign Powers, or to embark in military operations without the consent of Parliament. It was difficult for the Executive to have Parliament always at hand, and a large amount of responsibility with regard to foreign affairs must always be left with the Executive. Any Government which took upon themselves so grave a step as to embark in military operations knew that they would have to give a strict account of their conduct to Parliament, and that if they failed to obtain the sanction of Parliament for their acts they would incur the most serious personal responsibility, and that they would be liable to be immediately dismissed from power. In his opinion, therefore, the danger which the hon. Member (Mr. Richard) who had brought forward this Motion desired to guard against was not so great as was sometimes supposed. It was not always possible, or even desirable, that Parliament should be consulted before military operations were commenced; and, indeed, the hon. Member himself had not indicated any way in which the authority of Parliament could be better brought to bear in this matter than it was under the present system. Unless the hon. Member did that his Motion became a mere abstract one, to which it would be difficult to give any practical effect. He quite admitted that during the last 10 or 15 years the limits of Executive discretion had been overstepped upon more than one occasion; but it always lay with the Executive to allege that the occasion in question was an exceptional one, and that, therefore, they were entitled to Parliamentary indemnity for their action.

In these circumstances, he was afraid that nothing would be gained by laying down a hard-and-fast line of action. With regard to the method of controlling the foreign policy of the Executive adopted in the United States, he wished to point out that that country was in a totally different position with regard to its foreign policy from that occupied by any European Power. The United States had no foreign policy on this side of the Atlantic, and their foreign policy on their own side of it was very simple. He fully admitted that the more Parliament was consulted and the less secrecy there was about our foreign policy the better. It might be, as in the time of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, that while the foreign policy of this country in 1876 never received the approval of the people at large, still it did receive the approval of the then Parliament. If this Motion were agreed to, the hon. Member would have to go a step further and say that before the Government could take any important step in foreign policy they must take the opinion of the electors upon it. He ventured to hope that after what had been said on this subject on behalf of the Government the hon. Member would be satisfied, and would withdraw his Motion.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 108; Noes 112: Majority 4.—(Div. List, No. 38.)

Words *added*.

Main Question, as amended, put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 109; Noes 115: Majority 6.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Allen, H. G.
Allen, W. S.
Arch, J.
Barry, J.
Beith, G.
Bennett, J.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Blaine, A.
Bolton, T. H.
Boyd-Kinnear, J.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, right hon. J.
Bright, W. L.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Chance, P. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Cobbold, F. T.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cook, W.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cox, J. R.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Dillon, J.
Dixon, G.
Durant, J. C.
Esmonde, Sir T.
Esslemont, P.
Everett, R. L.
Fenwick, C.
Foster, Dr. B.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Gilhooly, J.
Gray, E. D.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hingley, B.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Ince, H. B.
Jacks, W.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, C.
Jenkins, D. J.
Johns, J. W.
Kelly, B.
Kenny, C. S.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Leicester, J.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Culloch, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
Mason, S.
Molloy, B. C.
Morgan, O. V.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Kelly, J.
Otter, F.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Powell, W. R. H.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Roberts, J. (Flnt. Bgs.)
Robertson, E.
Robson, W. S.
Russell, E. R.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheehy, D.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Spensley, H.
Stack, J.
Sullivan, D.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Thomas, A.
Tuite, J.
Watson, T.
Wayman, T.
Westlake, J.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. C.
Wilson, H. J.
Woodhead, J.

TELLERS.

Richard, H.
Rylands, P.

NOES.

Acland, rt. hn. Sir T. D.
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Addison, J. E. W.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Ambrose, W.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Baily, L. R.
Baker, L. J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, G. W.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Biddulph, M.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Broadhurst, H.
Bryce, J.
Chamberlain, R.
Charrington, S.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, Lord W. G.
Coote, T.
Corbett, A. C.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Crossley, E.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Curzon, Viscount
Dawson, R.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Duff, R. W.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Flower, C.
Fowler, H. H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Gibb, T. E.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Gower, G. G. L.
Haldane, R. B.

Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Holmes, rt. hon. H.
Howard, J. M.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hutton, J. F.
Jackson, W. L.
James, hon. W. H.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnson-Ferguson, J. E.
Johnston, W.
Jones, P.
Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir U. J.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kilcoursie, right hon. Viscount
Kimber, H.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lockwood, F.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Macartney, J. W. E.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
MacInnes, M.
Maclean, F. W.
M'Iver, L.
Mellor, rt. hon. J. W.
Menzies, R. S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Mulholland, H. L.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Murdoch, C. T.
Pease, A. E.
Pilkington, G. A.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Price, Captain G. E.
Pugh, D.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Richardson, T.
Russell, Sir C.
Saunders, W.
Saunderson, Maj. E. J.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Spicer, H.
Temple, Sir R.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vanderbyl, P.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Watson, J.
West, Colonel W. C.
Wolmer, Viscount
Woodall, W.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

SUPPLY,—Committee upon *Monday* next.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF SUPPLY.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): On Friday night, Sir, when a Motion like that which has just been negatived was taken, the custom was that Her Majesty's Government should move, "That this House immediately resolve itself into Committee of Supply." [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman opposite shakes his head; but that was the invariable rule in former years, and it was adopted out of regard for the surrender of their privileges which private Members made when the Motion for the Adjournment of the House on Friday night was got rid of. Unless some special circumstances intervened, some Member of the Government has always moved that the House should resolve itself into Committee of Supply. Now, on this occasion, I and other hon. Members have Motions on the Paper of considerable importance, which, in all probability, there will be no opportunity of discussing again during the present Session. I would, therefore, appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to follow the long-established rule which he himself, on more than one occasion, has said ought to be observed, except in special circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman, and those who represent the Treasury Bench, have always said that the Motion for Supply should be renewed, unless a late hour of the evening had been reached. It is now very little more than half-past 10, and yet the Government decline to set up Supply again. We are all aware how seriously the privileges of private Members have been curtailed in this House; and unless some opportunity is given to independent Members for having the questions in which they are interested discussed, their rights will be almost done away with altogether. We have in the House at the present moment a considerable number of new Members who are not acquainted with the rights and privileges of the House; and I appeal to them to support me on this occasion, or those rights and privileges will be seriously affected. I would also appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to say what the rule and understanding have been in reference to the Committee of Supply on Friday nights—whether it has not always been the practice of Her Majesty's Government, when a Motion has been negatived, to set up Supply again?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I rise at once to answer the appeal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman; and although I quite agree with some of his observations, I am certainly not able to agree with the conclusion he has arrived at. I think that the right hon. and learned Gentleman has somewhat overstated the case, although not seriously; because, in the circumstances under which the proceedings of the House on Friday nights were altered some years ago, and which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has recounted, I admit that there was practically an understanding that the Government should not escape from its obligation to allow free scope for discussion to private Members. He has fairly stated that that was the case whenever a division on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply occurred early in the evening. But we have now arrived at an hour which implies that a considerable portion of the evening has passed away; and the Government are bound to have more scruples as to the exercise of their discretion in again setting up Supply. We have considered that it would be better to proceed with the other Orders of the Day. It is a question, however, for private Members, and private Members only. The Government were taken to task early in the evening for having put a private Member's Bill next to the Order for Supply; but I believe there is a general concurrence of opinion that the Bill in question should go forward as rapidly as possible. Therefore, I thought that we ought to set up Supply for Monday, and go forward with the Order of the Day which stands next on the Paper.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I confess that we have some reason to be dissatisfied with the decision arrived at by the right hon. Gentleman. I certainly had understood that it had been almost the invariable practice that the Motion for Supply should be renewed under circumstances such as have happened this evening, and the more so as it is a comparatively early hour in the evening—only 20 minutes to 11. I do not know that the Motion of my right hon. and learned Friend stands on the Paper in such a position as would enable the important subject he desires to bring forward to be fully discussed; but there is a Motion in the name of the hon. Baronet opposite the Member for Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), whom I see in his place, which is of great interest and importance, and might very properly occupy the attention of the House this evening. What does the right hon. Gentleman compare that subject with? He compares it with a Bill which has no right to occupy its present prominent place on the Paper, and which would not have occupied that place but for the action of Her Majesty's Government, which, although it may, perhaps, be in accordance with precedents at the end of the Session, is, I will venture to say, hardly in accordance with precedents in the month of March. Her Majesty's Government, for their own reasons, have chosen on this occasion to place the Labourers (Ireland) Bill second to Supply—a Bill which they have not thought it necessary to introduce themselves, but which, I suppose, under certain pressure from below the Gangway, they have been induced to place in its present prominent position. But, Sir, it is not merely a question between the Motion of the hon. Baronet opposite and the promoters of the Labourers (Ireland) Bill, but it is a question between the Orders of the Day and the most pressing Business; and I certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the most pressing Business before the House at the present moment is the Business of Supply. Effective Supply has been put down by the Secretary to the Treasury for to-night; and therefore if, for any reason, the hon. Baronet opposite does not choose to avail himself of his precedence on this occasion in order to bring on his Motion to-night, the House ought to proceed with Supply and make progress with the Estimates. That the House should be called upon to postpone Supply until Monday in order that the Labourers (Ireland) Bill may be proceeded with can only be accounted for on one supposition, and that is the very precarious position in which Her Majesty's Government find themselves placed. We have done our best already to save them from defeat by their own followers to-night. We shall be happy to do it again, if we agree with them and if it be necessary; and after that assurance I hope the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider his position.

SIR JOHN COMMERELL (Southampton): I believe that the Motion which stands on the Paper in my name, in reference to the funds of Greenwich Hospital, comes before that of the hon. Baronet opposite.

MR. SPEAKER: The Order for Supply has already been passed over. The Order itself was defeated; and, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard) having been negatived, unless the Government chose to set up Supply again there is no power on the part of the House to revive it.

SIR JOHN GORST (Chatham): I understand that the Question before the House is whether Supply shall be postponed until Monday.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I rise to Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, if there is any Question before the House?

MR. SPEAKER: There is no Question before the House. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) who addressed the House addressed it on a point of Order. That is the only Question before it.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): Surely, Sir, was it not the case that just now the Question was put that the Committee of Supply be postponed until Monday?

MR. SPEAKER: The Committee of Supply has already been deferred by the action of the House, and there is no Motion before the House that Supply be postponed until Monday. The question which has arisen now has reference to the custom of setting up Supply after an Amendment has been negatived, and the Order of the Day has been suspended by the action of the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: I wish to submit, with very great respect, that the Question before the House is whether Supply shall be taken on Monday.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no Question before the House at all.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Can Supply be set down for Monday without the Order of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: I have already said that it has been set up for Monday. That was put from the Chair, and the House decided to defer the Order for Supply until Monday.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: But we object to that. We raised opposition to it. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Name!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the noble Lord that Supply is fixed for Monday. The Clerk at the Table had already proceeded to read the next Order. No objection was taken to that, and the House proceeded to the next Business after Supply. At this moment there is really no Question before the House.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL again rose, amid cries of "Order!" *and* "Name!"

MR. SPEAKER: If the noble Lord desires to put a question upon a point of Order he is entitled to do so. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) did put a question of Order, and he was therefore allowed to speak. But there is no Question before the House, and I must remind the noble Lord that he is not entitled to speak except upon a question of Order.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Then I will ask you, Sir, whether the House has agreed to the Motion of the Government that Supply should be set down for Monday? because I understood my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) to make an appeal to you in order to dispute that Motion. That is the point which I wish to place before you clearly—namely, whether the time had gone by, when my right hon. and learned Friend rose, for disagreeing with the proposition of the Government that Supply should be put down for Monday? I want to know, Sir, whether my right hon. and learned Friend was not in sufficient time to object to the Motion of the Government?

MR. SPEAKER: I put the Question in the ordinary way, that Supply should be postponed until Monday, and the Clerk then proceeded to read the next Order of the Day. The Order of the Day was read from the Table, and there is now no Question before the House except the Orders of the Day.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): May I ask a Question for information? I thought that my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, and myself, all spoke on the Question that Supply be postponed until Monday.

MR. SPEAKER: I have expressly stated that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven spoke upon a point of Order, and a point of Order takes precedence of any other Question. No Question can be raised now as to the setting up of Supply. The Question of Supply has been passed, and the Clerk proceeded to read the Orders of the Day.

SIR JOHN GORST: I rise, Sir, for the purpose of putting a question to you; and it is whether, supposing that Her Majesty's Government should change their minds and allow Supply again to be set up, it is not competent for them to do so?

MR. SPEAKER: We have passed the stage in which that could be done.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 10.]

(*Mr. Mayne, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Sheehy.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 15th March.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 9 (Extension of powers of compulsory purchase).

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to move the Amendment in this clause of which I have given Notice—namely, to insert in page 4, line 20, after the word "sanction," the words—

> "Subject to the provisions of section six of 'The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883,' as to the nature of the lands to be taken."

I do not intend to detain the Committee at any length while I explain my reasons for setting down an Amendment to this clause. It appears to me that there has been an omission in the drafting of the clause. The clause contemplates the disturbance of agricultural tenants in regard to their holdings in the event of the Sanitary Authority exercising its powers of compulsory purchase, and the provisions of the Act of 1885 are specifically referred to in the clause; but no such precautions are taken in regard to the Act of 1883. I therefore propose the Amendment with the view of supplying the omission, and to provide that the Provisional Order sanctioning the compulsory purchase shall be subject to the 6th section of the Act of 1883. My object is to protect the rights of the owners, as well as those of the occupiers, with regard to the maintenance of the residence and of the land immediately adjoining which are occupied with such residence. I do not suppose, for one moment, that those who drafted the Bill desired to introduce a principle which is totally novel to preceding legislation; and I confidently expect that hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway, who are responsible for the Bill, will consent to accept the Amendment, which simply places the provisions of this Bill in accord with the principles of the two previous Acts, and proposes to extend to the owner the benefits which the Bill intends to confer in the case of compensation upon the agricultural labourer whose occupation is disturbed.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 20, after "sanction," insert "subject to the provisions of section six of 'The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883,' as to the nature of the lands to be taken." — (*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I understand that the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) proposes to provide that in this Act the same exceptions in regard to mesne lands as exist in the original Act of 1883 should be continued. This provision was, if I remember rightly, carried at the time the Act of 1883 was passing through this House. The Amendment was moved by the ex-Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who was then Solicitor General, and agreed to by Members sitting on these Benches as a fair compromise. As a matter of fact, it was one of the Amendments agreed to on the strength of which the original Act of 1883 was passed. If, then, the Amendment now proposed by the hon. Member does not go any further than the proposition contained in the original Act I should not be disposed to object to it. But it is a matter upon which I think the hon. and learned Attorney General for England (Sir Charles Russell), who sits on the Front Bench, will be able to give us a decided opinion. Certainly, I should like to hear what the view of the Government is before accepting the Amendment, especially upon the point of law whether the Amendment moved by the hon. Gentleman does carry the matter any further than the Act of 1883.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): In the absence of my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, I am strongly of opinion that the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) makes no extension of the very reasonable and fair reservation contained in the Act of 1883. Believing the Amendment to be a very reasonable one I shall certainly support it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. FITZGERALD (Cambridge): I did not quite catch the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell the Committee, in answer to the question put by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) that the Law Officers of the Crown, to whom we look for information in regard to points of law, have given it as their opinion that if the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) is carried it will not make any further extension of the provisions of the present measure as to compulsory purchase?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: What I said was that it makes no extension of the reservation contained in the original Act of 1883 in regard to mesne lands, and so forth. We are of opinion that the same reservation, containing the same powers, should be included in Clause 9 of the present Bill which is now before the Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Amendment of 48 & 49 Vic. c. 77, ss. 2 & 4).

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to move the omission of Sub-section 2, which provides that "where a sanitary authority proposes to acquire lands on lease in execution of the Acts of 1883 & 1885, such lease shall be prepared by the sanitary authority."

Question, "That Sub-section 2 stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 11 (Exemption of certain premises from taxation).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 11 stand part of the Bill."

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): On the second reading of the Bill the right hon. Gentleman opposite objected to that part of the clause which provides that no Income Tax should be payable out of any lands, buildings, or premises acquired or built by a Sanitary Authority in execution of the Act; but I did not understand him to raise a similar objection in regard to Grand Jury cess; I would suggest, therefore, that the words "Income Tax" should be struck out of line 34, and that the rest of the clause should be allowed to stand. It is absurd to suppose that a tenant who pays, perhaps, 1*s.* a-week, or a rent as low as £1 or 30*s.* a-year, would be liable to the Income Tax.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin): The Question that the clause stand part of the Bill has already been put, and the hon. Member is too late in proposing any amendment of the clause itself.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Sanitary authority or contractor may enter on lands and take materials).

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): In moving the insertion of the Amendment which stands in my name, it is necessary that I should explain the object with which I propose it. The clause provides that the Sanitary Authority, or any person who has contracted with the Sanitary Authority for the carrying out of works provided for in an improvement scheme, shall have power to dig for and carry away gravel, stone, sand, and other materials which may be required for such works, subject to certain conditions, one of which is that the section "shall not apply in the case of any lands being an orchard, bleach-green, walled garden, haggard, or yard, or planted walk, lawn, or avenue to a mansion-house." My Amendment is to insert "demesne" after the word "lawn," in order expressly to except a demesne, as well as the other grounds specified in the sub-section. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will have no objection to accept this Amendment, which is in accordance with the spirit in which the clause has been drawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 8, after "lawn," insert "demesne."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'demesne' be there inserted."

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I do not object to the Amendment. On the contrary, I think it is a fair reservation to make.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I have now to move, in the next subsection, the insertion of the words, "or owner," after occupier. The subsection provides that the clause shall not apply in case the occupier of the lands shall not give his consent, unless and until the Sanitary Authority or contractor shall have obtained an order granting the power from a Justice of the Peace, sitting in Petty Sessions, for the Petty Sessions district within which the lands are situate. The object of the Amendment is to provide that the consent of the owner, as well as of the occupier, shall be necessary. I think the Committee will agree with me that the owner is fully as entitled to be considered, both in regard to compensation or in any arrangement that may be made, as the occupier.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 9, after "occupier," insert "owner."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'owner' be there inserted."

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I think that where the occupier of a house, or land, agrees to have his premises damaged, and materials for works or building purpose carried away, the owner might be reasonably expected to give his consent also. I believe that this is the provision which is inserted in the Land Act, the question considered being that the matter was one which more immediately affected the occupier than the owner. Surely there is every necessary safeguard if we insist upon the consent of the occupier and also the consent of the Local Authority being obtained. Precautions of that nature render the consent of the owner superfluous. I hope the hon. Member will see that the safeguards he wishes to obtain are altogether unnecessary.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I certainly do not think that the Amendment proposed by my hon. Friend is an unnecessary provision, at any rate until the law is greatly changed, and the owner, at some future period, becomes dispossessed of the land. The Amendment makes the matter perfectly clear; and in the event of the land being disturbed or injured the owner will be entitled to a certain amount of compensation as well as the occupier.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I see no reason why the owner should not have the right of refusing his consent as well as the occupier.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): I wish to point out that the Amendment, if inserted as it stands on the Paper, will not read grammatically. It requires the insertion of the word "or" before "owner."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 9, after "occupier," to insert the words "or owner."—(*Mr. Macartney.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or owner' be there inserted."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): It cannot be disputed that both owner and occupier will have an interest in the property; and in some instances the interest of the owner may be very considerable, whereas that of the occupier is very inconsiderable. I shall, therefore, support the Amendment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.): Of course, it is necessary to add the word "or" to make the Amendment intelligible.

MR. MACARTNEY: I have already accepted that Amendment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): The next Amendment is one which stands in my name, and it is similar to the one which has just been adopted. The sub-section provides that the Sanitary Authority or contractor shall make reasonable compensation to the occupier for waste or injury committed by entering thereupon, or by breaking the surface or making a passage through the land. My proposal is to include in the provision both the owner and occupier, according to their respective interests in the property.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): Does the hon. Member desire to leave out the word "but," in line 23?

MR. MACARTNEY: Yes, Sir; and to add the words, "and to the owner and occupier, according to their respective interests therein."

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: I do not see how, if we are to make sense of it, the sentence will run.

MR. MACARTNEY: The sub-section will run in this way—

> "The sanitary authority or such contractor shall make reasonable compensation to the occupier of said lands for the waste or injury committed by entering thereon, or by breaking the surface or making a passage through the lands, and to the owner and occupier according to their respective interests therein."

MR. WESTLAKE (Essex, Romford): I would propose to omit all the words after "lands," in line 23, down to "same," in line 27; namely—

> "But the value of any gravel, stones, sand, or materials, shall not be included in the amount of such compensation, unless same shall have been taken from any quarry or gravel-pit, *bonâ fide* demised to such occupier with liberty to work same."

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: In the first place, we must make sense of the sub-section, as it is proposed to amend it.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): There is an Amendment upon the same point in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who proposes to leave out "but," and to insert "and to the owner and occupier for." I think that that Amendment, taken in connection with a second Amendment in the same sub-section in the name of the right hon. Gentleman, will make the matter clear.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The Amendments which stand in my name will make the sub-section read thus—

> "The sanitary authority or such contractor shall make reasonable compensation to the occupier of said lands for the waste or injury committed by entering thereon, or by breaking the surface or making a passage through the lands, and to the owner and occupier for the value of any gravel, stone, sand, or materials taken."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 23, after the word "lands," to leave out "but," and insert "and to the owner and occupier for."—(*The Chief Secretary for Ireland.*)

Question, "That the word 'but' stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'and to the owner and occupier for,' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND: I beg to move the next Amendment in my name.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 24, leave out from "materials" to "in" in line 27, in order to insert "taken."—(*The Chief Secretary for Ireland.*)

Question, "That the words 'shall not be included in the amount of such compensation unless same shall have been taken from any quarry or gravel pit *bonâ fide* demised to such occupier with liberty to work same,' stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'taken' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

Clauses 13 (Temporary letting of allotments), and 14 (Act to apply to pending schemes), *agreed to.*

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I beg to move the insertion of a new clause, after Clause 2, to provide a definition of the term "agricultural labourer." The clause proposes, in the first place, to repeal that part of the 23rd section of the Act of 1885 which defines an agricultural labourer, and goes on to specify that the expression "agricultural labourer" shall mean a man or woman who does agricultural work at any season of the year on the land of some other person or persons, and the term shall also include a herdsman and a fisherman. I would remind the Committee that in the original Act of 1883 an agricultural labourer was defined to be a person who habitually works in agricultural work on the land of some other person; but it has been found that under that definition many persons whom it was undoubtedly the object of the Legislature to include have been excluded from the benefits of the Act. In regard to a considerable number of agricultural labourers employed in the agricultural work of some other person, it could not be proved that they worked habitually at agricultural labour, although that was their principal means of living. The definition was therefore amended in the Act of 1885, and it was made to run that the term agricultural labourer should mean "a man or woman who in ordinary seasons worked on the land of some other person or persons." Upon making inquiry, he found that even this definition still excluded a large number of persons who were virtually agricultural labourers. A good many women, and especially the widows of agricultural labourers, at certain times of the year have to accept housework; and in considering the case of Ireland hon. Members must not regard it from an English point of view, even in reference to the male sex. In England an agricultural labourer is able to find a sufficiency of agricultural work all the year round; but in Ireland the labour market is poor, and although there are many men in that country who would be glad to do agricultural work they are unable to get it to do. They find themselves compelled to resort to the quarries, or to the mending of roads, or driving cars, or any other work they can get to do; and what I want is to have the definition of an agricultural labourer so amended as to include all these persons. I hope, from the expressions which fell from several Gentlemen from the North of Ireland on the occasion of the second reading of the Bill, that they will be prepared to support the clause I move, and that there will be no opposition to it. If the object of hon. Members is to put an end to the wretched hovels which now exist in Ireland, so much to the discomfort of the inhabitants, and to prevent these persons from becoming a burden upon the ratepayers for medical relief and as inmates of the workhouse wards, they will certainly accept my clause. I have received a memorial from 52 persons in the Lurgan Union who work sometimes as agricultural labourers, but at others are not able to find that kind of work, strongly in favour of the proposal I make; and on the occasion of the second reading the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Macartney) spoke in the sense of this Amendment on behalf of the inclusion of fishermen. I think the hon. Member for North Armagh (Major Saunderson) did so also; but I do not quite recollect that the memorialists say they have been told in reply to their repeated applications that the law is not intended to apply to them at all. Their houses are wretched and unfit for habitation. They add that the Board of Guardians, of which the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Waring) is the Vice Chairman, had refused to include them in the Act as agricultural labourers in consequence of their having engaged in weaving work when the farmers did not require their aid in farming operations. I have no doubt that the hon. and gallant Member for North Down, if he had been present at the meeting of the Board, would have attempted to modify the decision of the Board in favour of these poor hand-loom weavers. As a matter of fact, they are poor farm labourers who have been driven to go to the loom because they cannot get agricultural work. Why, then, should they not have the benefit of the Act? The principle which I desire to lay down is that the man who does agricultural work when he can get it, and any other kind of work when he cannot get agricultural work, is fully entitled to the benefit of this Act as an agricultural labourer for the 12 months of the year. I hope that it will not be necessary to prolong the debate upon the clause, but that there will be a general consensus of opinion in its favour.

New Clause:—

Page 1, after Clause 2, insert the following Clause:—

"So much of the twenty-third section of 'The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1885,' as defines an agricultural labourer shall be and is hereby repealed.

"The expression 'agricultural labourer' in the said Acts and in this Act shall mean a man or woman who does agricultural work at any season of the year on the land of some other person or persons. The term shall include a herdsman and a fisherman,"—(*Mr. Sexton,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I have not much to say in opposition to the remarks which have been made by the hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton); but I do not think that the definition of an agricultural labourer which he has embodied in his new clause is sufficiently broad. I am perfectly willing to include the fishermen, although I am not of course, from my own personal experience, able to say how far they hold their houses upon a *quasi*-agricultural tenure. In regard to the fishermen of Ireland, I can only speak of the inland fishermen, and I know that in my own district there are a large number of fishermen who are engaged in the fisheries who hold their houses by an obligation to perform agricultural work, not at regular periods, but whenever they may be called upon by the owners of the houses. I believe there is some anxiety that this definition of an agricultural labourer should be extended so as to cover a very large body of inhabitants in the North of Ireland who are certainly as much entitled as any class of men to come under the benefits of this Act—I refer to the hand-loom weavers. There are a large number of hand-loom weavers to whom the present definition does not apply; but I am told by the hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) and by the hon. Member for Mid Antrim (Mr. O'Neill) that, nevertheless, it is the case that they hold their houses by the obligation to perform, not only at stated agricultural seasons, but whenever they are required throughout the year, farm work upon the land of the owners of their houses. I do not mean to make any general charge against the owners of these houses; but certainly, in some instances, the cottages in which these men live, to my own knowledge, are in a wretched sanitary condition, and yet they pay very exorbitant rents for the privilege of occupying them. I do not know whether the hon. Member for South Sligo will accept my amendment of this clause; but, if so, I should like to include those labourers who are occasionally employed in hand-loom weaving.

Mr. SEXTON: Yes; I am quite prepared to accept an Amendment to that effect.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The Amendment which I have placed upon the Paper includes fishermen as well.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin): As a point of Order, if the hon. Member for South Sligo (Mr. Sexton) accepts the Amendment of the hon. Member (Mr. Macartney) he had better withdraw his own clause.

Mr. SEXTON: No; I cannot do that, because there is another part of the clause of the hon. Gentleman to which I object; but what I am prepared to do is, after the word "herdsman," to insert "hand-loom weaver."

Mr. HOLMES (Dublin University): I beg to call attention to the circumstance that under the definition that has been given every reference to hire has been left out. We know that it is in the power of small farmers to employ their sons and relatives as labourers; and if that is done it will be possible for the Local Authority to provide houses for such persons, together with an acre of land. Such a thing was not contemplated by the former Act, and I am quite certain the Committee do not wish it to take place.

Mr. SEXTON: Insert the words "for hire" after the word "work" in the Amendment.

Mr. FITZGERALD (Cambridge): I fear that this Amendment may be made the means by which the land will once more be saddled with a payment which ought to be borne by those who do not pay the taxation on the land. I do not intend to make any Motion on this matter; but I think it right that the Committee should be reminded that the land may be saddled with yet one more tax.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "To amend the Amendment by inserting after the word 'work' the words 'for hire.'"

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to move to amend the Amendment by leaving out "and a" in the last line, and inserting after "fisherman" the words "and a hand-loom weaver."

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I do not wish to enter upon a discussion on this matter; but I should like to ask some information upon it from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. John Morley). The clause as it stands extends the benefit of this Act to herdsmen and fishermen; but suppose a fisherman does no agricultural labourer's work, will the clause include him under those circumstances, or does it not? Does it include a hand-loom weaver who does no agricultural work, or does it not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND: They must, for a certain time in the year, carry on the business of an agricultural labourer.

Mr. SEXTON: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman does not wish it to be understood that a herdsman is to be excluded from the Act unless he does some kind of agricultural labouring as well.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I would suggest that the difficulty could be met by adding at the end of the Amendment the words "doing agricultural work as aforesaid."

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I do not think that the Amendment suggested by the hon. and learned Attorney General would do as applied to herdsmen. The contention is that a herdsman should come under the Act by virtue of the work he does as a herdsman.

MR. SEXTON: The suggestion of the hon. and learned Gentleman would exclude herdsmen who were not agricultural labourers as well.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Would it not be more simple to add after "herdsman" "and also to?"

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: I think it is impossible to make that Amendment now. We have got beyond that.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I should like the hon. and learned Gentleman to tell me whether a herdsman is not already an agricultural labourer? Would it not be quite enough to say "fisherman and weaver," and omit the word "herdsman" altogether?

MR. SEXTON: I should say that it is quite necessary to include "herdsman." No Local Government official in Ireland would believe that "agricultural labourer" included "herdsman" unless he was told so by Act of Parliament.

An hon. MEMBER: Is a man engaged in road making included in the term "agricultural labourer?"

MR. SEXTON: No; that is not included.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: I think there will be some difficulty amending the Amendment as suggested.

MR. SEXTON: Then, Sir, I think I will leave the matter over to the Report.

New Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) is probably not aware that an electoral division is always made the area of charge. That is the smallest area that can be found; but he may be surprised to hear that in some electoral divisions there are not so many as 12 ratepayers. In the Killalone Division, for instance, there are fewer than 12 ratepayers living. What I propose now, by the clause which I am about to move, is this—that where there are less than 12 ratepayers living, six of them may make a representation; or, if they do not like to proceed in that way, any three of them may apply to the Board of Guardians to amalgamate two or more divisions. I beg to move the clause.

New Clause:—

(Representation to authority by ratepayer.)

"Where a sanitary authority has resolved that the electoral division shall be the area of charge for the purposes of the said Acts and of this Act, and where a representation is made to such sanitary authority in respect of any electoral division in which not more than twenty ratepayers are resident, then, in such case, the representation, if signed by six ratepayers, shall be received and acted upon by the sanitary authority, and shall be in all respects as valid and effectual as if it had been signed by twelve ratepayers, as prescribed by section five of "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883:" Provided also, That three ratepayers in any such electoral division may apply to the Local Government Board to amalgamate such division with one or more contiguous divisions, subject to the same sanitary authority, and the Local Government Board may order that such divisions shall constitute one division for the purposes of the said Act and of this Act,"

—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read the second time."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I confess that I do not see how this clause would work, because the effect is to reduce the number of signatories from 12 to 6. That is to say, that you have a variable number of signatories in accordance with the extent of the area of charge; but what are the means of knowing that the area of taxation would happen to be the electoral division?

MR. SEXTON: The Clonmel Board of Guardians have passed a resolution that the electoral division shall always be the area of charge, and therefore we know beforehand.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND: That may be so; but to fix the area is the first step, and how can we arrange for the last step to be taken before they have taken the first? It appears to me that the Amendment is open to objection; but as, according to the Census of 1881, there are only three divisions with fewer than 30 ratepayers, I think it can do no harm.

Mr. SEXTON: I think I can show that the apprehensions of the right hon. Gentleman are unfounded. He will see from the first part of my Amendment that it will not apply when there is a matter of doubt at the commencement of the proceedings.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill.

Mr. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.): I beg to move, after Clause 2, to insert the following clause:—

> "So much of the fourth section of "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883," as permits the sanitary authority to postpone their decision as to passing a Resolution, shall be and is hereby repealed, and instead thereof it is hereby enacted as follows: The sanitary authority shall pass a Resolution within three months of the receipt of a representation."

The reason I have in bringing this Amendment before the Committee is that I am aware that in many parts of Ireland the Local Authorities seem unwilling to bring the Act into operation. They put every obstacle in the way. They postpone the discussion of it from time to time, and in many parts of Ireland the Act has been almost a dead letter. The clause which I now propose to introduce into the Bill is simply to prevent undue delay in carrying out the provisions of the Act. The Committee will see that this Amendment does not interfere in any way with the free control over the Acts by the Local Authorities—it simply prescribes the time within which they must come to a resolution; and I contend that three months is quite sufficient time for them to make all the necessary inquiries and come to a decision. I do not think I need say any more on this matter, but will leave the Amendment in the hands of the Committee.

New Clause (Repeal of s. 4 of "Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883,) — (*Mr. Mulholland,*) — *brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The existing Act has expressly made provision for this power, and I do not see why this Amendment should have been brought forward.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I have no doubt that the hon. Member means well to the labourers. But my impression is that, if this Amendment were inserted, a Board of Guardians who were inclined to dawdle over a scheme would be forced into an adverse decision if we confined them to three months; and that would certainly not be in the interest of the labourers.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): This Amendment would prevent the Local Authorities from postponing their decision on the representation at all. That portion of Sub-section 4 which the hon. Gentleman proposes to repeal provides that the Sanitary Authority may postpone the passing of a resolution. That is the section which the hon. Member proposes to repeal; but if that is done; it will prevent them postponing their action on these matters at all, even from one meeting to another. Therefore I think that the first part of this Amendment is very strongly objectionable. The second part of the clause would also be objectionable, because I do not see the necessity of preventing the Board from postponing their decision for more than three months, if they like to do so.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I quite admit that the Sanitary Authority ought to be allowed a reasonable time—say even six months—to consider their scheme, which might entail a considerable charge upon the ratepayers of the district who would have to discharge it; but I am bound to say that throughout Ireland there has been a very considerable amount of dawdling. While not agreeing, therefore, with some portion of my hon. Friend's Amendment, which is open to objection, still I think the question is one which is well worthy of the consideration of the Government.

Mr. MULHOLLAND: Before proceeding further with the Amendment I should like to know from the Law Officer of the Government whether, if the Amendment were passed, it would prevent the Sanitary Authority from postponing their decision from time to time within the three months?—because I had no intention of doing that. If that were to be the effect of the Amendment I should be pleased to alter it.

Mr. SEXTON: The first part of the clause of the hon. Gentleman would be governed by the second. The more I consider the clause, in fact, the plainer it seems to me that the effect of it would be to defeat the operation of the Act. If you leave it to the discretion of men and say—"We leave it to you to do what you think best," there would be a tendency to do something useful; but if you say—"Either you must do something in three months, or do nothing at all," the irresistible tendency would be to do nothing at all. I am certain that if this clause were adopted there would be fewer schemes carried out than would otherwise be the case.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I beg to move the insertion of the new clause which stands on the Paper in my name, as follows:—

> "Any petition against a Provisional Order, as provided by section twelve, sub-section B, of 'The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1885,' shall state whether the objection in said petition is to the entire Order, or only to a part thereof, and if only to a part shall specify the particular part to which exception is taken.
>
> If, on the hearing of any such petition, it should appear to the Privy Council that said petition was presented without reasonable cause, the costs of such petition, and all proceedings in connection therewith, may be awarded against the person or persons presenting said petition."

As the Act at present stands, the petitioner is not bound to specify the part of the Order to which he objects. The Board of Guardians have to prepare and sustain the entire Order.

New Clause—(Petition against Order to specify what is objected to,)—*(Mr. Tuite,)*—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The first paragraph of the clause is entirely unobjectionable, as, of course, the petitioner ought to specify what is objected to. But the second paragraph, whilst not unjust, is certainly not necessary. It goes on the assumption that it is requisite that Parliament should confer power to award costs against petitioners in cases where they have acted without reasonable cause. If the hon. Member will refer to the Act of 1885, Sub-section 6 of the 12th section, he will see that an order respecting costs will be enforcible as if it were an order of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice. The question of awarding the costs of all parties is in the discretion of the tribunal that hears the petition.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: Does the hon. Member withdraw the clause?

MR. SEXTON: No; only the second paragraph.

Clause *amended,* by leaving out the second paragraph; as amended, read a second time, and *added* to the Bill.

Bill *reported.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be taken into Consideration upon Monday next."

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): I wish to say a word on that question. There are a considerable number of Amendments to the Bill, and surely the hon. Member will put off the next stage to a later date than Monday. I would beg to move that the Report stage be adjourned until Thursday, and that the Bill, as amended, be printed.

Amendment proposed, by leaving out the word "Monday," in order to insert the word "Thursday."—*(Mr. Brodrick.)*

Question proposed, "That the word 'Monday' stand part of the Question."

MR. SEXTON: If I might be allowed to explain, I would point out that the Amendments to the Bill are very few, and that they were made with the assent of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member press his Motion?

MR. SEXTON: Yes, Sir.

MR. BRODRICK: I move that it be taken into consideration on Thursday.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I hope the House will not divide on this subject. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley), seeing that there is some desire for the Report stage to be postponed a little longer, will use his influence to get it put off to Thursday.

MR. SEXTON: Let us divide the difference and say Tuesday.

MR. FITZGERALD (Cambridge): Though it is true all the Amendments we have made in the Bill were agreed to by the whole Committee, we did not understand exactly how they read when we passed them. Either through the fault of the hon. Gentleman who drafted the Amendments, or the mistake of the Clerk at the Table, most of the Amendments, after having been thrashed out across the floor of the House, were found not to be in the English language. Let us make the day Thursday.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I desire the hon. Member (Mr. Sexton) thoroughly to understand that there is no disposition on the part of the House to delay or obstruct the Bill. My hon. Friend only desires time to see what the Amendments are.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): Owing to the way in which the Question will have to be put, it does not seem to me that it will be possible to amend the Motion by putting Tuesday in the place of Monday. The method of putting the Question may prevent the opportunity of further discussion on Tuesday.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member (Mr. Brodrick) withdraw his Amendment?

Mr. BRODRICK: No; I move Thursday.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. SEXTON: May I just say that, as the hon. Member has not divided the House, I propose not to take the Report until Tuesday.

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [18th March] *reported.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolutions."

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): I wish to call the attention of the House to an answer I received to-night from the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) with regard to postage to our Colonies. It is a fact that people sending letters from this country to India, Australia, and New Zealand have to pay a double postage, and that people sending letters from those places here also have to pay a double postage to what persons have to pay in other countries of Europe. I am not aware that the Post Office is merely to be considered as a money-making machine. The answer I received to-night from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury was that there was a loss on the mails going from here to the Colonies; and for that reason, evidently, the Government refused to reduce the rate of postage. Now, I think it is of the utmost importance to this country that we should draw nearer the bonds of union existing between this country and the Colonies; and it, therefore, seems to me desirable that this country should not be placed at a disadvantage as compared with foreign countries in this matter of postage. As a matter of fact, I should like to see a penny postage established in our Colonies all over the world, so as to draw our ties closer. I do not think it should be made a money question, and I certainly think there is reason to complain about our rate of postage being dearer than that of foreign nations. This subject has been brought particularly under my notice of late. I have been abroad, and have found that the system which the Financial Secretary upholds is defeating itself. He says the Colonial Mails do not pay, and I am not surprised at the fact. I can show him one reason why it does not. At the present moment there is in operation a gigantic system, whereby letters are taken from England to the Continent in large packages to be posted abroad, because it can be done for half the price. The question is one well worthy of the attention of the House. We should not allow the system to which I refer to continue longer, but should insist upon having some pledge from the Government to the effect that if they are in Office when the Estimates come on next year this question shall be, at any rate, properly considered.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MARRIAGES (HOURS OF SOLEMNIZATION) BILL.—[Bill 62.]

(*Mr. Carvell Williams, Mr. Richard, Mr. Ince.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottingham, S.): Mr. Speaker, this is a very short Bill, and I am happy to think that I can move the second reading in a very short speech. The primary object of the Bill is to mitigate, if an end cannot be put to, the inconvenience occasioned by the compulsory attendance of registrars at marriages in Nonconformist places of worship. In towns the inconvenience may not be much felt;

but it is otherwise in country places, where those functionaries often live at a considerable distance from the spot where their services are required. They also sometimes have two or more engagements on the same morning, or they are unpunctual, and fail to appear at the appointed time, to the great embarrassment of all parties. Some months ago a Presbyterian minister wrote to Lord Salisbury that he had been so inconvenienced by the present arrangement that on three occasions he had performed the marriage ceremony in his chapel without the registrar; making himself liable to a £40 penalty in each case. I do not recommend other ministers to follow his example. I only refer to his statement to illustrate the grievance which I desire to remove. I presume that if it were proposed to remove it by an increase in the number of registrars, I should be met by financial objections on the part of the Treasury; but this extension of time will be almost equivalent to an increase, and will add nothing to the present expenditure. The Bill may, however, be supported on other grounds than that it will be acceptable to Nonconformists, and the only objection taken to it in any quarter has been that it does not go far enough. I am told that it would be a great boon to the working classes if marriages might take place at any hour of the day, and a minister of the Established Church asks me if I cannot get the hours extended until 6 o'clock, instead of 4? He says persons can receive the Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and the Confirmation, and admission to Holy Orders, and the churching of women can take place at any hour of the day or night; and why should the hours of matrimony be restricted? This Bill does not go that length, but limits the time to the comparatively early hour of 4 in the afternoon. Since it has been introduced, I have learned that it is very acceptable in the eyes of many of those who are known as the upper classes of society; because, if marriages could be celebrated after 12 o'clock, the various social arrangements connected with the ceremony could be brought into harmony with the altered customs of the times. It is no startling novelty which I am proposing; on the contrary, I merely propose that the law in England and Wales should approximate to, if not be identical with, the law existing in Ireland and Scotland. In Ireland all Protestant or mixed marriages may take place up to 2 o'clock; while Roman Catholic marriages may take place at any hour, provided that the requisite legal regulations are duly observed. In Scotland there is no restriction whatever in regard to either time or place. Lastly, I have to remind the House that the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Marriage Laws of the United Kingdom, in their Report issued in 1868, recommended the discontinuance, so far as the State is concerned, of the requirement that marriages should be solemnized within certain hours. That recommendation has remained a dead letter all these years, and now I propose that, to a certain extent, effect shall be given to it. I cannot conceive that any mischief can follow such a change, while its adoption will be attended with many advantages. I, therefore, hope that the House will assent to the second reading of this Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Carvell Williams.*)

MR. BERESFORD HOPE (Cambridge University): I am not rising to divide the House on this Bill; but I simply wish to point out that the advantages of the measure do not appear to be quite all on one side as the hon. Member seems to suppose. All those who have studied the social history of England know that the limitation of the hours of marriage is not an ecclesiastical provision. It is part of Lord Hardwicke's reform of the Marriage Law in the middle of the last century. The great scandals and grievances which had existed in the matter of clandestine marriages called for a drastic remedy, and the *raison d'être* of the arrangement was that the hour should be one at which the identity of the contracting parties could be most easily ascertained—in daylight. I grant that there would be advantages in an extension of the hours. There is one to which the hon. Member did not allude—namely, that it may get rid of that old-fashioned and expensive arrangement which involves so much trouble and outlay—the wedding breakfast. The change, on the other hand, may be found inconvenient in so far as it interferes with the manner in which the clegyman's day is at present mapped out. At present it is mapped out symmetrically, certain periods being devoted to this, that, and the other, and marriage services ending at 12 o'clock. If you are to be getting married all day long, the clergyman will be in a difficulty in regard to the performance of his other duties. I do not say that that is a reason why we should reject the Bill; but it is a reason why we should regard it suspiciously, and not with the idea that we are at the beginning of a great golden age. As I said before, I do not intend to divide the House; I merely put these few considerations before hon. Members.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): With regard to this Bill, I do not think the House will be guided by the motives which the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has put before us—I allude to his reference to wedding breakfasts. Nor will the House be altogether guided by what is most convenient to the clergyman. The considerations should be what is most convenient for those who wish to get married, and what is required on public grounds. Therefore, I hardly think it necessary to reply more fully to the arguments the right hon. Gentleman has used, although he does not directly oppose the measure. In one respect I think he was mistaken. He said that the law which limits the hour at which marriages can take place to 12 o'clock was Lord Hardwicke's Act. I do not think that is the case. If I am not mistaken, the law is to be found in the Canons, which are much older than the Act in question. Twelve o'clock was the old dinner hour, and it was customary, and on many grounds convenient, that marriages should take place before the regular dinner hour. That, I think, was the origin of the fixing of the hour at 12 o'clock. But since this Bill has been printed I have been in communication with those most interested, both with the Church of England on the one side and the registrars on the other; and I find that, in their opinion, it is desirable to extend the hours. But the suggestion I shall make to the hon. Gentleman who has charge of the Bill is that, instead of 4 o'clock, 3 o'clock should be taken as the limit. In the winter time, almost everywhere in England—certainly in the North—it is quite dark at 4 o'clock; and I consider it would be much better to so limit the rule as to the time when marriages should take place as not to allow them to be solemnized after dark. That is the rule which governs the Archbishop in the matter of the issue of special licences. I understand he has laid it down, as a general rule, that licences for special marriages shall not be granted for a later hour than 3 o'clock. If, therefore, the hon. Member will alter the figure 4 to the figure 3, I shall be happy to agree with his Bill, believing with him that the old reason which guided our forefathers in not allowing marriages after 12 o'clock no longer exists, and that it would be quite reasonable to permit them to take place up to 3 o'clock.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S.W., Newton): I do not rise to oppose the second reading of the Bill. What I always think on these matters is, that persons who can afford to pay have no right to get from an ecclesiastical authority that which persons who cannot afford to pay cannot get. I agree on this matter with what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and I hope the hon. Gentleman who is in charge of this measure will take into consideration the anomaly I refer to, which persons who have authority in these matters have chosen to establish in favour of those who can afford to pay, and will not, like those persons in authority, allow marriages to take place after dark. I hope he will agree in Committee that these marriages should take place in the daytime. A matter has been alluded to with regard to which I should like to say one word. The hon. Member who moved the second reading, in the first part of his speech, stated that it was inconvenient for registrars to attend marriages at an early hour, and that if the hour at which marriages could take place were extended the registrars would be able to attend all marriages that took place. I quite agree that the present inconvenience should be remedied; but I would point out that that part of the case is altogether different from the main principle of the Bill. I would remind hon. Members that there is a Bill now before Parliament which will dispense altogether with the attendance of registrars at Nonconformist chapels. If that Bill becomes law the force of the argument of the hon. Member will disappear. I would suggest that the hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill, seeing the favourable way in which it has been accepted by both sides of the House—by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, by myself, and by my right hon. Friend near me (Mr. Beresford Hope)—should, if he can see his way to it, use his influence with the hon. Gentleman who has put a block against the Registrars' Bill to get him to drop his opposition. In that way I think we should be able to do a great deal to free the registrars from inconvenience, and to remove what is felt to be a practical grievance by those persons who desire to get married in Nonconformist chapels. I only throw out that suggestion, as Nonconformist registrars have been alluded to by the hon. Member himself.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): The obvious need for the change in the law proposed by this Bill is admitted on all sides of the House. I trust the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary will not feel it necessary to lessen the value of the measure by limiting the hour to 3 o'clock. Many old-fashioned ideas as to what can be done before mid-day and what can be done after mid-day have now gone by the board—as to voting and other matters. As to the registrars' grievance, if there happened to be several marriages a-day at different parts of a district a long way from each other, it is obviously for the convenience of the registrar that he should have an opportunity of fixing different hours for the performance of his duties. With regard to what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), I think the proposed change in the law which would be effected by the Bill he has referred to—and which we are prevented from discussing at this moment—are so serious that we had better hold ourselves at liberty to have the value of the measure expounded to us with the assistance of the hon. Gentleman who has the Bill in hand. As regards the necessity for a registrar to be present at Nonconformist marriages, I believe there is a growing feeling in this country, as there is in many other countries, that the civil and religious services should be separate. I am aware that progress has to be originated on this side of the House, and that it is very tardily accepted on the other side. ["Oh, oh!"] I am not at all surprised to find there is some demur to the statement; but I do not hesitate to say that there is a widely extended feeling that, so far as the State is concerned, all that is necessary is that care should be taken that marriages are properly registered. I think that, as regards the religious ceremony, the less the State interferes, both as to the hours and the mode in which it is conducted, the better. I do not wish to prolong the discussion of the measure, which, up to the present, has been carried on in the best spirit. I trust the House will accept the second reading.

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University): What seems to be an irregularity in point of form is that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Nottingham (Mr. Carvell Williams) should call his Bill the Marriages (Hours of Solemnization) Bill, and then put into it matter which is entirely alien to the object of such a Bill. Except as to a small matter of detail, we are all agreed upon the Bill. Surely it would be much better for the hon. Gentleman to confine himself to the hours during which marriage can be solemnized, and say nothing here about the presence of the registrar.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I cannot conceive that the Bill which has been brought in by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir Richard Webster) can possibly be in any danger from the action of Gentlemen who are promoting the Bill now before the House. But a blocking Notice to the hon. and learned Gentleman's Bill has been put down in the name of a Member of the House who represents a constituency in Caithness, to which the measure cannot by any possibility apply.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is discussing a Bill not now before the House.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* next.

WAYS AND MEANS.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Resolutions [March 18] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Henry H. Fowler.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time.

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 22nd March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Trees (Ireland) * (42).
Committee — Justices' Jurisdiction * (18-43); Law of Evidence Amendment (19-44).
Third Reading — Glebe Loans (Ireland) Acts Continuance * (31), and *passed*.

AFFAIRS OF BURMAH.

QUESTION.

Viscount CRANBROOK: With reference to my Question about Burmah the other night, I understand the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India has received a communication which the House will be glad to hear.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (The Earl of Kimberley): The following telegram, dated March 21, has been received from the Viceroy of India:—

> "Prendergast telegraphs that he has dispersed the large body of insurgents collected at Yemethen, and that the neighbouring Woons are in friendly communication with him."

THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS—EVENING OPENING.

QUEEN'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

The LORD CHAMBERLAIN of the HOUSEHOLD (The Earl of Kenmare) *reported* the Queen's Answer to the Address of Friday the 12th instant as follows:—

> I have received your Address, praying that I will be pleased to direct that the National Gallery, the British Museum, and the Natural History Museum shall be open to the public weekly on three week-day evenings till 10 p.m.:
>
> I will carefully consider your wishes in this respect.

DORE AND CHINLEY RAILWAY BILL

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."

Lord HOUGHTON, in rising to move the Resolution standing in his name, said, the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury), who took a great interest in the question of the payment of interest out of capital, and had, in addressing a deputation of the unemployed, advocated such payments in the case of the Regent's Canal Bill, was absent; and it was not desirable, in the interests of the promoters of this Bill and of similar Bills, that the question should be discussed in the noble Marquess's absence.

Moved, "That the Second Reading of this Bill, and of any other Bill containing provisions for payment of interest out of capital during construction of works, be postponed until the 12th day of April next."—(*The Lord Houghton.*)

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (The Earl of Redesdale) said, he would have liked to hear what the character of the Bill was. The whole question of payment of interest out of capital depended upon the particular case brought under consideration. In the present instance, the Dore Railway Company was in an advantageous position, as 3 per cent of the capital was guaranteed to the shareholders by another Company.

Viscount CRANBROOK said, the question was not a Party one. He, however, agreed that it was desirable that his noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) should be present when the matter was discussed. He had no objection to the Motion.

Motion *agreed to*.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Earl of LEITRIM, in rising to move the Resolution which stood in his name, said, that the grantees and subgrantees of the College had approached Parliament upon three separate occasions for a re-adjustment of their position. First, they requested the issue of a Royal Commission; secondly, they promoted a Public Bill; and last year they brought forward a Private Bill, which was rejected by a smaller majority than that by which the Public Bill was thrown out. There was no doubt that there was a grievance; and if their Lordships were to accede to the Motion the grantees believed that a move would be made in the direction of a remedy. What were the grievances which the lessees and their under-tenants complained of? They complained, in the first place, that there were two conflicting standards of valuation in operation in respect of the valuation of the same land—namely, that prescribed by the College Act, and that of the Land Commission. Both were equally legal, and surely this inequality of legal operation would need to have very special justification. When Parliament established judicial rents the principle ought to have been made applicable equally to all rents for the future which were capable of being periodically raised or lowered. It was practically admitted by the College itself that their valuations were considerably too high. As instances of this, he might mention that at the end of the decade, after the passing of the Act, the valuation was made; but the College accepted an increased rent of 25 per cent when the standard indicated that they were entitled to 34 per cent. He thought this at once conceded the inaccuracy of the standard. At the end of the second term—namely, in 1875, the College standard indicated an increased rent of 47 per cent; but the College accepted an increase of 30 per cent only. Again, therefore, they confirmed the inaccuracy of their standard. He thought that it was much to the credit of the College Boards of 1865 and 1875 that they did not insist upon their full legal rights; but the question was, had not the increases which those Boards abandoned been indirectly enforced by the present Board? There was certainly no justification in the agricultural condition of Ireland for the 20 per cent additional rent imposed on the lessees in 1865. Upon this point he would only call one witness, and that witness should be the College itself. At the time of the passing of the College Perpetuity Act, in 1851, a Mr. O'Connell held a 21 years' lease of one of their estates in Kerry; but he declined to convert that lease into a perpetuity lease. He was the only tenant who declined to convert, and the result was this—that when in 1865 the rents of the grantees were raised 25 per cent his rent to the College remained the same; but he raised his occupying tenants 25 per cent. When the lease ran out the College Authorities sent down valuers, with the result that they confirmed Mr. O'Connell's rise of 25 per cent on his occupying tenants, and their rents remained unchanged until 1881, when the College, under the compulsion of the Land Act, took off the 25 per cent which Mr. O'Connell had put on; but the increased rent of the perpetuity leaseholders was continued. That practically admitted the whole case of the grantees. With regard to the valuation of the Land Commissioners he had no very great experience. His tenants, some 2,000 in number, had, for the most part, settled out of Court. They had entered into 15-year judicial leases arrived at under the guardianship of the Land Commissioners, and he had no reason to complain of that standard, because, like many other landlords, he had returned to those leaseholders 10 per cent of their rents. The second grievance of which they complained was the great expense of putting into operation the Fluctuation Clauses of the College Act. So great was the expense that it rendered them almost prohibitive in regard to any application for a decrease of rent. He might instance a case in which an attempt was made to put these clauses into operation. Under them the prices of some five commodities had to be ascertained in 13 of the most important towns in Ireland. In this particular instance these prices were ascertained in nine of the towns when the arbitration suit came to an end. Although this suit was not fought out to the end, it cost £3,000. Had it been carried to the end the cost would not have been less than £4,500. But the result was that in the case of this particular grantee his rent was increased 25 per cent, whereas the rents of the other grantees were only increased 20 per cent. This distinction the College Authorities maintained until today, and it came to this—that no grantee could obtain the decrease unless he was prepared to deposit something like £4,500 for expenses; and, under these circumstances, it was obvious that if the grantee had only a life interest in the estate it would be utter folly on his part to run the risk of having to pay thus smartly for his attempt to decrease the rent. If this would be utter folly on the part of the larger tenants, how could they expect the smaller tenants to take action? The security, therefore, which was supposed to be given to the tenants was useless, and the safeguards provided were of no effect. How, therefore, could these estates be conducted in a business-like and proper manner? He wished to call their Lordships' attention, further, to what he might call some external evidence of this grievance. Recently, as appeared from their Lordships' Notice Paper, he proposed to call the attention of the House to some Resolutions which were adopted by 600 or 800 of the tenants of the College in the county of Armagh. The substance of those Resolutions was contained in a letter addressed by the Rev. Mr. Ellis to the Board of Trinity College; and it was, in short, a proposition to the College to take off the 20 per cent imposed in 1865. The Board, however, would only treat with the grantees. He maintained that the Board, in reality, had not the power to treat; and, therefore, the Committee, he suggested, would be quite as much in the interest of the Board of Trinity College as of the tenants; because in 1874 the majority of the Board passed a Resolution dealing with the question of the revision of the rents; but it was vetoed by the Provost. Appeal was made to the Vice Chancellor as Visitor; and he decided that the Board could not, without the consent of the Provost, grant a prospective reduction of rents. Therefore it was illusory to treat with the Board—the Provost was the only person who could be treated with. The way in which the Provost would treat was indicated by his having exercised his power of veto over a resolution of the Board to grant a tenant whose rent was 5 per cent higher than any other an equitable re-adjustment. They had thus only to treat with one man exercising arbitrary power, the Provost of Trinity College. As a consequence of the exercise of this arbitrary power they had now, for the first time, ejectments issued against grantees of the College in County Kerry, where so much trouble existed. During the last few years a great movement had been going on amongst leaseholders generally for an adjustment of their position; but if the position of leaseholders generally in Ireland called for revision, how much more did the condition of the grantees of Trinity College require some remedy when their leases only ran for 10 years, and, though called a perpetuity, they were subject to an anomalous and disturbing tenure? He begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the tenure of lands under Trinity College, Dublin, and the Provost thereof in his corporate capacity; and on the working of the Trinity College, Dublin, Leasing and Perpetuity Act, 1851, with respect to the variation of rent, and its effect on the value of the interest respectively of the college, the perpetuity grantees, and the occupying perpetuity tenants of the lands."—(*The Earl of Leitrim.*)

Lord ASHBOURNE said, their Lordships would excuse him immediately referring to the remarks of his noble Friend, seeing that he was for so long a Representative of the University of Dublin. No doubt his noble Friend had had a very difficult task to make out his case. It was not the first time that he had attempted to do so. The noble Earl had endeavoured to attain his end by a Royal Commission, then by a Public Bill, and now he desired to do it by means of a Committee of Inquiry. The noble Earl had shown considerable adroitness, and had improved upon his method of presenting this matter to their Lordships, because he had introduced a variety of topics, with the object of somewhat diverting attention from the direct matters connected with this question, rather than of concentrating their attention on the short and simple topics which, if presented plainly and directly to the House, would enable their Lordships to understand the question in a moment. He noticed also with pleasure that the noble Earl made another great change, and that was that he had abstained on the present occasion from making any charges of a grave and serious character against the Provost and Board of Trinity College. Many of these men were known throughout Europe for their scientific and classical attainments, and every one of them was as jealous of his honour and had as great an appreciation of honour as anyone who sat in their Lordships' House. What were the plain facts of the matter? Trinity College, Dublin, like all great seats of learning, possessed considerable landed property, the profits of which were applied to maintain the great educational interests intrusted to its keeping. Neither the Provost nor the Board were now personally directly interested in this College property. Up to 1851 the College property was let on leases of 21 years, renewable on certain renewal fines being paid. This being considered unsatisfactory, an Act was passed in 1851, with the consent of all parties, by which the tenants were given their holdings in perpetuity, with power to both sides to apply to have the rents varied according to certain standards of value every 10 years. It was that Act which the noble Lord wished to undermine. The effect of the Act was to turn all the renewable leases into perpetuity leases on terms greatly to the advantage of the tenants. Under those terms, either the College on the one hand, or the tenants on the other, were entitled to have the rents revised every 10 years, such rise or fall to be regulated by the price of five of the chief articles of consumption. It was, if the parties pleased, exceedingly easy to ascertain this average, and nothing like the elaborate suit mentioned by the noble Earl was required. He did not think that their Lordships would hold that the terms of this statutory contract were inequitable as regarded the tenants. The noble Earl had read a letter from some tenants embodying resolutions; and he could read to their Lordships a letter of thanks sent to the authorities of Trinity College immediately after the passing of the Act of 1851, in which the tenants strongly approved of the Act. Amongst the signatures to that document was the agent to the Leitrim estates. In 1863 certain of the rents were revised under the provisions of the Act, and then it was found that the College were entitled to raise the rents by 34 per cent. The College, however, only raised the rents by 25 per cent; and, indeed, never on any occasion had they taken from their tenants the pound of flesh to which they were justly entitled. In 1865, when again the rents were revised, the College only raised them 20 per cent, instead of the much higher percentage which they might have claimed. In 1875 the machinery of revision was again applied; and it was clearly proved that the College were entitled to raise all the rents by at least 12 per cent. The College, however, had never sought to take, and had never taken, any portion of that 12 per cent; and they had always treated their tenants with the utmost consideration compatible with the proper discharge of their obligations to the great educational interests which were committed to their charge. If the tenants believed that they were entitled to a reduction of rent, why did they not apply for a revision of the rents under the terms of the Act of 1851? The noble Earl had not shown that the prices had, in the opinion of tenants, fallen so as to justify the reduction of rent. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Waterford), whom they all sincerely hoped to see amongst them again soon, replying to this question last year, had pointed out that there was another course, although an extreme one, open to the tenants if they were so dissatisfied. They might throw up their leases. The case of Mr. O'Connell had been mentioned. He resigned his lease; and the College Authorities, when brought face to face with the occupying tenants of that estate, dealt with them with that fairness and generosity which they had a right to expect. Griffith's valuation for these College estates was £66,833; but the rent actually paid to the College was not more than £33,077, and this sum was subject to a deduction of about £2,000 for tithe rent-charges. Therefore, they had their College perpetuity tenants paying only considerably less than one-half of Griffith's valuation. It was a remarkable fact that the present agitation, by which it was sought to bring about a reduction of these College perpetuity rents, had been got up by the middlemen, who themselves naturally obtained a large profit rental from underletting the holdings. His noble Friend, with great adroitness, had endeavoured to call in to his aid the popular feeling prevalent in many parts of Ireland in favour of bringing leaseholders within the beneficial operation of the Land Act of 1881. But the Land Act of 1881 only dealt with occupying tenants, and repudiated dealing with middlemen altogether. The agitation in Ireland was to bring occupying leaseholders within the benefit of that Act; and it had not yet been suggested by any agitation outside of their Lordships' House that middlemen in the position of his noble Friend were entitled to special legislation, not to bring them within the benefit of the Land Act of 1881, but to get them out of the Leasing and Perpetuity Act of 1851. Trinity College, Dublin, stood in a delicate position in reference to that Motion. The topics to which he had alluded were merely the very elements of common sense. They lay on the very surface of the whole question; and, of course, every member of the Board, who were men with great capacity for a clear appreciation of the rules of reason, could understand those points as well as anybody else. But when his noble Friend, in his place in Parliament, made grave charges against them in reference to the way in which they had administered their landed property in respect to those perpetuity lessees and grantees, it was an anxious question for them whether they should, from their point of view, ask to have the Motion rejected. They had nothing to conceal, nothing to shrink from; and, therefore, as far as they were concerned, all they had to say was that, under the circumstances, and with their record, they were not the body that should ask to have an inquiry like that rejected, as though they had anything to keep back, or anything of which they were ashamed. If it was suggested that the method of ascertaining prices under the Act of 1851 was cumbrous and expensive, or could be made so by one of the parties, he was sure that his noble Friend would, he was sure, be met fairly and frankly by the Board, whose members would co-operate in securing some arrangement which would make possible a cheap assessment of prices and a fair measure of value having regard to prices. But that was not the topic suggested by his noble Friend. He would not go into the question on the broader view of principle. He had spoken of it from the standpoint of the University of Dublin. But it was for the wisdom and discretion of their Lordships to decide whether they thought that was a case in which, consistently with sound principle and wholesome precedent, they could grant the inquiry now proposed. If an inquiry was granted in this case, it was obvious that their Lordships would find it very difficult not to grant it in others. If that Motion was acceded to, it would, by its opening words, give not only an inquiry into the working of the Perpetuity Act of 1851, but into the administration by the College of every inch of land it possessed in any part of Ireland. The frame of the Notice of Motion was certainly open to criticism. It was hardly reasonable to ask their Lordships to assent to such an inquiry as that now proposed with respect to the variation of rent, and to keep out of view what certainly was not immaterial—the substantial profit rent received by the middleman. The Irish Land Commission held ecclesiastical leases; the Charter House and other great public Bodies also held perpetuity leases; and if this Motion was adopted, how would it be consistent with sound principle not to give the same hearing to their lessees if they came and asked to have a Select Committee appointed? He did not discuss the question from that point of view; but he thought it would not be fair, having regard to the position which he had the honour to hold as a Member of their Lordships' House, if, in making the remarks that he had offered, he had not accompanied them with a short statement of the possibilities involved in the adoption of the precedent which his noble Friend now asked them to set.

Lord FITZGERALD said, he regretted that they had not heard something from the Government to guide them in this matter; and also that the noble Lord who had just spoken had done so in a manner which led them to suppose that the only remedy which was to be expected would have to come from some such inquiry as the one proposed. The question was one which ought to be arranged by the parties themselves; but now that the matter had progressed thus far he should regret very much if the inquiry was not granted.

Lord BRAMWELL said, he deemed it to be his duty, as a Member of their Lordships' House, to point out what it was they were asked to do. On the last occasion when the subject was before their Lordships the Chairman of Committees said of it—

> "I cannot conceive anything more dangerous than for this House to lay down that it is lawful for the lessees of any property to bring in a Bill in order to create a new arrangement with the lessor without his consent, and for the purpose of making their own terms with the landlord."

This, however, was not a Bill; it was a Motion; but what was its object? To get a recommendation made by a Select Committee on which a Bill might be founded and introduced. The noble Earl who brought this Motion forward made no secret of his desire. On a former occasion the noble Earl said that he wanted a substantial reduction of rent, and also a different mode of calculating the value decennially. This was no question of altering an Act of Parliament. The restraining Acts prevented a contract the parties wished to make; the particular Act removed that restraint; and the College and lessees made their bargain. The noble Earl wanted to alter the bargain made between the College and its lessees, not only by giving a reduction of rent, but also by getting an arbitrator to fix the amount of rent instead of having it fixed as before. The noble Earl did not want to break the leases; but he did want to break a large lump off the rent. What the perpetuity lessees were trying to do was to shift their losses, by the operation of the Fair Rent Clauses of the Land Act, upon Trinity College. [The Earl of Leitrim: No, no!] No reason at all had been suggested why the Motion should be entertained; no case of injustice had been made out; and he hoped their Lordships would refuse the Motion.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell) said, he thought there could be no doubt that the noble Earl who had introduced this Motion was not merely speaking on his own behalf, but on behalf of a considerable number of persons who believed that they were suffering under a wrong, and he was afraid they would continue so to think, notwithstanding the speeches of his noble and learned Friend (Lord Ashbourne) and the noble and learned Lord who had just spoken. Now, no doubt, as a general rule, their Lordships would agree that it would be desirable to inquire into grievances which people believed they felt rather than refuse to inquire into them. At the same time there was a danger in creating inconvenient and undesirable precedents, and one had to balance the inconvenience and undesirableness of refusing an inquiry to those who believed they were wronged, against, it might be, the still greater inconvenience and inexpediency of creating a precedent of this description. Now, it seemed to him that the claim to this Committee could only possibly be rested on a single ground. It would be out of the question that their Lordships should grant a Committee to inquire into a bargain made by private individuals with other private individuals, or even with a public Corporation; and he quite admitted that the Statute of 1851 was a statutory bargain, although in the form of an Act of Parliament, which really was only an Act of Parliament to carry out a contract between the parties, and could not be dealt with on the same footing as a Public Act. But the only ground on which this claim could be rested would be this. It was impossible for anyone to read the Leasing Act of 1851 without seeing that the intention of both parties to that bargain was that variations in the rent should take place from time to time, regulated by that which both parties at the time believed was a fair mode of determining the full value of the occupation of the land. Since that Act the Land Act had been passed, which established a different basis of estimating occupying value. If, therefore, all that was intended by the Motion was that the mode established in 1851 as an equitable method had proved to be inequitable, and if Trinity College would be perfectly willing, as the noble and learned Lord (Lord Ashbourne) seemed to indicate, to meet their perpetuity tenants and modify that method, a measure might be introduced by consent which would be a much more satisfactory way of dealing with the question than a reference to a Committee of their Lordships.

The Earl of LEITRIM said, that after what had fallen from the Lord Chancellor he should not be justified in pressing his Motion to a division; but he should not be justified in withdrawing his Motion unless he denied the accuracy of the statements of fact which had been made in opposition to it. It was a most extraordinary proposition of the noble and learned Lord that the lessees should be asked to surrender their leases. The noble and learned Lord was a type of the confiscating and disestablishing Lord.

Lord ASHBOURNE said, he was opposed both to confiscation and disestablishment; the suggestion in question had been started by another speaker.

The Earl of LEITRIM said, yes; but the noble and learned Lord had adopted it. There was one other matter to which the noble and learned Lord had referred—to the charge of fraud which he had brought against the College Authorities on a former occasion; and the inference he appeared to draw from his (the Earl of Leitrim's) not repeating it to-day was that it was entirely unfounded and unwarrantable. It was one thing to assert and another thing to repeat that assertion, and he thought the latter unnecessary; but with the permission of the House he would withdraw the word "fraud," and substitute for it the words applied by the Attorney General for Ireland to the case to which he had applied the charge of fraud. These were the Attorney General's words—

> "The motive assigned in Mr. Nunn's letter for not making any further concession may be morally a very bad one; but the legal right is not thereby affected."

He must congratulate the perpetuity leaseholders upon the expressions of opinion as to the justice of their case which had been elicited. He begged to withdraw his Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — MINIMUM OF ATTENDANCE AT YEOMANRY CAVALRY TROOP DRILLS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD HARRIS asked the Under Secretary of State for War, with reference to the Order requiring a minimum number to be present at the two Yeomanry troop drills for which extra pay is granted, Whether discretionary powers could be granted to the General Officer commanding the district, at the request of the officer commanding the regiment, to allow pay for such drills, although the minimum number should not be present? The result of the order would be to give it greater elasticity, so that the danger which at present existed of the best troop losing the allowance owing to the absence of one or two men would be obviated. The noble Lord said that the subject deserved greater attention than had been bestowed upon it. The agricultural depression had told more heavily upon the Yeomanry Cavalry than upon any other part of our Volunteer Army. Their expenses were very heavy, and the allowances made were inadequate. The Yeomanry, too, deserved greater consideration than any other corps, inasmuch as, if certain conditions were fulfilled, they were bound to render compulsory service.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Lord SANDHURST): My Lords, the Government have no want of sympathy with the Yeomanry, or any other portion of the Auxiliary Forces; but I regret to say that they cannot agree to the suggestion contained in the Question of the noble Lord. To make troop drills of any practical use it is necessary that as many men should be induced to attend as possible, and under former Regulations the attendance was unsatisfactory. Therefore payment for certain drills was arranged as an inducement for men to attend; but when payment was conceded a stipulation was made that not less than two-thirds of the enrolled strength should be present, or there would be no pay. The drills and minimum attendance were settled by a Committee of officers under Major General Elkington, the then Deputy Adjutant General for the Auxiliary Forces, the intention being to insure the instruction being productive of good results; and the Secretary of State for War does not feel disposed to alter the existing Regulations so lately made.

THE EARL OF CORK said, he was inclined to concur in the answer given by his noble Friend, as he thought the attendance at the drills of the Yeomanry ought to be as large as possible. As an old Colonel of a Yeomanry corps, he could bear personal testimony to the fact that the concessions made last year by the Government had caused those drills to be much better attended than they were formerly, and had increased the efficiency of the men. If power were given to relax any of those Rules the attendance would not be so large.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE said, that in the last two years he had inspected two or three Yeomanry regiments. The condition of those regiments was certainly far better than it was formerly, and was as creditable as it could be under the difficult circumstances of the service. He was bound to say that if the drills were to be of any use there must be a certain number of men present. He fully agreed in what had been said as to the value and the efficiency of the Yeomanry. In his opinion, the Regulation now existing could hardly be changed without disadvantage to the Yeomanry themselves.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he agreed that a certain number of men must of course be present, and thought that perhaps a hard-and-fast line must continue to be laid down. But there was a certain difficulty in that respect, inasmuch as when the commanding officer had to find fault with the men he was obliged to find fault with the wrong ones. If he found that there were one or two men fewer than there ought to be in attendance, it was no use for him to pitch into those present and tell them that they ought to come, for they were there already, and perhaps they had incurred considerable expense in coming there. Yet that expense and trouble would go for nothing, because other men had not turned up, and consequently the troop drill could not take place. He could not help thinking that the commanding officer might have a certain discretion as to the exact number of men who should attend, though he did not see what other answer the noble Lord opposite could give than the one he had made to the Question of his noble Friend.

LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 19.)

(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

LORD DENMAN: My Lords, I find that *The Times* newspaper has taken up this Bill, and argues upon it as if it were one of the Legislative Bodies. It alludes to the case of O'Donnell; but I ask your Lordships, if that man's statement—happily admitted—had been upon oath, whether it would have saved him? I considered that he had killed a man who not only had planned the odious assassination of a noble Friend and esteemed neighbour of my own, but had also betrayed his accomplices and caused their death. I tried to obtain his respite, and wrote to the proprietor of *The Morning Post*, and sent the Memoirs of Captain Freeney to the Lord Mayor, Mr. (now Sir Robert) Fowler, but in vain. I complain that *The Times*, in the report on the second reading, in giving my extract from my noble and lamented Predecessor's speech in 1820 as to calling an unnecessary interested witness, gave it as my opinion, which weakened the effect of it; and anything I say may only appear in *Hansard*, too late to produce any impression, although the public have the right to know what is really said. This Bill has twice been read a third time in your Lordships' House, was read a third time on two occasions in "another place," and again brought forward on December 3, 1884, after having been withdrawn in "another place" on the 10th of July, which was fatal to so many measures in your Lordships' House. I sent a copy of the speech in 1820 to Mr. Stuart-Wortley, and he thanked me for it. I have protested against its principle when the Bill for admitting women as witnesses against their husbands passed your Lordships' House. It cannot be made a good Bill.

Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly.

Clause 1 (Person charged, &c. competent as witness) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Consent of person charged necessary).

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he would suggest the omission of that part of the clause which provided that the husband or wife of the person charged should not be an admissible witness without the consent of the other. No doubt it was painful for husband and wife to give evidence against each other; but the same might be said with even greater force of near relations; and the present provision would, in effect, mean that the husband or wife could only be examined for the defence, although the absence of such evidence might lead to a miscarriage of justice.

LORD BRAMWELL explained that the object of the Proviso was to prevent perfect confidence between husband and wife being done away with.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Person charged, if witness, bound to answer all questions).

LORD HALSBURY said, he begged to move the omission of the clause. The first part of it was useless, or not necessary, and the latter part mischievous. He entirely objected to Judges having the power to make law, it being their duty to administer the law as passed by Parliament.

Moved to omit Clause 4.—(*The Lord Halsbury.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, he could not agree that the clause was useless or unnecessary. When a person charged was allowed to give evidence, it must follow, as a matter of course, that he could not be allowed to shelter himself from unpleasant questions, alleging that he would criminate himself if he answered them. By the latter part of the clause a discretion was given to the Court in the matter.

Clause *amended*, by leaving out all after ("charged") in line 22 to ("fit") in line 23.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

LORD HALSBURY moved to insert a new clause to the following effect:—

> "A person called as a witness in pursuance of this Act shall not be asked, and if asked shall not be required to answer, any question tending to show that any defendant has committed or been convicted of any offence other than that wherewith he is then charged, unless the proof that the defendant has committed such other offence is admissible evidence to show

that such defendant is guilty of the offence wherewith he is then charged, or unless such defendant has given evidence of good character."

Lord BRAMWELL said, he could not assent to the noble and learned Lord's Amendment. If a man charged with an offence chose to tender himself as a witness he ought to be subjected to cross-examination in the same way as the prosecutor or any other witness was. That was not a Bill for the benefit of prisoners. He believed that more convictions would take place under it than they had before. He thought that it was a bad Bill for the guilty and a beneficial Bill only for the innocent. He did not believe that that power of cross-examination would be abused; and he was quite certain that the Judges, the Chairmen of Quarter Sessions, the Bar, and the public would all resist and resent an unfair cross-examination. His noble and learned Friend said that that was the beginning of the process of examining prisoners whether they liked it or not. He did not wish to introduce that now, and if it were ever introduced it would require to be done by the most careful legislation. He confessed that he thought the French practice of the Judge setting his wits against the prisoner ought not to be adopted. It was said that our present law was so careful that when there was a previous conviction against a man it was not brought forward against him until he had been found guilty of the particular offence with which he was charged. That was quite true; but why was that? Because the only reason for bringing forward a previous conviction before the man had been found guilty would be to prejudice the jury against him. But when he was called as a witness he would not be asked about a previous conviction for any other purpose than that of showing that he was not a trustworthy witness. If he chose to keep out of the witness-box the jury would know nothing about his character; but if he entered the witness-box they had a right to ask what his character was, in order to see whether he was a trustworthy witness. A prosecutor's evidence was sifted in this way; and why should the prisoner be placed at a greater advantage? There could not be contradictory modes of getting at the truth and both right.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell) said, he thought the question raised by the Amendment was one of very considerable difficulty; and he was not convinced that it would, on the whole, tend to justice. He could not entirely regard it as a question between the prosecutor and the prisoner, because the effect of the answers of a prisoner would be very different on a jury from the replies of a prosecutor or an ordinary witness. He admitted that it was a question of the balance of advantages and disadvantages, and he did not profess to entertain any very strong opinion upon it. But when they were making that very considerable change in the law, he doubted whether it would be wise to couple that change with the limitation suggested by his noble and learned Friend.

Viscount CRANBROOK said, he could not understand under what system a prisoner was to be allowed to become a witness, and to be put on a totally different footing from all other witnesses. His former experience led him to think that if a man stated the whole truth, as he had sworn to do when he gave evidence, and candidly confessed that he had a bad character, he was more likely to be believed by the jury than if he acted otherwise.

The Earl of MILLTOWN said, he thought that some of the arguments to which they had listened that evening were arguments against the principle of the Bill itself, and he had himself urged some of them in the discussion on the second reading. If a prisoner was to be examined at all, he must be subject to the same rule of examination as other witnesses.

Lord ASHBOURNE said, he thought that logically the objections to the Amendment were sound; but he was anxious that the Bill should pass. It was a good measure not only for the innocent, but for the community at large. He would vote for the clause, because he thought public opinion was not ripe on this matter, and the measure would have a better chance of passing if the Amendment were inserted.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 16; Not-Contents 9: Majority 7.

Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 44.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 22*nd March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —ARMY ESTIMATES.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£4,457,300, Consolidated Fund.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Highways Acts Amendment* [149].

Second Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*; Drill Grounds* [143].

Considered as amended — Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*.

QUESTIONS.

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LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—SHAW *v.* LLOYD.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen the report of the statement made by Mr. Kisby, Q.C. Queen's Advocate, in the trial of Shaw *v.* Lloyd, to the effect that the affirmance of the original eviction decree, which is alleged to have been tampered with by the Clerk of the Peace of Monaghan, "had been sent to the Irish Office in London, and, owing to it being sent here and there it got lost;" did the affirmance reach the Irish Office; if so, is there any trace of it to be found; has he seen the report of the further statement of the defendant's counsel, Mr. Dodd, Q.C. that the affirmance had been sent to the County Inspector of Constabulary now in Carlow; have the Government questioned the Inspector on the subject; and, if this statement is true, can he explain of the disappearance of this document, which is an important piece of evidence on the question of classification of the county records; and, is it a fact that the Lord Chief Baron, with the consent of counsel on both sides, directed a shorthand writer to be sworn to take notes of the evidence; if so, will the Government, before coming to any decision on the dismissal of the Clerk of the Peace, or of his deputy, give directions that a transcript of the shorthand writer's notes may be made, and would there be any objection to these being printed and circulated amongst the Members, as the case is one of much importance, and must form a subject of debate in the House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I have made inquiries, and have been informed that there is no record of this decree having been received at the Irish Office; certainly it is not there at present. I have no information as to whether the County Inspector received it, and I really see no reason why it should have been sent to him. I am informed that a shorthand writer took notes of the proceedings by order of the Court; but the Government have no control over him, and they therefore could not undertake the printing and circulating of the evidence. As I have already indicated on more than one occasion, in reply to former Questions, the Government have no power to dismiss this Clerk of the Peace. That rests with Quarter Sessions.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—RULES OF LOCATION OF CONSTABLES.

MR. ALEXANDER BLAINE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Sergeant Finlay, county inspector's clerk at Cavan, has relations in Ralahan, Bailieborough, and Lisball, in county Cavan; and, if such be the fact, whether it be in accordance with the constabulary rules that Sergeant Finlay be stationed in the same county?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, Sergeant Finlay, who was stationed at Cavan, had an aunt residing at Ralahan, 20 miles off, and cousins at the other two places named, 25 miles distant. There was a rule of the Service that men should not be located in their native counties or in counties with which they were connected. This rule was relaxed in some cases where, as in the present, no inconvenience was likely to arise.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—SECRECY OF THE BALLOT.

MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether it has come to his knowledge that on Friday, March 5th, Mr. Ridout, Assistant School Inspector, when visiting the National School at Tattingstone, near Ipswich, Suffolk, asked the children "for whom their fathers voted at the late election;" asking those whose fathers voted for Rendelsham to hold up their hands, and then those whose fathers voted for Everett to do the same; and, what steps he has taken or proposes to take in reference thereto?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): I have no knowledge of this charge against an Assistant Inspector except through the Question of the hon. Member for Suffolk. As I may have to exercise a judicial function in regard to it, I would ask the hon. Member to furnish me with the names and addresses of witnesses who were present when the alleged serious indiscretion occurred. When he does so I will at once make an official inquiry. But I cannot institute an inquiry upon a mere general statement.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —SCHOOL GRANTS IN THE HIGHLANDS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Why Caithness and Sunderland are exempted from the provisions giving increased grants to the Highland counties for increased regularity in attendance, and why graduates should receive 10*s*., while teachers who are not graduates only receive 4*s*. for the same work, tested by the same standard?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): The counties of Caithness and Sunderland are not excluded from the increased grants for average attendance; but the Department has not thought that it would be proper, without special sanction, to extend to these counties the exemption from the 17*s*. 6*d*. limit, which exemption under the Code applies only to those counties for which the Legislature has made special and express provision. The additional grants received for specific subjects, which are received by managers and not by teachers in cases where graduates are employed, is based upon the fact of the additional expense of employing graduates, who are specially qualified and require a specially large salary. It is very important to encourage the connection between the University and the elementary schools.

POST OFFICE—MAILS TO THE UNITED STATES.

MR. SAMUEL MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that all letters for the United States posted in Brussels, Paris, and other large cities on the Continent, and arriving in London in closed mails on Thursday morning, are forwarded by the British Post Office to New York by a fast line of steamers from Southampton on that day, to the prejudice of English traders, the correspondence posted in this Country being kept back for a later steamer; and, whether the Postmaster General will take steps to remedy this grievance?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E): Closed mails from the Continent are received in London every Thursday morning for conveyance to New York by the North German Lloyd steamers from Southampton, while the British mails containing correspondence posted as late as Thursday evening are forwarded that evening by British steamers *viâ* Queenstown. So long as the present agreement between the Postmaster General and the British steamship lines remains in force the Postmaster General is precluded by that agreement from sending by non-contract lines any other letters than such as bear a special superscription; any letters so endorsed are sent by the German steamers.

IRELAND—DISTRESS IN THE TOWN OF WICKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What Report was made by the Local Government Board inspector recently sent to inquire into the distress existing in the town of Wicklow; is he aware that the inspector did not call on any of the Roman Catholic clergy, who are best acquainted with the circumstances, or on the Chairman of the Town Commissioners; why did he not do so; and, how else did he obtain his information?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, the Inspector who inquired into the distress in the town of Wicklow had interviews with the relieving officers, the medical officer of the workhouse, and the hon. secretary of the relief committee, and he also visited the relief works. He also called on the Chairman of the Town Commissioners, but was not fortunate enough to find him at home. The Board considered that the inquiries he made were sufficient to enable him to make a Report.

LAW AND JUSTICE—ESTABLISHMENT OF A COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL.

Mr. SHIRLEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Doncaster) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill for the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal; and, if not, whether they would be disposed to provide facilities to a private Member to introduce such a measure; and, what are the intentions of the Government with regard to the codification of the Criminal Law?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Charles Russell) (Hackney, S.), in reply, said, that the state of Business would not permit the Government to deal with the matters mentioned in the Question. As to whether facilities would be given to a private Member, if the hon. Member meant that the Government were to give up their own time, they were not prepared to do so.

ARMY--PENSIONS—CASE OF ISAAC HEMPTON.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, If Isaac Hempton, now living at Mountjoy East, Omagh, county Tyrone, served for 21 years in the Army, 16 years and 354 days being Foreign service, and was retired in 1875 on a pension of 11*d.* per diem, having medals for Crimean and Indian service; if he is aware that, owing to a wound received by Hempton at the relief of Lucknow, he is now absolutely unable to engage in any occupation for the support of his wife and family; and, if, considering his long service and good records, the Commissioners will be prepared to consider his claims for an increase of pension?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.), in reply, said, the case was not one which would come within the consideration of the Commissioners.

THE RAILWAY CLEARING HOUSE (IRELAND).

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he is aware that the Associated Companies of the Irish Railway Clearing House have adopted a form of accounts called the summary system; whether, under this system, the clerks of the clearing house are compelled to work from nine a.m. until ten p.m.; and, if he will take action to prohibit the enforcement of such long hours of clerical duty?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside): As the Board of Trade has no control whatever over the Railway Clearing Houses, I do not feel that I can usefully interfere.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—DUBLIN POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will make the Post Office, College Green, Dublin, available for the receipt of parcels, and so remove an existing inconvenience from one of the business centres of the Irish Metropolis?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): Parcel Post business is not transacted at the College Green Post Office for want of space; but there are receiving offices in Grafton Street and Dame Street, the first about 370 yards, the second about 330 yards, distant from College Green—at which parcels may be posted, and which were established mainly for that purpose. The Dame Street Receiving Office is at the present moment vacant through the resignation of the receiver, but no time will be lost in filling up the vacancy.

IRELAND—INVESTMENTS OF ENGLISH CAPITAL.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN (Newcastle-on-Tyne) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If Her Majesty's Government knows, or has the means of ascertaining, the amount of money lent to Irish landlords by English Mortgage and Insurance Companies?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): The Treasury does not know, and has no means of ascertaining, the amount of money due from Irish landowners to English mortgage and insurance companies in respect of loans advanced by those companies.

EGYPT—THE SYSTEM OF PENSIONS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true, as stated in the public prints, that the subordinate native servants of the Egyptian Government, and the families of deceased officers and soldiers, have been deprived of the pensions to which the rules of the Service entitled them, while the claims of the more highly paid Europeans are maintained intact; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will insist that, so long as the British Government occupies and defends Egypt, the natives shall not be treated less fairly than the Europeans?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The whole system of Egyptian Pensions has been for some time under examination by a Committee at Cairo, and a new Pension Law is in course of preparation. The statements referred to by the hon. Member are not confirmed by any information in the possession of Her Majesty's Government, who have no reason to believe that any valid claims have been disregarded, or that Natives have been treated less fairly than Europeans. It has been, and continues to be, the policy of Her Majesty's Government to take all possible steps within the sphere of their action for securing the fair treatment of Natives.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked whether the hon. Gentleman would cause inquiry to be made as to the truth of the statements?

MR. BRYCE: If my hon. Friend will indicate any particular point, inquiry will no doubt be made.

EGYPT—COST OF THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Why the contribution of the Egytian Government towards the expenses of the British Army of Occupation (which was originally to have been a much larger sum to cover all extra expenses) has now been reduced to £170,000, notwithstanding that the expenses have been very greatly increased, and are estimated by the War Office, for the ensuing year, at double the cost taken in the ordinary Estimates for 1885-6, and that one item alone, "Additional Expenditure for Supplies, Transport, &c. consequent on the Occupation of Egypt," is estimated by the same authority, for 1886-7, at £416,000 in excess of the amount estimated for 1885-6, while at the same time a new charge for Egyptian Troops at Suakin is entered on the British Estimates, thereby practically reducing the Egyptian contribution to about £100,000; whether he expects that the sums due will really be paid, and the Government has considered any proposals for remitting them; and, whether these arrangements are in pursuance of an attempt of the Financial Adviser of the Government of Egypt to establish an apparent financial equilibrium, and avoid the further inquiry into the finances of Egypt, by throwing on the British taxpayer the cost of the defence of Egypt?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE) (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): At the time of the conclusion of the Financial Convention of March 18, 1885, it was agreed that the sum to be paid by Egypt for charges on account of the British Army of Occupation should not exceed £200,000 a-year from the 1st of April following. Of this sum, £170,000 is credited to Army Funds, and £30,000 goes to the Navy, and appears as an Appropriation in Aid under Vote XVIII. of that Service for Army Transport. It has recently been agreed that the Native Force which is to be sent to Suakin to replace the British garrison there, shall be paid by the Egyptian Government, but that the cost—estimated at £41,000—shall be deducted from the payment towards the charges of the Army of Occupation. The Foreign Office are not aware of any other deduction. The sums due by the Egyptian Government on account of the charges for the Army of Occupation up to the end of last year have been duly paid, and there is no reason to suppose that they will not continue to be paid. These arrangements are, therefore, in pursuance of engagements already sanctioned by Parliament.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked if the engagements in question were international engagements?

MR. BRYCE: They are between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Egypt.

ARMY (INDIA)—THE INDIAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS.

MR. JAMES MACLEAN (Oldham) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the augmentation of the British troops in India by the addition of ten thousand men, and the augmentation of the Native Army in India by the addition of seventeen thousand men, which was agreed upon by the Governor of India and the late Government, is being proceeded with; what will be the full strength of the British troops in India after the trooping season 1886-7, and the full strength of the Native Army in India at the same time; what progress has been made towards raising the four additional Sikh and the five additional Ghoorka regiments; and, when these regiments will be added to the effective Military strength of India?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The authorized addition to the European Force was 10,657 men. Of these about 6,400 were sent out last trooping season. The total permanent addition to the Native Army is between 16,000 and 17,000 men. Orders have been issued for the increase of some 4,500 men to the Cavalry; and two at least of the five additional Ghoorka regiments have been raised, and recruits for the others are, it is understood, coming in satisfactorily. If the remainder of the Europeans are sent out during next trooping season and the whole of the additional Native Forces are raised, the full European Establishment will be 69,764, and the Native 141,000. No Orders have yet been issued for raising any of the Native Forces except those I have already specified; and it rests with the Government of India to use its discretion, having regard to financial and other considerations, as to the time of issuing them.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE OF OFFICERS.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Wexford, N.) (for Mr. H. CAMPBELL) asked Mr. Attorney General, Who is responsible for the punctual and regular atendance of the officers of the Royal Courts of Justice; is it the fact that there is great irregularity in the attendance, some officials arriving about 11.30, and leaving before 3, and, in consequence, much loss of time to the public and suitors generally; and, is there any time or attendance book for signature by the various officers and clerks, and who has the supervision of it?

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) inquired whether it was not within the knowledge of the hon. and learned Gentleman that the officials in question gave great satisfaction both to the Bar and to the public attending the Courts, by their civility and punctual attendance to their duties?

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) wished to know whether some of the Taxing Masters in Chancery were not Directors of Public Companies, and as such went away to attend to meetings of the Directors during official hours?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.), in reply, said, he could not properly be asked to join in the general commendation which his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Addison) had expressed; and with regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) he had no information. He was not yet in possession of the facts in regard to the Question on the Paper, which perhaps the hon. Member would renew on a future occasion.

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—THE COLONIAL AND IMPERIAL NAVAL FORCES.

MR. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Governments of any of our greater Colonies have expressed willingness to consider some scheme for the amalgamation of the Colonial and Imperial Naval Forces; whether negotiations have been opened with any of those colonies for the purpose of considering any definite scheme: and, whether he can lay upon the Table any Papers explaining what has been done in this matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): I am afraid it would be difficult to give a complete reply to the hon. Member within the limits of an answer to a Question. But I may state generally that such of the Australian Colonies as possess Navies of their own have, with the loyalty and patriotism which all the Colonies have always exhibited when Imperial interests were at stake, expressed their willingness to co-operate with the Home Government in any measures which might be found necessary for the defence of that part of the Empire. In order to give practical effect to that desire, Lord Derby, when Colonial Secretary, formulated a scheme for the naval defence of the Australasian Colonies, which was adopted with some slight modifications by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the late Secretary for the Colonies (Colonel Stanley). That scheme will be submitted and explained by Admiral Tryon, the Admiral in command of the Australian Station, to a meeting about to be held at Melbourne, at which most of the Australasian Colonies will be represented, and the Colonial Governments which will not then be represented are considering the subject separately. From what I have stated, my hon. Friend will, I think, see that the time has not yet arrived when any Papers explaining what has been done in the matter could be usefully laid before Parliament.

CORRUPT PRACTICES ACT—POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he is aware that party political associations were, as a matter of form, dissolved for the period of the last General Election; and, whether the Corrupt Practices Act makes these associations illegal; and, if so, whether this temporary dissolution of the associations carries out the provisions of the Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir CHARLES RUSSELL) (Hackney, S.): I have no information as to the first part of this Question, other than that in the hands of every Member; but, so far as I understand, the main purpose sought to be accomplished by a dissolution of these associatious is to narrow the area of agency, and has nothing to do with the legality or otherwise of the association itself. I will not express any opinion as to the legality of any particular association; but, generally speaking, I may say that I am not aware of any provision of the Corrupt Practices Act which makes illegal any political association properly constituted and conducted.

THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, How many schemes the Charity Commissioners and the Education Department have at the present time in preparation or under consideration; and, whether he will order that in future a list of all sehmes and charitable or educational trusts, for the time being under consideration of the Charity Commission, be exhibited daily for public inspection free of charge in the office of the said Commission?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): I am unable to answer precisely the first Question of the hon. Member, for the words "schemes in preparation or under consideration" represent no formal stages of the procedure of the Charity Commissioners. But I may refer him to pages 23 to 27 of their Report for 1885, just issued, in which he will find the state of progress of all schemes published by the Commisioners. I am not prepared to recommend that a daily list of schemes under consideration should be made for public inspection, as this would be a restriction on administration which should not be imposed on any Public Department. All information as to the progress of any particular scheme or case can now be obtained by application to the Office of the Charity Commission.

EGYPT—OCCUPATION BY ITALY OF MASSOWAH.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN (Newcastle-on-Tyne) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, when the Italians took possession of Massowah, any arrangement was made with them for the permanent occupation of that place; and, if so, can he state the terms of the agreement; and, whether, in the event of the British Army leaving Suakin, any arrangement has been made with the Italian Government for the permanent retention of Massowah, or for keeping the peace of the Soudan?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): No arrangement has been made with the Italian Government for the permanent occupation of Massowah. Lord Granville informed the Italian Ambassador, on the 23rd of December, 1884, that if the Italian Government wished to occupy any of the ports in the Red Sea relinquished by the Egyptian Government, it was a matter for arrangement between the Italian Government and the Porte. (Blue Book, Egypt, No. 14, 1885, page 70.) No arrangement has been made with the Italian Government for the retention of Massowah, or for keeping the peace of the Soudan in the event of the British Army leaving Suakin.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN: Are the Italian Government paying the expenses of the occupation themselves, or the Egyptian Government, or is any other Government contributing to the expenses of the occupation?

MR. BRYCE: So far as I can answer that Question without Notice, I believe the Italian Government are paying it all themselves.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE ANTRIM GRAND JURY.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Mayor of Belfast, Sir Edward Harland, was summoned to serve on the county Antrim Grand Jury at the current Spring Assizes; whether a number of local gentlemen regularly summoned for many years past were not summoned on this last occasion; whether amongst those who were summoned by the high sheriff, Mr. Samuel Allen, and who served at the Spring Assizes, was Mr. John Leslie Beers, formerly governor of the county Antrim prison, and now governor of the Kilmainham prison, Dublin; and, whether a governor is permitted to absent himself for several days from his post for the purpose of acting as a grand juror, and, in that capacity, aiding the adoption of a political resolution, which formed part of the transactions of the Antrim Grand Jury?

MAJOR SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) Before answering the Question, will the right hon. Gentleman kindly inform the House whether it is not the case that Mr. Beers was on leave at the time, and also inform the House whether there is any Statute which prohibits gentlemen holding the position which is filled by Mr. Beers—and being at the same time the landowner of a county—serving on a Grand Jury; and also whether, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the High Sheriff of Antrim was not quite as justified in summoning Mr. Beers, a landowner, as the National Party were justified in choosing a leader from the same class? [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The latter part of the Question is irregular.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said, he was informed that the fact was as stated in the first paragraph of the Question. He was not aware, however, whether, as stated in the second paragraph, any gentlemen who were usually summoned were not so summoned at the last Assizes. The duty of summoning Grand Jurors rested with the High Sheriff under the provisions of the Grand Jury Act. He was informed that Mr. Beers was not given leave of absence for the purpose of attending, but he was on leave, and, being summoned, he attended.

IRELAND — HOME RULE — ALLEGED INTIMIDATION OF LANDLORDS.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Constabulary have information that a landlord named Waller, residing near Navan, county Meath, has sent round his steward to his tenants and labourers to call for their signatures to a petition against Home Rule, and to extort compliance by the intimation that, if they refused, "the master wouldn't be their friend;" whether another landlord named Tisdall, in the same district, has acted in a similar manner; whether attempts are being made, in various parts of Ireland, to compel tenants and labourers to sign petitions against Home Rule, by threats of eviction and disemployment; and, whether the Constabulary will be instructed to inquire into and report upon such proceedings?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I find on inquiry that the Constabulary have no information to bear out in any way the allegation mentioned in the hon. Gentleman's Notice.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — CHISLEHURST SCHOOL.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether his attention, or that of his predecessor, has been called to the Correspondence relating to the Catholic school at Chislehurst; whether it is a fact that Her Majesty's inspector has reported that during the last school-year there was an average attendance of more than thirty, and that all the other conditions for gaining the grant had been fulfilled; whether it is true that the Department has refused the grant for that year, although the school has been under inspection, and the managers have been claiming the grant for the past nine years; upon what section of what Act of Parliament such refusal of the grant is founded; whether the Code (Section 19) explains "the annual grant list" as "the list of schools claiming annual grants;" whether the managers of Chislehurst school have been claiming the grant for several years; whether this refusal of the grant for the first year in which it has been earned is ever extended to Board schools, or to schools within a School Board district; and, whether he will examine into the circumstances of this case, and consider whether the grant should be conceded; and, in case of an adverse decision, lay the Correspondence upon the Table?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): On the 1st November, 1885, the Chislehurst Roman Catholic School established that it had had for 12 months an average attendance of more than 30, and, according to Article 91 of the Code, it was at once put on the annual grant list. For several years before it had claimed a grant without fulfilling this condition of the Code; refusal was then based on the 97th section of the Act of 1870, which makes compliance with the Code essential. The 19th Article of the Code is ambiguous in language, but it has always been held to mean that "schools claiming grants," are schools establishing their claims to grants. There has been no refusal to give the grant when the condition of 12 months' precedent average attendance was established. Article 91 does not apply to School Board districts, and the case could not arise with Board Schools, as they could make no claim under it. I am not prepared to lay the Correspondence on the Table, as it is voluminous and refers to more details of administration.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CONTEMPT OF COURT.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention had been drawn to a recent case in the country Longford, wherein three orders for attachment had been issued against three persons for contempt of court; whether the contempt of court consisted in forcibly retaking possession of a farm from which they had been evicted; whether the sheriff had only been successful in arresting one of the parties, John Clarke, now in Sligo Gaol; whether, in alluding to the other two cases, Judge Boyd had said, as follows:—

> "That it was a strange state of affairs to which the Country was reduced, when there was a warrant issued by one of Her Majestys' Courts, and the authorities refused to give the police authority to execute the warrant. The idea of a sheriff making a return that, in consequence of the refusal of the authorities to give police protection before 8 a.m., the two persons could not be arrested;"

and, whether the Irish Executive contemplated taking any steps to carry out the Law?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said, he was not in a position to reply now, and asked that the Question should be repeated.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CASE OF DISTRICT INSPECTOR TILLY.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether District Inspector R. H. Tilly, of the Royal Irish Constabulary stationed now at Cavan, was, twenty-five years ago, admitted to the Constabulary Force as a cadet, having duly passed the medical and competitive examinations; whether a month or two after his examination, a question arose as to defect, due to hesitation in Mr. Tilly's manner of speech, and he was medically examined a second time and declared to be fit for service; whether in November last, it having come to the turn of Mr. Tilly to be promoted to the rank of County Inspector, he was summoned before a Council of three Officers at the Castle without being informed of the purpose of the summoning, and was informed two days after, by the Inspector General, that his character, private and official, was without reproach, but that, so far as concerned promotion, he was to be passed over; whether the defect of speech referred to is of greater moment in regard to the office of District Inspector than to that of County Inspector; and, whether, in view of the length of Inspector Tilly's service, and of the fact that he has a large family dependent upon him, the Government will allow him the promotion to which, in the regular course of seniority, he has become entitled?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-TYNE), in reply, said, this case came by way of appeal before the Earl of Carnarvon and the late Chief Secretary. The facts were laid very fully before them both in the reports of the examiners and of heads of the office, and also in memorials and testimonials submitted by Mr. Tilly. The conclusion arrived at was that no sufficient reason had been shown for interfering with the decision arrived at after full and careful consideration of all the circumstances.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

MR. MAGNIAC (Bedford, N., Biggleswade) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he has received any remonstrance from commercial quarters with reference to the absence of a sufficient representation of commercial interests upon the Indian Committee; and, whether, having regard to the fact that the most important tie between this Country and India is a commercial one, he will undertake to examine the matter, with a view to acceding to the desire of the remonstrants, and so as to give a practical direction to the inquiry?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To the first paragraph of my hon. Friend's Question I have to reply that the only suggestion which has reached me from any commercial body is that which he handed to me on Friday from the executive committee of the London Chamber of Commerce. In answer to the second paragraph, I am not prepared to admit, having regard to the nature of the inquiry, which involves many questions not connected with commerce, that the proposed selection of members is otherwise than a fair one. I may remind the House that if our proposals are accepted there will be on the Joint Committee one Peer and one eminent Member of this House closely connected with the commercial interests of the City of London, and at least one other Member identified with the commercial interests of the cotton districts of England.

AFRICA (CENTRAL)—MURDER OF BISHOP HANNINGTON.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he can give any authentic information relating to the murder of Bishop Hannington; and, whether it is proposed to take any steps with the Native chiefs in reference to this outrage?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): All the information in the possession of Her Majesty's Government with regard to this sad occurrence has been forwarded to the Church Missionary Society by whom it has been published. Sir John Kirk, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General at Zanzibar, endeavoured by means of letters from himself and from the Sultan of Zanzibar to influence the King of Uganda in the Bishop's favour; but it is not known whether these letters reached the King before the event. The distance of this powerful Kingdom from the coast makes it difficult to take steps for the exaction of any reparation.

EGYPT—THE GARRISONS IN THE SOUDAN.

MR. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to withdraw Her Majesty's troops from the posts they have occupied on the Nile Railway, and from Wady Halfa, to Assouan; if it is intended to abandon the Nile Railway, and the frontier at Wady Halfa, or whether they are to be held by Egyptian troops; and whether, if so, the course proposed has had the unreserved concurrence of the Khedival Government, and has been recommended by the English and Turkish Commissioners now in Egypt; when the decision arrived at will take effect; what forces at present constitute the Army of Occupation in Egypt; and, what will be the strength and composition of the troops which will remain there?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): In answer to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government gradually and with due regard to local circumstances to withdraw Her Majesty's troops to Assouan. The frontier at Wady Halfa would then be held by Egyptian troops. This decision has been arrived at by Her Majesty's Government on their own responsibility; and they will be ready to make to Parliament at the proper time such communication of details as may be required. With regard to the matter of fact as to which the right hon. Gentleman inquires, the number of our forces in Egypt, by the latest Report, was 17,108 officers and men.

MR. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered that portion of my Question relating to the railways. I should also like to know when the decision arrived at will take effect?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have stated that Her Majesty's troops are to be withdrawn from Wady Halfa to Assouan. The right hon. Gentleman can judge for himself what effect that will have upon the railway. As to the other Question, we shall have regard to local circumstances.

COMMISSION ON DEPRESSION OF TRADE—THE SILVER CURRENCY.

MR. GOSCHEN (Edinburgh, S.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the deep and increasing interest shown in various parts of the Country in the silver question, he will consider the expediency of separating this urgent subject from the other matters referred to the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade, and of appointing a separate Commission to inquire into the position of silver, the condition of the currency, and the various plans of utilising silver to a greater extent for currency purposes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): I have communicated with the Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade, and I learn from him that the Commission has undertaken and already begun to inquire into this question. In these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government do not feel disposed to interpose in this matter.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his attention had been drawn to a letter sent from the India Office to the Treasury in January with regard to the fall in the value of silver; and, whether he could lay that letter on the Table of the House?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I cannot say until a decision has been taken on that matter, which has not yet been done.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—PATENT BALLOT MACHINE.

MR. COOTE (Huntingdon, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the "patent model," now on view in the Conference Room, for recording the numbers of votes at elections, and momentarily ascertaining the state of the poll for each candidate; and, whether he will be prepared to recommend its adoption generally throughout the Country, especially in counties, so as to afford facilities to the returning officer to declare the poll on the day of the election?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): Yes, Sir, I have carefully examined the model in the Conference Room, which appears to me a very ingenious and not too elaborate contrivance for recording the votes given to candidates at elections. Its object is to record the number of votes given at each polling place to the respective candidates, so that the total poll may be made up in a few minutes after the returns from those polling places have been received. This, however, is inconsistent with one of the chief objects of the Ballot Act, Section 34 of which provides that the whole of the ballot papers from all the polling places must be mixed together before they are counted. It appears to me that this provision of the Act is one of great importance, and if it is to be maintained the proposed machinery could not be adopted.

MR. COOTE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in many places the ballot papers are not mixed, but counted from the boxes from the different polling stations?

MR. CHILDERS: Where that is the case, all I can say is that the Returning Officers and all concerned are violating the law.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—"BOYCOTTING"—CASE OF JOHN FORAN, GALLEY, CO. KERRY.

MAJOR SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Her Majesty's Government is aware of the fact, that a man named John Foran, of the parish of Galley, county Kerry, has been boycotted for a long time past, and was unable to procure a coffin last month, in either the town of Listowel or Ballylongford for his wife's remains, and had it not been for the humanity of Mr. Sandes of Sallowglen, who got his own carpenter to make him one, the body would have had to be buried without a coffin; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take immediate steps to enable Her Majesty's subjects to provide the means of decent interment for deceased members of their family?

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this was not a purely local matter; whether Foran was convicted of fraud; and whether he was not generally odious in the locality?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am afraid I cannot say what was Foran's popularity in his own district. It appears that he has been more or less "Boycotted" for some time past. He was at one time under personal police protection, but this was withdrawn at his own request in February, 1885. The allegation with respect to the coffin is, I am informed, unfounded. It is quite true the coffin was supplied by Mr. Sandes's carpenter, who was the first person to whom Foran applied, and he was not refused one at Listowel, Ballylongford, or any other place.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—LOSS OF THE "OREGON."

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If there is any regulation requiring seagoing vessels to carry boats to accommodate the number of persons they are permitted to carry; if this regulation is enforced; and, if the *Oregon* had such a supply of boats; and, if not, on what grounds are such vessels excused from carrying a full complement?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): By Statute a passenger steamer is required to carry boats according to her net registered tonnage, and not according to the number of persons she is permitted to carry. This regulation is strictly enforced, and the *Oregon* was not excused from carrying her full complement of boats. The law requires seven boats, of 1,893 cubic feet capacity, or six boats, of 2,035 cubic feet; in each case two of them must be lifeboats with 1,000 cubic feet aggregate capacity. The *Oregon* had 10 boats, of the capacity of 3,650 cubic feet, of which four were lifeboats with an aggregate capacity exceeding 2,000 cubic feet; and the Board of Trade had ascertained, as they do in all cases of steamers carrying more than 12 passengers, that these boats, with their equipments and lowering gear, were in good order and thoroughly efficient. Besides this, she had on board 120 cork lifejackets and 600 lifebuoys. The passengers and crew were all saved.

MR. MACFARLANE asked if the right hon. Gentleman could state the number of passengers that were on board the *Oregon*, and the carrying capacity of the boats?

MR. MUNDELLA: I cannot tell that; but I have already stated that the capacity of the boats depends on the tonnage of the steamer, and not on the number of passengers.

MR. MACFARLANE: I shall ask the right hon. Gentleman another Question on the subject.

INLAND REVENUE—THE LAND TAX COMMISSION.

MR. FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) asked the honourable Member for North West Staffordshire, Whether he has any objection to giving a Return containing the names and addresses of the persons whom it is proposed to name as additional Land Tax Commissioners, in order that the same may be published before the next stage of the Land Tax Commissioners' Names Bill?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.), in reply, said, that the names of the additional Land Tax Commissioners were published in *The London Gazette*. If it could be shown that there was any general desire for the Return for which the hon. Member asked, he would agree to its publication.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CO. DONEGAL QUARTER SESSIONS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the hardship inflicted on the inhabitants of the Barony of South Raphoe in county Donegal, in having to go all the way to Lifford, he will suggest to His Excellency the desirability and the convenience of having quarter sessions held at least twice a year at Stranorlar?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): The Quarter Sessions of the County Donegal were, after inquiry, re-arranged by Proclamation in May last year, and in the following October a further Memorial was presented to the Privy Council; but that Body decided that it was inexpedient to make any further changes until the effect of the Proclamation was better ascertained.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the matter will be reconsidered?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I cannot say at present.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—KINGSTOWN HARBOUR.

MR. PETER M'DONALD (Sligo, North) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What action, if any, has been taken as to the carrying out of necessary improvements on Kingstown East Pier, for which estimates were furnished by Mr. F. A. Doyle, C.E.; and, if no action has been taken, whether the Lords of the Admiralty will, within a reasonable time, take the matter in hand?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): The improvements in question are wholly intended to promote the recreation and amusement of visitors to Kingstown; and Mr. Doyle and other gentlemen interested in Kingstown were recently informed by the Commissioners of Public Works as Harbour Commissioners that no objection would be raised to the execution of the scheme if carried out from other than public funds.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS—APPOINTMENT OF DR. DONALDSON.

MR. BOYD-KINNEAR (Fife, East) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether it is true, as stated in the newspapers, that Dr. Donaldson, Professor of Latin in the University of Aberdeen, has been appointed Principal of the University of St. Andrews; and, if it is true, whether he will state the grounds on which a stranger to the University has been appointsd over the head of candidates connected with it?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): It is the case that Dr. Donaldson has been appointed Principal of St. Andrews University, on the ground that he is a very learned man, of varied experience in teaching, who holds very enlightened views on University education. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: Hear, hear!] Well, it appears from the exclamation of the noble Lord that he thinks no one should be appointed Principal who is not a Conservative. While duly appreciating the qualifications of other candidates, I came to the conclusion that he was the best man for the position. I am not aware that there is any usage of appointing Professors to the Principalship of the University with which they are connected.

EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT—THE LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he will cause inquiry to be made whether the following statement is substantially correct, viz.: That 36,000 employés of The London and North Western Railway Company met in London not many days ago to consider their position with regard to the proposed Amendment to the Employers' Liability Act of 1880, and unanimously resolved to petition Parliament to have their case specially considered, as they are better protected by their present Insurance Society than they would be under the Act; that their agreement to contract out of the Act was an entirely voluntary arrangement between themselves and the Company, and has resulted far more beneficially for the employés than if they had not done so, the compensation paid in respect of claims for accidents being relatively far greater, and moreover such compensation having been frequently paid for accidents in respect to which they would have been unable to claim under the Act; that the said employés look with apprehension on any measure that would deprive them of the right to contract themselves out of the Act where the Company contributes to the funds of their Insurance Society, as any such legislation would throw on the men burdens of a much larger contribution than at present paid by them, without any corresponding benefit; whether he will make inquiry by whose authority the aforesaid meeting was convened, and whether any but employés were present; whether the suggestion that the employés have signed a document, to the effect that they are satisfied with the Act as it now stands, only under compulsion is in the slightest degree compatible with the foregoing statement; and, what steps the Board of Trade intend to take in order to ascertain and give full effect to the true and unbiassed wishes of the aforesaid employés and others in a like position?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): I have been informed by the London and North-Western Railway Company that the statement contained in the hon. Member's Question is correct, and that the meeting referred to was convened by the workmen. It would appear that the suggestion that the workmen signed a document under compulsion to the effect that they are satisfied with the Act as it now stands is not compatible with the foregoing statement. As I understand that the Bill in question will be referred to a Select Committee, before which the delegates of the workmen will be able to express their own views, I do not think it is desirable that I should take any further steps in the matter.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, that the Question had reference to one which he placed on the Paper on Friday. After he had asked that Question a deputation from the men employed by the London and North-Western Railway Company waited upon him, and explained that the document referred to in the answer of the right hon. Gentleman had been signed with the greatest possible willingness and without pressure by all the men who belonged to the Insurance Society. It was clear, therefore, that in the first instance he had been misinformed, and he wished to state so to the House.

POOR LAW ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—THE QUEEN'S COUNTY.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Roman Catholic curate of the Stradbally District of the Queen's County gave notice to his flock that he would require to see each of their Poor Law voting papers before they were collected by the police; and, whether the Constabulary will be instructed to inquire into and report upon such proceedings?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Every possible inquiry has been made by the police, and they cannot find that there is any truth whatever in this allegation. It appears that there has been no contest in that electoral division this year.

STATE OF IRELAND — CONDITION OF CORK AND TIPPERARY — CHARGES OF THE JUDGES OF ASSIZE.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the charges delivered to the Grand Juries of Cork and Tipperary, on Wednesday last, by Mr. Justice O'Brien and Mr. Justice Johnston, in which they are reported to have said as follows:—

"Mr. Justice O'Brien (Cork)—'I am forced to say that I can observe no sign whatsoever that the waters have subsided. For although the aggregate of crime, of reported crime, comprised within the interval, hardly exceeding two months, must necessarily be very small, yet within that aggregate are elements that can lead certainly to no very satisfactory or favourable conclusion with reference to the condition of this part of the country. I find that in all those forms of outrage and violation of the law that must be taken to be certain and unquestionable indications of the state of public feeling, the late account of this county is less satisfactory than the former one. For example, in the cases of killing and maiming cattle, a large increase has appeared in it. In the cases of malicious injury to property there is also an increase; an increase, perhaps, in the number of cases, but certainly no decrease whatever in the quality and degree. In the cases of notices resulting from the object and design of intimidation, there is at least no decrease in one part of the county, and a great increase in the other, and even the character of the offence or the form of outrage has apparently become more bold and more alarming.'

"Mr. Justice Johnston (Clonmel)—'Turning to the report that I have received from the authorities, I am sorry to say that the return which has been presented to me of those cases specially reported for this riding of this great county, as compared with the corresponding period of last year, shows that crime has increased by nearly one-fourth. The increase appears to be in housebreaking, in robbery, in killing and maiming cattle, and in what are known popularly as Whiteboy offences, in assaulting houses, and in threatening letters. This report is not a state of things on which this riding of the county is to be congratulated;'"

and, whether the Irish Executive have any reason to believe that the state of these counties is inaccurately described by these Judges?

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Wexford, N.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question I would like to ask this further Question, Whether his attention has been called to some remarks of Mr. Justice O'Brien in the Court in Cork on Saturday last with reference to Mrs. John Lucas, who was charged with setting fire to her husband's house, and pretending that it was an agrarian outrage, her husband being a J.P., in which his Lordship stated that Mrs. Lucas had been guilty of an offence of the greatest heinousness to be dealt with in the strictest manner, more especially as the state of the times furnished many with a pretext for covering their crimes and casting the blame on those who were in no way responsible for it?

MR. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.): I would also ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this case, in which a magistrate's wife was sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment, was not the most serious case at trial at the Cork Assizes?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): My attention was naturally directed to the remarks of the learned Judge in the unfortunate case of Mrs. Lucas. It scarcely falls, however, within the scope of the Question on the Paper. In answer to the hon. and gallant Gentleman I have, of course, seen the charges referred to both at Cork and Tipperary. As regards Cork, the observations of Mr. Justice O'Brien are weakened by the fact that he appears somehow to have regarded the Return presented to him as extending over a period hardly exceeding two months, whereas in reality it covered some days more than three months. Turning from that, and looking to the recent Returns of agrarian crime, I find that the number of such outrages in the County Cork was in November last year 9, in December 11, in January 17, and in February it fell again to 11. In Tipperary county the number in November was 14, in December 13, in January 8, and in February 9. There are, therefore, no indications in our Returns of the growth at present of crime of this kind, but rather the reverse.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE "EXCELLENT" MERIT GRANT.

MR. WOODHEAD (York, W. R., Spen Valley) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, under the present Government, or during the period of Lord Salisbury's administration, the Education Department has given instructions to Her Majesty's Inspectors to reduce or limit the number of schools receiving the "Excellent" merit grant; and, whether there is any uniformity of standard in awarding such merit grants,—as between different Inspectors; as between Town and Country; and as between Board Schools and Denominational Schools?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): No instructions have been issued to Her Majesty's Inspectors to reduce or limit the number of schools receiving the "Excellent" merit grant. The greatest possible efforts are made to secure uniformity of standard all through the country and among all classes of schools in awarding the merit grant; and I have reason to believe that they are to a great degree successful, although, no doubt, as the decisions depend upon individual judgments, the uniformity as between different Inspectors cannot be absolute.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—WRITING ROOM OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix) asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he is aware of the very defective lighting of the "Writing Room" of the Library of this House; and, if so, will he adopt measures to remedy the defect?

THE LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. LEVESON GOWER) (Stafford, N.W.): If the hon. Member will be so good as to point out to me what are the precise defects of which he complains I shall be happy to endeavour to remedy them.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION—CONFERENCE DURING THE COLONIAL EXHIBITION.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If advantage will be taken of the presence in the mother country, during the forthcoming Colonial Exhibition, of many leading statesmen and representatives of our Australasian, Canadian, and South African brethren, to assemble a Conference, under the official auspices of Her Majesty's Government, to inquire into the practicability of Imperial Federation, and so formulate, if possible, proposals for the consideration of the Imperial and Colonial Parliaments, calculated to strengthen the ties uniting the British people, and to consolidate the Governments of their Territories for such Imperial purposes as defence, commerce, and Foreign affairs, while reserving local legislative independence for all portions of the Empire now separately administered; and, in such case, if notice thereof will be telegraphically transmitted to the several Governors, for the information of their Ministers, that the most fitting delegates may be selected?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): We should be very sorry to omit any opportunity which appeared to afford an opening for strengthening in any way the relations of the Colonies with this country; and I need not say that subjects of that kind are constantly under consideration—as, for instance, the subject of defence at the present time; but I do not perceive that the occasion referred to by the hon. Member could be turned to account in the way he proposes. I do not think we should take measures for assembling a Conference for the purpose of considering the subject of Federation unless we were prepared to lay before them a plan. They would have considerable ground of complaint if we had not such a plan. We have no such plan to lay before them, and therefore cannot agree to the suggestion of the hon. Member.

STATE OF IRELAND—"BOYCOTTING"—STATEMENTS OF CLERGYMEN OF THE IRISH CHURCH.

Mr. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, among other expressions of opinion elicited by his appeal as to the state of feeling in Ireland in relation to the establishment of a separate Parliament for that Country, his attention has been drawn to the very grave condition of things in that portion of the Empire, as evidenced by the communications addressed to *The Record* by four hundred and sixty of the beneficed clergy of the Irish Church in the provinces of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, showing that there were three hundred and fourteen cases of boycotting; whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to ascertain whether such cases are authentic; and, if so, how do they propose to redress that condition of things; and, in view of the fact that the present revenues and the security of the invested capital of the Church of Ireland have been seriously affected by the present crisis, whether he will take steps to have transferred the mortgages of the Irish Church body from the threatened security of Irish land to Government securities, in order that the Church may not lose any large portion of what was left her of her diminished patrimony?

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): May I ask whether the last part of the Question is in Order?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have noticed the paragraph; but I do not perceive that it is out of Order.

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The courtesy of the editor of a newspaper has supplied me with a copy of this information which is not otherwise in our possession in that form; but I have no reason to suppose that it adds to the information already placed before us by the observations and inquiries of the police. If there are any cases not known to the police I should be very happy to make them the subject of inquiry. Of course, we are aware that there is a serious amount of pressure upon individuals from the system known as "Boycotting" in Ireland. In the month of October last there were 800 or 900 cases of that kind; but that is now five months ago. Since that time there has been no increase in the number of these cases. In regard to the closing paragraph of the Question, I am bound to say that I do not regard the matter referred to as in any way connected with the duty of the Government. I think it would be a very unmanageable responsibility for us to recommend or procure investments of funds belonging to the Church Body in Ireland, which is, of course, essentially a private association; and I am not at all sure that the members of that Body would feel themselves placed under any obligation to us if we were so to interfere.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I am anxious to ask the First Lord of the Treasury a Question affecting the Business this evening. I understand that it is necessary, in point of law, that the Votes for the men and money in the Army Estimates should be taken to-night. The House will perceive that there are several Notices of Motion of interest and importance on going into Committee of Supply on the Army Estimates, and they will probably occupy a considerable time. It may very well be, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will not be able to make his statement until a late hour in the evening, so that no opportunity for debate on that statement will be afforded to the House to-night. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, if the Votes be taken to-night, there will be an opportunity given to us on Thursday next of debating the question?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Yes, Sir; unquestionably, if the course of the debate to-night should render it difficult properly to discuss the statement of my right hon. Friend, we will give the earliest opportunity in our power for the purpose of that discussion, and that, I believe, will be arranged on Thursday next. We are very anxious to get forward with the Crofters' Bill, and that Bill should not give way to anything excepting the Army Estimates in the event anticipated by the right hon. Gentleman.

RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE—PROCEDURE AT QUESTION TIME.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the alleged extraordinary conduct of the police at Leeds last Friday?

Mr. SPEAKER: I must point out that the Question of the hon. Member comes within the new Rule requiring that Notice of Questions should be given beforehand to the Clerk at the Table.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND subsequently rose and commenced to put the same Question.

Mr. SPEAKER again interposed, and refused to allow the Question to be put.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) said, he understood that, according to the Rule, although a Notice of a Question could not be given orally, it would be open to Members to ask supplementary Questions in addition to those on the Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have endeavoured to put the best interpretation in my power upon the Rule. Supplementary Questions purely seeking for the elucidation of former answers are in Order; but supplementary Questions which it cannot be in the power of a Minister to answer at the moment, I regard as belonging to those of which Notice should be given.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, that his Question was one which it was entirely in the power of the Home Secretary to answer. Would the right hon. Gentleman cause inquiry to be made into the conduct of the police at Leeds?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now evading my ruling.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the rules and conditions laid down, and the views expressed by him on the 8th of June, 1883, the circumstances which occurred at half-past 10 on Friday evening last, when the Government declined to set up Supply, constituted one of those rare occasions when the Government were justified in taking that course?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Yes, Sir; in our opinion they did constitute one of those rare occasions.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: I beg to give Notice——

Mr. SPEAKER said, that Notice would be required of any further Question the right hon. Gentleman might desire to put on the subject.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK, rising to Order, asked whether the Resolution come to last week by the House on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Essex (Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson) excluded Notices of Motion from being given *vivâ voce?*

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly not. I understood the right hon. Gentleman began his remarks by saying—"I propose to ask."

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK said, he was about to give Notice of a Motion in reference to the Contagious Diseases Acts in the same terms as those used by the right hon. Gentleman on the 8th of June, 1883.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) asked the President of the Board of Trade, When the second reading of this Bill would be taken?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Mundella) (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he was afraid he could not give a definite answer.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give ample Notice of the day on which he proposed to take the second reading.

AFFAIRS OF BURMAH.

In reply to Mr. Wodehouse (Bath),

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said, a telegram, dated March 21, had been received at the India Office from the Viceroy in the following terms:—

> "General Prendergast telegraphs that he has dispersed the large body of insurgents collected at Yemethen, and that the neighbouring Woons are in friendly communication with him."

ARMY—THE INFANTRY OF THE LINE (NUMBERS).

Mr. BRAND (Gloucester, Stroud) asked the Secretary of State for War, What is the number of the Infantry of the Line (exclusive of depôts) now serving at home; what is the number serving abroad; what is the number serving in India, and in the Colonies; and, what will be the probable distribution on 1st January 1887?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): The strength of the Infantry of the Line at home (exclusive of depôts) is 33,803. The Infantry depôts at present contain 14,615 men. There are 81,746 abroad, of whom 52,217 are in India, 15,765 in the Colonies, and 13,764 in Egypt. It is at present proposed that on the 1st of January next the Establishment of Infantry of the Line should be thus distributed—At home, 52,956; in India, 50,998; in the Colonies, 16,110; and in Egypt, 6,269. As the number of battalions in Egypt will have been reduced, the establishments of the depôts will be 9,459.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE VOLUNTEER CAPITATION GRANT.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central), in rising to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, for the efficiency and development of the Volunteer Force, an immediate increase in the Capitation Grant is absolutely and urgently necessary,"

said: There are so many hon. Members around me intimately acquainted with the condition of the Volunteer Force from service therein, that it will not be necessary for me, I hope, to detain the House at any great length. The circumstances attending the formation of the present Volunteer Force will be well within the recollection of the House. At the mere rumour of the possible invasion of this Island by a foreign nation, tens of thousands of all ages, of all callings, and of all classes, flocked to arms. As you, Mr. Speaker, doubtless remember, working men vied with nobles and with each other in their demonstrations of patriotism and of loyalty. The danger, if it ever existed, passed away; but not so the National Army created by the apprehension. In 1859 the supreme importance of national defence was indelibly impressed upon the hearts of a large proportion of British subjects; and it is there, Sir, to-day, after 27 years of stern proof, stronger than ever. Few, indeed, were able to believe that so vast a force could be long held together by national spirit alone. Prophets were not wanting, as they never are, who loudly declared that so soon as the danger disappeared, and, forsooth, that as soon as the novelty of military exercise or of uniform wore off, the Volunteer Force would fall away and die. But, as every man in this country and every hon. Member of this House knows, the prophets and the critics were wrong, as they usually are. The Volunteer Force encountered much ridicule, much discouragement, and much opposition. But, to the glory of the British nation, it has come triumphant through it all, and now is entitled, I submit, to take rank as one of the most remarkable national institutions in the world: It evokes the admiration, it excites the envy of foreign nations. They cannot understand how an Army now nearly 250,000 strong can possibly be maintained, not only without compulsion, but without pay, or the receipt of any civil advantage of any sort or kind. The British Volunteers gladly sacrifice both leisure and money, and undergo much discomfort and inconvenience, to submit themselves to military discipline, and undergo military training. It cannot fail to be a source of pride to be associated with such splendid men in a position of authority; but many hon. and gallant Members will share the difficulty I feel, after commanding two Metropolitan regiments, in understanding why men should go through so much as do the Volunteers for such scanty recognition at the hands of their countrymen. Let the House but reflect for a minute upon what the Volunteer Force has done, and is still doing, for the country. There can hardly be a doubt, Sir, that had it not been for this glorious institution we should ere this have been compelled to adopt some form of compulsory service. Some hon. Members may disagree with me; but I submit that it would have been impossible for Great Britain to have remained passive while every European country converted their able-bodied manhood into soldiery. Our concern with Continental affairs may be small by comparison; but a few miles of sea would not have been sufficient to insure our insular safety, if we had not felt that a large proportion of the male population were training themselves to defend our shores against any invader. I do not hesitate to say that we owe it to the Volunteer Force that the yoke of conscription does not oppress the necks of our youth. But the Volunteer Force has rendered yet another service to the country, and this not of a military character. It has promoted the physical development of the nation, and it has added a great interest to the lives of hundreds of thousands of young men. It has fired their laudable ambition, and provided them with honourable recreation. There is, I feel sure, not an hon. Member having many persons in his employ who does not look with favour upon those under him joining the Volunteer Force. He knows that healthy recreation is the surest preparation for good and useful work. It is for this, among other reasons, that great mercantile houses such as Shoolbreds, Maples, Broadwoods, Trollopes, Lamberts, and dozens of other patriotic firms, spend large sums annually upon the Volunteer Companies recruited among their *employés*. They recognize the great moral value of the Volunteer Force. My hon. Friends below the Gangway opposite will agree that many working men share this feeling. There is, indeed, hardly a place of business in the country whose best hands have not been, or are not, Volunteers. The national and patriotic feeling, I say without fear of contradiction, is strong among the working men of Great Britain; and it is glorious to see them, after their labour is done, shouldering their rifles in their country's cause, and drilling for hours without fee or reward, and often in the cold and wet. But the Volunteer Force has not only averted conscription, not only been of moral advantage to the nation, but it has also, I feel assured, earned a claim to the gratitude even of those whose opinions are ably reflected in this House by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard), for it has preserved peace by showing a readiness for war. What then, Sir, has been the attitude of the State towards the Force? I am glad to be able to say that the prejudice and discouragement it had at one time to encounter are now of the past. At the present time the Volunteer Force receives every encouragement and assistance from His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, and the whole of the Military Authorities. The Army no longer regards the Volunteer Force with jealousy and ill-disguised contempt, but as a valued Auxiliary Service, providing many of its best recruits. The House will learn this, I trust, this evening from far more competent lips than mine—as, for instance, from the distinguished and gallant General who represents Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley), and the hon. and gallant Baronet opposite the Member for Durham (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan). The Volunteer Force, Sir, now consists, as I have already stated, of nearly 250,000 men. They are divided into 213 battalions of Infantry, 60 corps of Artillery, 17 corps of Engineers, and 4 corps of Volunteer horse. Of the total strength of 224,012, no less than 218,207, or 97 per cent, were returned last year as efficient according to the requirements of the War Office. These are that they should do 60 drills in the first two years of their service, and subsequently nine drills, besides firing either 60 rounds of ball cartridge on passing into what is technically known as the second musketry class. The War Office conditions being fulfilled, an allowance of 30*s*. per man is granted to the corps six months after the lapse of the Volunteer year, which begins on November 1, and terminates on October 31. I ask the pardon of the House for entering on these details; but it is of the utmost importance that hon. Members should thoroughly understand the present position of affairs, and I and my hon. Friends who will support me are but the spokesmen of a very large section of our countrymen. The Government gives a further allowance of £1 a-year for those officers and non-commissioned officers who have gone through a course at a school of military instruction, or have passed an examination. The House will be glad to learn that there were last year no less than 18,368 proficients under this head. They also allow 10*s*. a-year to the 727 zealous officers who have passed an examination in tactics. Out of the aggregate of these sums every single expense has to be defrayed by the officers and members of Volunteers corps, with the exception of the pay of one Adjutant, an officer of the Regular Army, detached for five years for drill purposes, and three or four Sergeant Instructors per battalion. Rifles and bayonets are, it is true, provided, and there is an allowance of 2*s*. per day for a limited number of men to go into camp. With these exceptions, and one or two small allowances, everything has to be furnished by the corps. They have to provide uniform, clothing, and equipment for the men, and to hire head-quarters and offices, to rent drill places and ranges, to pay journey expenses in transit to and from reviews—in short, to find everything. When it is considered that the provision of uniform alone, without great-coats, costs nearly the whole of the Capitation Grant of 30*s*. a man for three years, and that the men, in default of private agreement, are by law entitled to leave after a fortnight's notice, the House will readily understand that the expenses are very much in excess of the Government grant. It is, of course, highly essential that in the consideration of this matter the House should confine its attention entirely to necessary expenditure. If I were to seek to lead hon. Gentlemen into other channels I should be taking up the time of the House unnecessarily, and entering upon the endless field of individual extravagance. In 1878, following a conference of Volunteer officers at the Royal United Service Institution, in which I bore a somewhat active part, a Committee was appointed by the War Office to inquire into the requirements of the Volunteer Force. Many changes for the better resulted therefrom. But as they were precluded from entering into the financial question the position of the Volunteers was not improved, and this notwithstanding that a Return called for elicited the fact that the expenditure of 23 Metropolitan regiments was £9,135 in excess of the receipts from Government. I have lately been favoured with details of the necessary expenses of nearly every regiment in the force, and have them here open to the inspection of hon. Members. Under this head of necessary expenses I include rent of head-quarters or drill places, payment of interest on money borrowed for the purchase of buildings, rent of rifle ranges, uniforms and equipments, travelling expenses to and from reviews, united drills, parades, and ranges, salaries and allowances, bands, issue of orders, printing, and other necessary incidentals. I venture to think that hon. Members will agree that every one of these items is absolutely necessary to the efficiency of the force. A regiment must have a head-quarters, a drill hall wherein to train in the long winter nights, and ranges whereon to shoot. It must be clothed in uniform and pay for transit to reviews, have a certain staff for the transaction of necessary business. It is very desirable that it should go into camp for a few days in the year, and a band has always been found necessary, at all times, in every military body. I will not weary the House by going through the whole of these Returns; but taking 100 regiments, representing about 75,000 men, at random from the whole, I find that for head-quarters, drill places and drill halls, or interest on money borrowed for their erection, they paid last year, in round numbers, £28,000; for rifle ranges, £14,500; for uniform clothing, £53,000; for travelling expenses, £20,000; for salaries, £9,600; for camps, incidentals, and bands, £34,000. The total obligatory expenditure, then, last year of these 100 regiments, representing about one-third of the force, was more than £32,000 in excess of the Government allowances. How was this enormous deficiency of £32,000 provided? It had to be found, in greater part, by the officers, in addition to the expenses they incur of uniforms, prizes, social gatherings, and a dozen other claims. What is the inevitable result of such treatment at the hands of the country to whom we give our time, our study, and the best service we are able to render? It is that great difficulty exists in finding suitable officers. Men without private means are almost excluded from the commissioned rank. Those military men who are compelled by existing Regulations to leave the Army in the prime of life are debarred from continuing their military work, are shut out from the Auxiliary Service, to which they would be simply invaluable, by the great expenses involved. The Volunteer Force now lacks upwards of 1,100 officers, and the difficulty of obtaining them increases from year to year. Surely, Sir, the House will no longer tolerate this short-sighted policy. I trust that hon. Members have noticed the remarkable letter on this subject in to-day's *Times* from Lord Bury—one of the most competent authorities on the subject. He points out what is undoubtedly the fact, that in the early days of the Volunteer Force many rich men were in their ranks. They have, however, now given place to others less blessed with this world's goods, but more valuable from a military point of view. Subscriptions used to flow in freely. Now they are very difficult to obtain. Will the House permit me to give a single instance of this? I wrote to the late Duke of Wellington to help me to raise a small sum to acquire head-quarters for the corps I have the honour to command here in Westminster. The expenditure was and is absolutely necessary. His Grace, well known for his liberality and admiration of the Volunteers, said he disapproved of private individuals being called upon to put their hands into their pockets to discharge the duty of the State. The same answer is now nearly always returned. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, then, as now, Prime Minister, animated doubtless by similar reasons, refused the use of his great name on the Committee formed for the purpose. The War Office refused to advance the money even on the undoubted security of a lease of 99 years. The then Home Secretary, now the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), found it necessary to eject us from Westminster Hall, where, with the London Scottish and London Irish, we had drilled for a quarter of a century. I only mention this as a single instance of the great difficulties under which the Volunteer Force labours. The experience of all is the same. In large towns rents are enormous; ranges are difficult to obtain within accessible distance, and the drill has often to take the form of a peaceable demonstration amid an admiring mob. The Volunteers make no unreasonable demands. We seek no impossibilities from the Government. We seek nothing for ourselves—no civic advantages—not even the relief from jury duty, which the patriotic democracy of America gladly affords the members of its National Guard. But what we do humbly ask of the Representatives of the people of this great nation are the means to provide ourselves with what is absolutely necessary to discharge our duty to our Queen and to our country. If a deaf ear is turned to our entreaty, which is practically that of every Volunteer in Great Britain—of 225,000 men now serving, of 500,000 more who have served—then the Volunteer Force cannot fail to decline. It is a question of the utmost urgency. The force is here to-day at the service of the country, full of vitality, but not ready for the field, badly equipped, without great-coats, without knapsacks, without transport, with bad accommodation, cramped and held back in every way by a false and petty economy. What would not Germany, France, Italy, or Russia do for such a force? I hope the hon. Member for Leith opposite (Mr. Jacks), who knows the feeling abroad on the subject, will tell the House what is thought in Germany of the treatment of the British Volunteers by the British Government. We do not seek the charity of our countrymen. We appeal to the gratitude, the patriotism, the foresight of the people of Great Britain and Ireland. These Returns I hold in my hand prove beyond all question that the absolutely necessary expenses of the Volunteer Force are upwards of £100,000 a-year in excess of the Government grant. We may be content to spend £100,000 more, with the help of our friends, towards special matters connected with the efficiency of our regiments and the popularity of the Service. But we do ask the State, in the name of justice—the State for whom we devote ourselves—to give us the means of obtaining the absolute necessities for military duty. This can only be done effectually by an increase of 10*s.* per head per efficient in the present Capitation Grant. That is a sum of £110,000. The need is urgent, clear, and positive. No inquiry can throw further light on the matter. I can well understand the anxiety of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to incur no unavoidable expense. The anxiety to relieve the taxpayer is shared up to the hilt by hon. Members on these Benches. But let me very respectfully assure the right hon. Gentleman that when he is no longer Chancellor of the Exchequer, but again a Parliamentary candidate, liberality in this respect will repay him a hundred-fold; and future generations, too, will arise in gratitude. We seek but the 1,000th part of the cost of a single day of war, of a single battle, of the mere rumour of invasion. I invoke the generosity of the House. I invoke the patriotism of Her Majesty's Government. I appeal to the liberality of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I appeal to the national feeling of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the other side. I appeal to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on this side of the House; and, lastly, I trust to the undivided support of hon. Gentlemen around me, of the Party in the State whose very name truly symbolizes its one guiding principle, the conservation of the unity of the Empire. The Volunteer Force plays an important part in this sacred duty, and, as such, it appeals with confidence to the generosity of Parliament. It remains now for me, Sir, to thank the House for the attention with which it has been pleased to listen to me, and to beg the indulgence of hon. Members for the very imperfect way in which I have attempted to lay before them the salient requirements of the free and National Army. I beg, then, to submit, for the unanimous and generous consideration of this House, that for the thorough efficiency, maintenance, and development of the Volunteer Force, an immediate increase in the Capitation Grant is absolutely and urgently necessary.

MR. GURDON (Norfolk, Mid) said, he had much pleasure in seconding the Motion of the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent), and in doing so he (Mr. Gurdon) might observe he fully agreed with all that the hon. Member had advanced in his eloquent and convincing speech. The hon. Member had told the House from his own experience what were the wants and requirements of Volunteer corps in London; and he (Mr. Gurdon), speaking on behalf of country corps—to whom every argument that had been adduced applied with threefold force — could from a long experience say that they in the country required drill sheds, armouries, magazines, training grounds, shooting grounds, &c., equally as much as they were required in London; and, though they were not congregated together in such large bodies, yet, owing to the scattered character of the corps, these requirements were, if anything, more necessary and little less costly. When a battalion consisted of six, eight, or 10 companies, distributed in small and scattered towns, there must be drill shed, rifle ground, armoury, and magazine for each company, and this involved a greater expense in the aggregate than would be necessary if the arrangements could be more concentrated. In fact, the demands upon Volunteers, officers and men, were so heavy that an increase of the Capitation Grant was absolutely necessary if the force was to be maintained in a state of efficiency. At present considerable expenditure over and above the amount allowed by Government as Capitation Grant — however economically the Capitation Grant was spent—was incurred; and the deficiency had to come out of the pockets of officers and men, and those pockets were not just now particularly full. He (Mr. Gurdon) had been so long connected with his regiment that he had begun to think it time to retire to make way for a younger and more active man; but he could not find anyone ready to take his place; and he was convinced that the explanation was that young men feared to undertake the heavy expenditure which the position rendered necessary. This increased the difficulty of finding gentlemen to take the places of officers who wished to retire after years of service. There were still plenty of recruits to be got as privates, as good men as ever entered the force, well-behaved and of good position and standing; but there was the greatest possible difficulty in obtaining officers to fill up vacancies, in the country especially. It was of the greatest importance—and in the country it was even more necessary than in the towns—that a thoroughly efficient body of officers should be maintained. The expense was, of course, not the only reason why officers could not be obtained. He admitted that young men of the upper and middle classes were often strangely idle and lazy, and did not realize, as they ought to do, their duties to the State; but, nevertheless, he believed the question of expense was the main difficulty, and he thought the Government ought to do something towards meeting it. The friends of the Volunteer movement did not ask for a large sum of money—for their great boast was that the Volunteer Force should be a cheap as well as an efficient Volunteer Army—but they asked for a very moderate increase in the Capitation Grant, an increase which would not altogether relieve officers and men from individual effort and sacrifice, but which would do something to help them in making such efforts successful. They regarded the present Chief Secretary as their friend; and as the existence of Governments was sometimes rather precarious, and the right hon. Gentleman might not be in Office another year, they desired to make the most of the present opportunity, and hoped the House would pass the Motion.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "for the thorough efficiency, maintenance, and development of the Volunteer Force, an immediate increase in the present capitation grant is absolutely and urgently necessary," — (*Mr. Howard Vincent*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) said, he desired to support the Motion as an old Volunteer officer who for 10 years had been treasurer to a Metropolitan regiment—an office he could not recommend anyone else to undertake. It was a continuous struggle to make the income cover the expenditure, and expedients that were not satisfactory had to be resorted to in order to raise the necessary funds. The regiment of which he was treasurer was 800 strong. The Capitation Grant of 30*s.* per head, with extras to officers and others who passed certain examinations, amounted to £1,369. The heads of expenditure were as follows:—Rent of head-quarters, interest on money borrowed for erection of drill hall, &c., £250; rent of rifle range, £126; uniform and equipment of members, £750; travelling expenses to and from ranges, &c., £150; salaries and allowances of staff, £107; band and cost of issuing orders, £250—making a total of £1,633; so that the deficiency was £264. This fell upon the officers, and they had to appeal to their personal friends to assist them in keeping the regiment out of debt. Resort was had to bazaars, theatricals, and concerts to raise the money. In reply to an invitation to take part in the forthcoming Easter review, Colonel W. J. Alt, the commanding officer, had been obliged to write to the Colonel of the Coldstream Guards to the effect that, in consequence of the heavy expense the corps was put to in the matter of rifle ranges, &c., it could not afford to take part with an Easter marching column, or to attend any review that would necessitate a railway journey. The result of this would be most discouraging, and its effect upon recruiting most disastrous. He thought it should not be necessary for an officer to have to return such an answer as that.

Colonel SALIS-SCHWABE (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton) said, he was sorry to have to support any Motion which would swell the already enormous sum of their Army Estimates; but he was of opinion that the money which should be spent for the Volunteers might be obtained from economies elsewhere. The moment to point that out would arise on the Estimates. The Volunteer Forces were already kept up to a great extent by the officers, and the officers were getting rather tired of having always to pay, and it was only for a limited period that they would continue to pay. A great many Volunteers, especially those in Lancashire, put forward the statement that if they got extra money they would give extra efficiency, more especially with reference to better shooting. Some Volunteers thought that the recent Orders granting extra rank and the right of wearing uniform on retirement were offered as a sop in lieu of uniform. He did not think so, but would be glad if the Secretary of State for War would confirm his view. He hoped whatever was decided upon would be retrospective with regard to this year. Even then the officers would not benefit until April next year.

SIR EDWARD HAMLEY (Birkenhead) said, he was strongly in favour of the Motion. He hoped the House would not object to hear some remarks from one who, though not connected with the Volunteers, had made a careful examination into the position of the force, and who had acquired thereby a great interest in it, and a profound conviction of its inestimable value to the country. It would suffice if he stated why he attached high value to the force, and why he thought this increase was urgently necessary. Our Volunteers were nothing short of a great defensive Army, which, with a little more generous aid, and with the public interest in its affairs which was so essential to the prosperity of any institution in this country, would, he believed, become capable of meeting an equal force of Continental troops, if such should be landed on our coasts. He did not assert that the force was now efficient to that degree, but that it was capable of easily becoming so. In an investigation he had occasion to make last year he was led to conclude that of all the forces—Regulars, Militia, and Volunteers—which might be assembled for the defence of the Kingdom, the Volunteers would constitute two-thirds, and on the basis of the present Estimates it appeared that each efficient Volunteer last year cost the country 63*s*. He quite agreed with his hon. Friend who moved the Resolution (Mr. Howard Vincent) that if any of the great Military Powers on the Continent had happened to possess such a force, so cheap, so capable of becoming formidable, and so dependent for its existence on the will of its individual members, that Power would have sedulously fostered and cherished it, and studied how to render it thoroughly efficient and content. Of course, it was impossible that a Volunteer Army should exist in any country where conscription prevailed. Volunteers and conscription were incompatible. In one respect, at least, the advantage was enormously in favour of the Volunteer system, of which our Volunteers were the fullest development. It had often been assumed by those who instituted comparisons between our Army and those of Foreign States to our disadvantage that a conscript Army, whatever else it might be, was a cheap one. That was a delusion. A conscript Army was terribly costly. The expense of its pay and maintenance afforded no test of the burden which conscription inflicted upon a nation. It took the best of the youth of the country from the labours of the field, the workshop, and the desk, and forbade them in the most active part of life from contributing anything whatsoever to the wealth or productiveness of the nation; and it was in that way that huge conscript Armies pressed the life almost out of foreign States, and rendered existence a burden to the population. But our Volunteers did not cost the country one penny beyond the sum he had stated. They first performed their duties as citizens, and then gave the hours which they might well devote to recreation or repose to learning their duties as soldiers; and this they did so effectively and so thoroughly, and in such excellent temper, that only a very small percentage of them ever failed to attain the requisite degree of efficiency. It was in this way that the Volunteers contrasted so favourably with the Armies of the great Military Powers; and he believed, wherever the discipline was most strict, there it was most cheerfully submitted to. The officers endeavoured to make themselves proficient in the science of their profession; and from all he and the country knew of the character and quality of the force, it might be relied on to be found always on the side of law, order, and good government. This body of citizen soldiers, of which the country had uncommon reason to be proud, and which he, for his part, could never think about without wonder and admiration, was a National Force such as no other nation in Europe did or could possess, and yet it was one that had always led a struggling existence. On the theory of the survival of the fittest it must have been very fit to have survived so long. He did not know whether any Minister had ever bestowed any gracious words upon it; if so they had given it very little else. The men had subscribed out of their own pockets for travelling expenses, and had contributed to a fund for maintaining the efficiency of the corps; while their officers had contributed to the fund in a far more considerable degree. He had a letter from a commanding officer, in which that gentleman said that during the period of his command he had spent thousands of pounds on the efficiency of his corps; that he could no longer continue to do so; that the prospects of the force were never so gloomy as at present; and that officers, otherwise willing to join, were deterred from doing so by the prospect of the expense in these depressed times. Thus it would be seen that it was at a serious crisis in the history and affairs of the force that they now asked the House and the nation to bestow on the Volunteers the great advantage of preserving that force to the State; and he hoped the country would not allow it to suffer, to fade, and die out from mere inanition. They should consider what our condition would be without this force, and the strength which the Government would derive in dealing with foreign countries from the sense of security at home. He knew that there were hon. Gentlemen opposite who professed to regard invasion as a bugbear, and were ready to vote away Army, fortifications, and defences of all kinds in their ardent desire to conciliate the taxpayer, who was also an elector. But there were other hon. Gentlemen who might be supposed to know something of military questions, who believed that invasion was a very possible calamity, disregarded only because it had not happened in our own time. Napoleon contemplated it, and had made mature preparations for landing, which had only been prevented from being carried out by the vigilance of Nelson. The facilities for invasion were far greater now than in the time of Napoleon; and as for the precautions which the country took to protect its wealth and itself, the army which King Harold marched to Hastings was better qualified to keep the field than any proportionate force which could now be brought to defend the country against invasion. And what a rude awakening would successful invasion, however temporary, bring! Empire and liberty and self-respect—our lofty aspirations and our great pretensions—England as the home of freedom, and Britannia as ruler of the waves—would all vanish in the smoke of an enemy's camp. Even the Treasury Bench —"yea, all which it inherit would dissolve, and leave not a wreck behind." If they were now to meet these moderate demands, and by this slight assistance check the ebbing tide in the Volunteer movement, which had set in owing to the long neglect and small encouragement given to it, they might be sure that they could not lay out money in a better form than in increasing that Army which must always form the main element of our national defences.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE) (Mid Lothian): Sir, I make no scruple in interposing myself between hon. Members of the House, because I think it is necessary that the House should know the position in which the Government stand in relation to this question. I hear this Motion recommended as usual upon grounds of economy—upon the ground that this is an extremely cheap force. The hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Edward Hamley) who has just sat down I do not think conceals that an increase to all kinds of the forces is what he desires, because, according to him, nothing has been done. The fact that we have more than doubled the defence Estimates of this country within a moderate number of years does nothing at all, in the minds of a certain class, except darken the colours in which the state of the country are painted, sharpen the appetite for further augmentation, and increase the pressure brought to bear upon the Government for enlarged expenditure by a House of Commons which, according to the Constitution, is sent here not to enlarge, but to diminish the expenses of the country. That is the function of the House of Commons in our Constitution, and it is a function to which I, for one, mean to adhere, and I mean not to be a party to a transgression on the part of any House of Commons beyond the lines that the Constitution prescribes to it. It is the duty of the Executive Government to consider and to determine what proposals shall be made to Parliament in regard to the military as well as to the other expenditure of the country. It is the duty of Parliament to accept, or reject, or alter those proposals; but the Constitution does not permit the Parliament to increase the sums that are asked by the Executive Government for the defence of the country. The House of Commons, Sir, has no title to increase the charge upon the people beyond what the Executive Government demands. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes. I hear those murmurs coming from what is called by itself the Constitutional Party; but I am speaking the language of history, the language of law, the language which the Tory Party of 50 years ago would have been the very first to support and to re-echo. The Tory Party of to-day is a very different Party. Of its opinions I am not the judge; but I am the judge of my own opinions and of my own actions. Now, here is a proposal in which, although the House of Commons is not allowed to increase, and has no power to increase by a single farthing, the expenditure of the country, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Vincent Howard) has contrived to sail pretty near the wind by his Resolution, for this House of Commons, which cannot increase the expenditure, is invited by him to vote that for the thorough efficiency, maintenance, and development of the Volunteer Force an immediate increase in the present Capitation Grant is absolutely and urgently necessary. Now, if we were persons regardful only to meet, as is sometimes charged upon us, the wants of the hour and the convenience of the hour, nothing could better suit our purposes than to accept the present Motion, because it will not bear to the extent of a single shilling upon the expenditure of the present year—I beg pardon, I mean by the present year the year of the present Session in which we are legislating—but on the expenditure of the coming financial year. The present arrangements—the arrangements that it will be the duty of my right hon. Friend near me (Sir William Harcourt) to propose, in the course of two or three weeks from the present time, would not be in the slightest degree affected, consequently we have no interest connected with any immediate financial or other difficulty of our own in opposing this Motion. It is quite evident, from the way in which this Motion has been received, that our immediate interest lies all the other way. I wish to state our position in reference to the Motion as it is, and as it will be, if, unfortunately, the Motion should be passed. It will be exactly the same as it is now. It will not be altered, so far as I am concerned, in the slightest degree. If this or any other House of Commons wants a Minister who is ready to accept, independently of his own judgment, the orders of the House of Commons for an increase of the taxes of the country, all I can say is, I have no doubt it will find such a Minister; but that Minister will not be the one who now addresses you. My right hon. Friend near me the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) has given his best attention to this Motion. He has had to apply himself rapidly, but carefully, in the first instance, to preparing the Estimates of the year; and, in the second instance, to the varied business of the Department to which he has so recently succeeded. He has, I believe, had the advantage of receiving a highly-informed deputation on this subject. He has met that deputation in no hostile spirit; he has promised an examination of the question; and he has promised that examination in terms which, in the first place, do not bind him to refuse the proposal now made; and, in the second place, if they are to be interpreted at all, would be interpreted in the sense of its being very far from unlikely that he might see cause to make some proposal of the kind. But the right hon. Gentleman has asked of those with whom he has communicated that he may be left free to examine this question; and that is what we ask, and that is what we claim. It is our duty to claim it as the Executive Government of the country—it is our duty to claim it, and it is our duty to exercise that freedom; and that freedom will remain, and will be exercised in precisely the same manner, whatever course may be taken by the House of

Commons with reference to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman; and in making that announcement I am saying what belongs to the elementary truths of the British Constitution. I am a witness of the practice of a long period. I have strong convictions as to what is necessary for the welfare of the country. I believe that the welfare of its finance lies at the root of the well-being of the country. There is nothing so easy and nothing so vulgar as to tamper with sound finance. There is nothing so easy and nothing so vulgar, because that tampering is recommended by the almost certainty that there will be, for some length of time, no intolerable inconvenience as the result. It is the nature of financial difficulty to be first felt when it has become hopeless and incurable, and therefore it is that it is the business of the Executive Government to be specially the steward of sound finance; and of all the points belonging to that stewardship there is none so weighty and none so sacred as the reserving in their own hands, for their own free and deliberate judgment, the determination of the proposals which they make to the House of Commons. It may be said—and it would be said with perfect truth—that it is their duty to listen carefully, and to listen respectfully, to all that can be urged in the House of Commons on a subject of this nature. I am not deprecating the debating of such subjects; I am not deprecating the expression of opinion by highly-instructed persons like the hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just sat down (Sir Edward Hamley), or even by less-instructed persons, although I must say that those expressions of opinion have, within the course of the last 20 years, cost the country enormous sums of money. I hope that it may all have been well and judiciously laid out; but on that subject I am, perhaps, a little too old to learn, and a sceptical habit has, in some degree, got possession of my mind. I wish to say that it is not to limit the liberty of debate—it is not to deny the special duty of the Executive Government to attach importance to what they hear, and to the information they receive, and the authority brought to bear upon them everywhere, and most of all here; it is with regard to the attempts that have now become fashionable to leave upon the Executive Government the responsibilities of taxation, and to assume for popular speaking and popular Motions in this House the duty of determining expenditure. It was my duty only a few days ago to protest against a Motion made in this House which, as I said, tended to confuse the provinces of the Legislative and Executive power, and to make the Legislative into the Executive. But, Sir, the objection which was felt by hon. Gentlemen opposite upon that occasion applies with tenfold greater force to the Motion that is now before us. There is nothing in which it is so dangerous to make the House of Commons, being the Legislative, exercise the functions of the Executive, as in the power of raising the public charge—there is nothing so dangerous as that the responsibility of raising the public charge in this country should be separated from the responsibility of discovering and proposing the means of meeting that charge. It is that severance at which the hon. Gentleman opposite who has made this Motion aims at effecting. He wants to make us impose larger burdens on the people. He proposes to increase the Volunteer charge—is that not a larger burden on the people?

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT: What I say is, that by increasing the grant you will prevent a greater burden falling on the people.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I beg your pardon. The hon. Member has made his speech, and I heard it. I am not going to enter into an argument with the hon. Gentleman upon the question whether an addition to the Volunteer charge is not an addition to the public expenditure. He says it is not an addition to the public expenditure; I say it is an addition to the public expenditure; and although I am extremely sorry to disagree with him, my experience compels me to reject the high authority of the hon. Gentleman. But I say there is no one point in which it would be so dangerous to assign to the House of Commons the functions of the Executive as in separating the power of increasing the public charge and the responsibility of finding the means of meeting it. I have frankly laid my protest on this subject before the House. I do not wish at all to misrepresent in any direction the attitude of my right hon. Friend near me (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) or the attitude of the Government; but I sum up that which I have had to say—this not very agreeable announcement I have had to make—in declaring, for my part, that in the days or months which may remain to me I must adhere to the unquestionable principles of this House's constitution, and must decline to accept orders from the Representatives of the people sent here to diminish the public burdens. I must decline to accept orders from them to increase the public burdens. I reserve to my right hon. Friend and to the Government the duty of prosecuting the inquiry into this matter in the spirit in which he met the deputation the other day. We will not be biassed against the Motion—against the proposal involved in the Motion—by anything that may take place here. We will endeavour to give careful and respectful attention to all arguments that may be urged in its support. If the judgment of the Government be that this augmentation of a charge which has grown with great rapidity, happily owing to the enormous increase in the number of our Volunteers, whom the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir Edward Hamley) who spoke last appears to speak of as a decaying, if not a dying force, is desirable, he will not be deterred by anything that may be done here, however we may object to it in principle, from giving that fair and candid examination to the subject which he has already promised; but his responsibility for proposing, upon his own judgment and the judgment of his Colleagues, the charge that he may think necessary for maintaining the Volunteer Forces, as well as the other forces of the country, must remain entire, and cannot be taken off the shoulders of the Government by any vote, however important in itself, that may be given in the House of Commons.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I have been very much surprised at the extraordinary and, if I may venture to say—with all respect to the right hon. Gentleman—what appears to me the entirely uncalled-for nature of the Prime Minister's reply to the Motion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Howard Vincent). The right hon. Gentleman has accused my hon. Friend of tampering with the principles of sound finance, of ordering Her Majesty's Government to impose increased burdens on the people, and of attempting to usurp the functions of the Executive power, and all because my hon. Friend, being most thoroughly acquainted with the circumstances of the case, has ventured to call the attention of the House to the present position of the Volunteer Force, and to impress upon Her Majesty's Government the necessity of improving that position. Well, if it were a question of the principles of sound finance, I think my hon. Friend might, with some justice, reply that on the Motion which he has proposed he had made what, in the opinion of many hon. Members of this House, would be a measure of extremely sound finance by adding to the efficiency of the cheapest military force which this country possesses. I do not suppose any hon. Member in the House will question the Constitutional doctrines of the right hon. Gentleman that it rests with the Executive Government, and not with any other Member of the House, to impose an additional burden on the people; but it is the first time I have ever heard that well-known Constitutional doctrine brought forward as a reason why a Member of the House of Commons should not call attention to what he considered to be a grievance and a fault in the constitution of any of Her Majesty's Forces, and to call upon the Government of the day to remedy it. [Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I said so.] We are all as anxious as the right hon. Gentleman can be not to interfere with the proper functions of the Executive power. We supported him loyally in that view the other night; but there was nothing that I can see in the Motion of my hon. Friend that for a moment renders him susceptible to the accusations of the right hon. Gentleman. The Prime Minister told us that the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had received a deputation on this subject, and had considered it in no hostile spirit. I do not know what reply the right hon. Gentleman made to that deputation; but if the tone of his reply was similar to that of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, I am afraid I can hardly say that the deputation was received in no hostile spirit. What is the request made by my hon. Friend? It is that Her Majesty's Government shall consider at as early a date as possible the present position of the Volunteer Force in this matter, with a view of remedying the difficulty in which it at present stands. The Prime Minister has admitted that if the Resolution were carried no additional expenses would be imposed on the taxpayers during the ensuing year. But it would be, I must say, a very significant statement to Her Majesty's Government, and a statement which this House has a perfect right to make, if it thinks fit to make it, that this is a subject urgently and immediately demanding their attention, with a view to placing the Volunteer Force in a better position than that in which it at present stands. No one can deny that it is not only competent for, but the bounden duty of, the House of Commons to consider a question of this sort, and if it believes a change to be necessary to recommend such change to Her Majesty's Government. Well, now, what are the circumstances? We have had some speeches in this debate, made, I am quite sure it will be admitted by hon. Members opposite, from no Party point of view whatever. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister did his best to impart a Party tone to this question; and if we chose to do so, I think we might fairly ask whether he who is responsible for the expenditure—the waste of millions of pounds—in the Soudan ought to be the man to object, on the score of sound finance, to this additional expenditure which is asked for? But, Sir, I do not want to dwell upon considerations of that kind; what I do want is the House and the Government to consider the Motion of my hon. Friend, made by him as it has been in a speech of extreme ability, displaying intimate knowledge of the subject, supported as it has been by two hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House, also well acquainted with the circumstances, and backed up with the high authority of the gallant General behind me (Sir Edward Hamley)—I do want the House and the Government to consider whether this is not a Motion which fairly and properly calls for their attention. Is it true, in the first place, that there is a very large expenditure, and an increasing expenditure, imposed upon the officers of the Volunteer Force by the necessary requirements of that force? That has not been denied by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. Can it be denied by the Secretary of State for War? Well, if it be true that the necessary expenditure imposes such a burden on the officers of the Volunteer Force—that year by year it becomes more and more difficult efficiently to officer the Volunteer Force—surely here is a matter urgently demanding the attention of the House. Will it be said that this expenditure is not necessary? Why, if it is not necessary it is the duty of the War Department to put a stop to it; but I do not think that can be contended for a moment. You have the force depending upon the voluntary work of the people. That work is cheerfully and anxiously done; but it is not fair for this country to call upon those who are ready to give her their services in this way to incur great and swamping burdens in their attempt properly to fulfil their duty. I do hope that, after the remarkable effusion of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, we may have some more soothing statement in reply from the Secretary of State for War; and I do hope that the Volunteer Force, who form so large a part of the law-abiding citizens of this country, are not to be told, in reply to the Motion of my hon. Friend, that this Motion is made merely with the view of increasing the expenditure on the Army, which hon. Members on that side of the House are always ready to put forward as one of the most earnest desires of anybody on the Opposition Benches who ventures to touch upon these matters. The Motion has been made by my hon. Friend because he believes it to be absolutely necessary for the continued efficiency of the Volunteer Force that the Capitation Grant should be increased. I am anxious to hear the reply of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), who is responsible to this House and to this country for the continued efficiency of the force, and I do hope that he will deal with this matter in the non-Party spirit, the fair spirit, in which it was introduced by my hon. Friend, and that he will not descend to the unfair and the clap-trap arguments of the Prime Minister.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): I wish to say a word with regard to the form of the Motion. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) who has just sat down rather judiciously avoided referring to the terms of the actual Motion. He said that they were entitled—and no one would deny it—to call attention to the condition of the

Volunteers, and to show that certain changes are necessary and expedient for the improvement of the condition of the Force. But those are not the terms of the Motion. The Motion declares that an immediate increase in the Capitation Grant is absolutely and urgently necessary. I can read this Motion only as a distinct declaration for an increase of the charge upon the people. There will be no end to the increase of expenditure in this country if Motions of this character, popular in themselves, can be made and carried. This is a popular Motion for this reason—that the Volunteer Force is deservedly one of the most popular bodies in this country; and certainly I, for one, shall say no word against any amount of praise being bestowed upon that force. But I say that it is a most dangerous thing to pass general Resolutions of this kind, calling for increased charges, but not indicating whence the means are to come to meet those charges. Consider the position in which this Motion would place a future Chancellor of the Exchequer? That is a point which deserves the attention of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). The present Chancellor of the Exchequer may escape the consequences of this Motion, which amounts to a proposal to increase the charge upon the people a year hence. This is rather like drawing a bill at a long date for somebody else to meet. If it is objectionable in Committee of Supply to give a Vote for the immediate increase of a charge, it is ten times more objectionable to give a Vote for a charge which is to take effect in a more or less distant future. I hope that the House will not pass the Motion in its present form. If the desire of the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Howard Vincent) is to do good to the Volunteer Force he ought to avoid a form of Motion which cannot but lead to controversy between the two sides of the House. If his intention is to call attention to the condition of the Volunteer Force, to point out the manner in which that force is defective in its organization, or in other respects to awaken public opinion on the subject, and to aid the judgment of this House, let his Motion take that direction, and then he will further what I am sure is the object of every hon. Gentleman in this House — namely, to act in a generous and grateful spirit towards the great Volunteer Force of this country.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) said, that he could not understand what object the Chancellor of the Exchequer had in rising at the particular time he did, unless it was to cool down the debate from the extraordinary heat which had been raised by the Prime Minister. He had the honour to command the largest Volunteer corps in the Kingdom, and, if he were not mistaken, he had the higher honour of once having had the Secretary of State for War himself under his command. [MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, no!] The right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt) spoke of this Motion as being popular because the Volunteer Force was popular. On behalf of the Volunteers he wished to say that this was not a question at all of popularity or unpopularity. It was a question whether in the opinion of the House it was cheaper by at present doing nothing to run the risk of the Volunteer Force going to the bad, or whether it was right that the House should inform Her Majesty's Government by vote that it considered that state of things as dangerous. If the Government had been able to say that the state of the Volunteer Force was as satisfactory as regarded finance as it was as to efficiency, then they should have had the statement without the impassioned language of the Prime Minister. As they had heard the other day from the Secretary for War, no fewer than 1,090 commissions were vacant in the Volunteer Force, while at the same time the Volunteer movement itself was never more popular than at the present time. The cause of that was that officers, having spent large sums, left the Service when to the great benefit of the country they might have remained, and new officers could not be got owing to the terror of the charges to which they would be subjected. Nothing could be ultimately more demoralizing in a force of that kind than that it should be officered by men who had to make large payments out of their own pockets for their support. The Commanding Officer could not exercise the same discipline, nor could he so easily get rid of non-efficient officers, because he knew that officers had to make large sacrifices of money during the time they had held commissions. Not only so, but there could be no question about the fact that the best officers they could get were young men, and such young men were not generally in a position to make the necessary expenditure. Those on both sides of the House who desired that the Motion should be carried had no idea, even after what the Prime Minister had said, that the passing of the Motion would be tying up the Executive Government in any way. No doubt the money which ought to have been provided might be an addition to the Estimates; but he presumed the finances of the country were not managed on a mere hand-to-mouth footing. If it were the fact that the Volunteer Force would be seriously diminished, and perhaps practically destroyed, if the Motion was not given effect to, then he thought the Secretary for War would admit that it would cost a much larger sum to protect the country from invasion by troops who were not Volunteers. If every hon. Gentleman in the House who knew the real state of the facts voted in accordance with that knowledge it would be a great gain in the future. In his own corps, which numbered over 2,500 men, they had managed to scrape together a sum to meet the general expenses; but he did not believe they would be able, in the course of another year, to get along even in spite of the large sums of money which he himself and his brother officers had expended for a large number of years in carrying on the corps. If that were the case with a large corps, he could certify that small corps could not be maintained unless an addition was made to the Capitation Grant.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I regret extremely, in the interest of the Volunteers themselves, and in the interest of the solution of this important question, that the terms of the hon. Member's Motion are so unfortunate. Undoubtedly, that Motion is open to the construction put upon it by the Prime Minister, and it is objectionable on the high ground that the Executive should not be committed to expenditure in this way. But if the hon. Member's object was—as I fully believe it to be—only to call the attention of the House to the condition of the Volunteer Force, and to provoke discussion, and possibly an expression of opinion from this Bench, then I think he has done very good service in bringing this matter forward. Now, I was somewhat astonished that the hon. Gentleman made no allusion to the fact that about a couple of weeks ago I had the honour to receive a large deputation, consisting not only of a number of Volunteers, but also many Members of Parliament interested in the movement; and I then stated what I will now repeat to the House—namely, that I am quite aware that there is this difficulty about officers; I am quite aware that many of the corps are not in a satisfactory financial position; but when I am asked suddenly to agree that 5*s.* or 10*s.*, or any sum of money, should be added to the Capitation Grant, I say it is my duty to be somewhat circumspect in the matter, and to ask for such Returns of the expenditure of the various Corps as will justify me in taking such a course. What happened in 1878 and 1879? There was a similar complaint made on the part of the Volunteer Force, and a Committee was appointed, which had Lord Bury as Chairman, and of which Sir R. Loyd-Lindsay—now Lord Wantage—was a Member, to inquire into the matter. No two men could be mentioned more capable to give an opinion; and I was rather astonished to see in *The Times* of to-day a letter from Lord Bury, in which he states—and I have been astonished to-night to hear the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Howard Vincent) repeat the statement—that that Committee was restricted from going into the question of finance. I cannot imagine how that idea could have entered Lord Bury's mind. The points of reference were these—first, to inquire what were the necessary requirements of the Volunteer Force; secondly, whether the present grant was sufficient for its purposes; thirdly, in what form increased assistance should be given; and in the Report signed by Lord Bury there is an elaborate analysis of the finances of the Volunteers, founded upon the Returns furnished to the Committee. Now, those Returns furnished for the five years previous to 1878 and 1879 are precisely the Returns I wish to get for the five years previous to 1886, showing the expenditure of the corps under different heads. Well, Sir, the conclusion Lord Bury's Committee came to was that the Capitation Grant was sufficient for its purposes, except as to three items. Supposing that purpose to be the provision of strictly necessary expenditure, the Committee reported they were of opinion that, with proper organization, the present Capitation Grant need not be increased. Now, what did they mean by "strictly necessary expenditure?" I wish to recall to the House the exact character of this Volunteer Force, because it appears to me, from some things that we have heard, that it is in danger of losing its character. We often hear it said that if the men give their time the Government ought to bear the charge of their expenses. But that has never been the principle recognized in the Volunteer Force itself. The principle has always been that the Government should assist Volunteers in maintaining their corps in efficiency—in expenditure, that is, necessary for the requisite efficiency of the corps—and that no other assistance ought to be given to them; but that anything else ought to be furnished from other sources. What does the Report of Lord Bury's Committee say? It says—

> "The Committee proceeded to determine what items of expenditure were in reality necessary to the efficient maintenance of the corps, and were, therefore, properly chargeable against the public."

This is a full recognition of the principle I have stated—that that which is properly chargeable against the public is the expenditure in reality necessary for the efficient maintenance of a corps; but that is not what we are told now. We are told that we are to go much further. I have quoted the Report of this Committee, in the first place, to show how vague are the recollections of some of those who profess to be authorities on the subject, and also to show that on a previous occasion, when there was a strong feeling among the Volunteers that the grant was not sufficient, the Committee found that it was sufficient. Well, Sir, what I promised to the deputation to do, and what I have done, is this. I have called upon all the corps in the Kingdom to furnish a tabulated Return of all their expenditure under different heads. When these Returns are received, it will then have to be determined which of those items of expenditure are really necessary and which are not. That will be a difficult matter, to which I shall carefully address myself; and then we shall be able to see whether any or what addition to the Capitation Grant is necessary. I appeal to the House of Commons, not only on the high ground of sound Constitutional doctrine laid down by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone), but on the ground of common sense, whether it is not most desirable that, having the responsibility I have, and having means at my command of getting at information which are not open to the hon. Member opposite, I should be allowed to ascertain for myself, on the authority of official documents, the real facts of the case? Then I hope I may be trusted to come to a proper conclusion. I am not going to pass any eulogy on the Volunteer Force, for that is altogether unnecessary, and no one could be more pleased than I shall be if it falls to me to add to their efficiency, or relieve them from the difficulty of which they now complain. I have every disposition in the world to do whatever is right in relieving the Volunteers and adding to the success which has hitherto attended the movement; but I confess it will be impossible for me, on humbler grounds than the high Constitutional ground put forward by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, to agree to the peremptory and abrupt expression of opinion contained in the Motion now before this House.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) suggested that the hon. Member should eliminate the word "immediate" from his Motion, which, he thought, had a somewhat peremptory and harsh tone about it, and substitute for it the word "early."

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 187; Noes 166: Majority 21.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Allen, H. G.
Allison, R. A.
Arch, J.
Asher, A.
Baker, L. J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, Sir G.
Barbour, W. B.
Barclay, J. W.
Barry, J.
Beith, G.
Bickersteth, R.
Biddulph, M.
Blaine, A.
Bolton, T. H.
Boyd-Kinnear, J.
Bradlaugh, C.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Bright, W. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. H.

Bruce, hon. R. P.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Buxton, E. N.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Chamberlain, R.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, right hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Cobbold, F. T.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Collings, J.
Compton, Lord W. G.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cook, E. R.
Coote, T.
Corbet, W. J.
Cox, J. R.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dixon, G.
Duff, R. W.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Ellis, J. E.
Esmonde, Sir T.
Esslemont, P.
Everett, R. L.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Finlayson, J.
Fletcher, B.
Flower, C.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, H. H.
Fry, T.
Gibb, T. E.
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, G. G. L.
Grenfell, W. H.
Haldane, R. B.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hartington, Marq. of
Havelock - Allan, Sir H. M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Henry, M.
Hobhouse, H.
Hooper, J.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Jacks, W.
James, C. H.
Johnson-Ferguson, J. E.
Jones-Parry, L.
Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir U. J.
Kenrick, W.
Kilcoursie, right hon. Viscount
Labouchere, H.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Leake, R.
Leicester, J.
Lockwood, F.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Macfarlane, D. H.
MacInnes, M.
Maclean, F. W.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Culloch, J.
M'Lagan, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Mason, S.
Mellor, right hn. J. W.
Molloy, B. C.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Moulton, J. F.
Mundella, rt. hn. A. J.
Newnes, G.
Noel, E.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, W
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Kelly, J.
Paget, T. T.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A. E.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Priestley, B.
Pugh, D.
Pyne, J. D.
Quilter, W. C.
Ramsay, J.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Rendel, S.
Richardson, T.
Rigby, J.
Robertson, E.
Robson, W. S.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, E. R.
Shaw, T.
Sheil, E.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Thomas, A.
Trevelyan, rt. hn. G. O.
Tuite, J.
Vanderbyl, P.
Villiers, rt. hon. C. P.
Warmington, C. M.
Westlake, J.
Wiggin, H.
Will, J. S.
Williams, J. C.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, J. (Durham)
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.
Yeo, F. A.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, rt. hn. E.
Morley, A.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, G. W.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bethell, Commander
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blaine, R. S.
Blake, T.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bourke, right hon. R.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, E.
Coddington, W.
Cohen, L. L.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J.
Compton, F.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. S.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, rt. hon. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Evelyn, W. J.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Feilden, Lt-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, rt. hn. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Giles, A.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Green, E.
Gregory, G. B.
Grimston, Viscount
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hickman, A.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Howard, H. C.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes - Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Jenkins, D. J.
Johns, J. W.
Johnston, W.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.

Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T
Lewis, C. E.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Lloyd, W.
Lowther, hon. W.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, J. M.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Laren, C. B. B.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Milvain, T.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Pearce, W.
Peel, right hn. Sir R.
Pelly, Sir L.
Percy, Lord A. M.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Ritchie, C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Round, J.
Russell, Sir G.
Sandys, Lt.-Col. T. M.
Saunders, W.
Saunderson, Maj. E. J.
Selwin - Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shirley, W. S.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sitwell, Sir G. R.
Smith, A.
Smith, D.
Stafford, Marquess of
Stewart, M. J.
Sturrock, P.
Talbot, J. G.
Temple, Sir R.
Tipping, W.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Webster, Sir R. E.
West, Colonel W. C.
White, J. B.
Winn, hon. R.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Yorke, J. R.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Gurdon, R. T.
Vincent, C. E. H.

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

EGYPT—COST OF THE ARMY OF DEFENCE.—OBSERVATIONS.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.), who had on the Paper the following Notice of Motion:—

> "That the cost of the Troops employed for the defence of Egypt should not be borne by the British taxpayer, but should be a first charge on the Revenues of Egypt,"

said, he regretted that the Forms of the House would prevent him from moving the Resolution. He gathered from a reply given that evening that some little progress had been made in reducing the numbers of the British Army in Egypt. But only a few weeks ago our military establishment in that country, including camp followers, numbered, he believed, something like 28,000 men. The cost of such a force must amount to at least from £4,500,000 to £5,000,000 per annum. He now found that it was proposed to maintain in Egypt 8,846 British troops, and the cost of these and for the Native assistance which was to be employed was estimated at £1,038,172. But that excluded the cost of arms, accoutrements, barracks, and other stores supplied from this country; also the cost of recruiting, of administration, and of the non-effective forces. He had no hesitation in expressing his belief that the cost of the reduced force, supposing it was really reduced so far as was proposed, would be at least £2,000,000, against the very small sum which we expected to receive from the Egyptian Government. All the statements he had heard inclined him to the belief that every effort was being made to establish an equilibrium in Egypt without regard to doing justice to the people of the country, and still less without regard to the taxpayers of this country. His proposition was that, whoever undertook the defence of Egypt, the cost of the defence ought to be made a first charge on the Revenues of the country, as it was an expense incurred to keep it solvent and as a going concern. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), he noticed, had put down an Amendment to his Motion. He had considerable sympathy with the Amendment, as he agreed with what he believed was the view of the hon. Member, that we had so little business in Egypt that the taxpayers of this country should be made to feel the burden of this occupation in order that we might sooner get out of it. There was only one reason that he could see why an Egyptian Army should not be raised to undertake the defence of the country, and that was that it would cost money, which would reduce the enormous revenue received by the bondholders. Before we departed from Egypt he presumed we must make arrangements for an Egyptian Army which would undertake the defence of the country, and uphold that self-government which Her Majesty's Government always professed themselves desirous to see. He had no hope, however, until we got out of Egypt, that we would get rid of this burden; but he wished to emphasize his proposition that, whoever defended Egypt, it was only right and fair that the ample Revenues of that country should be first called upon to bear the cost.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.), who had given Notice of an Amendment, which, however, he could not move, declaring—

> "That the cost of the British troops employed in the occupation of Egypt should be defrayed

out of the English Exchequer, as likewise the cost of all English officials engaged in the administration of that country,"

said, he hoped that when the Government had been long enough in Office to make up their minds about their policy in Egypt they would afford the House of Commons an opportunity of coming to a final decision with all the facts before it. From this hour the Government ought to be shaping their policy with a view either to the indefinite prolongation of our occupation or to the withdrawal of our troops. The withdrawal itself could not be effected within a month or within a year, and if it were intended that we should withdraw the preparations ought not to be postponed for a single week. Four years ago it was declared by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) that the English occupation of Egypt would not be prolonged beyond six months, and that every effort was to be made to withdraw them; and still we were no nearer to withdrawal now than we were then. The principle which guided him in putting down the Amendment was that the one motive which would be a strong incitement to the Government to withdraw our troops, and to hon. Members to urge them to do so, was the fact that we were obliged to put our hands into our pockets and to pay heavily as long as our troops remained in Egypt. Unless it could be shown, either that the English occupation had been of immense benefit to the Egyptian people, or, on the other hand, that the war was a righteous war in which the Egyptian people were the aggressors, and that they were suffering the penalty of their aggression, he could not conceive what justification there was for continuing this occupation, still less for making the Egyptian people pay for it. The occupation of Egypt had been a curse to the English nation, and the sole motive for it was the interests of the English bondholders. Long before the bombardment of Alexandria the Prime Minister declared that no consideration would induce him to permit the British power to be used to support the bailiffs of the bondholders; and the right hon. Gentleman laid down the principle that it was not the duty of the Government to compel another nation to pay its debts, but that a man who advanced money to another nation did so at his own risk. He was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had departed from that principle. The results had been the burning of Alexandria, the destruction of the Egyptian Army, which had no inglorious past, the utter demoralization of Egyptian finance, and the disgraceful transactions involved in the payment of £4,000,000 as Alexandrian indemnities. Before the bombardment of Alexandria in 1881, Egyptian finance showed a balance of £495,000, and afterwards it showed deficits of £185,000 in 1882, £222,000 in 1883, £843,000 in 1884, and £1,200,000 in 1885. It was alleged that Alexandria was burned by Arabi's troops; but the Egyptian people had no Representative on the Commission which made that declaration, and which was composed of men interested in making it. The result was that £4,125,000 had to be paid in indemnities by the Egyptian people, and it was declared by the correspondent of *The Times* that undoubtedly a considerable number of the claims had been sold to Egyptian capitalists, who had reaped a large profit out of the transaction. One result of our occupation had been the destruction of the Egyptian Army, and another the loss of the Soudan to Egypt, and the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives in useless warfare. The hon. Member then read extracts from Lord Northbrook's Report to show the extent of Egyptian indebtedness, and said that this was the result of the invasion of Egypt since 1852 by the cormorants of Europe. He was proceeding to explain with some minuteness how loans were financed, when——

Mr. SPEAKER said, he would point out to the hon. Member for East Mayo that the financing of Egyptian loans had no bearing on the Votes to be taken in Committee.

Mr. DILLON said, that since the English entered Egypt the burdens of the people had advanced by leaps and by bounds, and the deficit was greater than ever. It was a delusion to suppose that the Egyptian people could pay for the Army of Occupation. He did not say it would lead to Egyptian bankruptcy, for that was certain under any circumstances; but it would hasten it. The Revenues of Egypt depend upon three things—cotton, wheat, and beans. Egypt was naturally a rich country, and if not loaded by debt it could easily pay its way. But cotton had fallen.

Mr. SPEAKER said, that the remarks of the hon. Member were not in accordance with the Rules of the House.

Mr. DILLON said, in conclusion, he would merely contend that England, and not Egypt, should pay for the Army of Occupation. If we did tax the Egyptian bondholders, he would be glad to see them made to pay; but, failing that, England should pay. The debts had been incurred for no benefits to be conferred on the Egyptians. He remembered being much struck with the remark made by an old fellah after Tel-el-Kebir—"It is pretty much as before; the English are in Cairo; the usurers are in the villages. God is great."

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) said, he had some sympathy with the suggestion of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) that the cost of the British troops in Egypt should be defrayed out of the British Exchequer. If England was occupying Egypt for Imperial purposes, it might be contended the expense ought to be thrown upon the Imperial Exchequer, and not on the Egyptians, who were already a highly-taxed people. But his principal object in rising was to represent to the Government the consideration that if we withdrew our troops from Egypt, the friends of England in Egypt, and those who had placed confidence in us there, would be left in an awkward, difficult, and dangerous position. That had been strongly represented to him when he was in Cairo in January, 1885. He hoped the Government would not overlook their responsibility in this matter, and would not withdraw the forces.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.) said, he had listened with attention to the speeches of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and the hon. Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler); but he would be out of Order, he feared, if he were to follow them in the observations they had made. The only question before the House was as to who should pay for the British troops in Egypt. The two speeches of the hon. Members for Kirkcaldy and for East Mayo proceeded from a common point of view; but they had stated opposite facts and arrived at contradictory conclusions. His hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy said that Egypt had been benefited. [Sir George Campbell dissented.] Well, his hon. Friend said that Egypt could pay. The hon. Member for East Mayo said that Egypt had been injured by the occupation, and could not and ought not to pay. The Government, on their part, adopted a middle course. They believed Egypt ought to pay something; but that there were good reasons why she should not pay the whole cost of occupation. The facts, so far as they related to this point, were very simple. When our occupation began in 1882 the Egyptian Government were informed that a charge was to be made on Egypt of the extraordinary expenses entailed upon England by the occupation—not of the ordinary expenses, because our troops would have to be maintained somewhere, if not in Egypt. The sum of £4 8*s.* a-month was suggested as the extra expense for each soldier. Last year, when the Convention was being settled by which a deduction was to be made in the interest paid to bondholders, the serious condition of Egyptian finance made a great impression, and it was felt that England must deal leniently, and not ask Egypt to pay more than the disordered state of her finances would allow, and an arrangement was accordingly made that the maximum charge should not exceed £200,000 a-year. That was the existing arrangement. Those charges had, of course, been larger than were contemplated, owing to the invasions from the Southern Frontier of Egypt, which necessitated a larger force than they expected. The arrangements for frontier defence were of an indefinite character, and the Government were bound to have regard to the Southern Frontier, which, of course, involved extra expense. The hon. Member for East Mayo said that Egypt ought to pay nothing. But it could not be denied that if Egypt was exposed to dangers from which she was saved by the Army of Occupation she was to that extent benefited; and certainly that Army preserved her from the inroads of the wild warriors of the South. Then the people of Egypt had also been undoubtedly benefited in other ways during the last two or three years—*e. g.*, by the presence of English Administrators. [Sir George Campbell: No.] He had excellent authority for that statement, which the hon. Member would be quite willing to recognize. In answer to his hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy he would remind the House that we went to Egypt to protect British interests, as hon. Gentlemen opposite were accustomed to say. We say the Army of Occupation went to Egypt to maintain Treaty engagements; and it was only reasonable that, having undertaken those Treaty engagements, we should be prepared to bear some part of the cost of fulfilling them. There was also a graver reason for that course. Egypt was unable to pay the whole costs. She had been threatened with bankruptcy for years past, and if we contributed nothing her financial position would be hopeless. By giving her a temporary indulgence the finances of the country would be improved, and for that reason the bondholders were asked last year to accept a diminution of their interest. Then, again, unless we contributed something it would be difficult for English Commanders to act in a military crisis on their own responsibility for the defence of the conntry. He could, in conclusion, inform the House that the Government had every reason to believe that the finances of Egypt would continue to improve, and before long it was probable that she would be a solvent country. He entertained some hopes that the organization of the Egyptian Army would be improved; that the efforts made by British Administrators to promote irrigation works would be successful; that forced labour would be diminished; and the International Tribunals were already beginning to bring forth good fruit.

DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—DEFENCE OF COALING STATIONS.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster), in rising to call attention to the necessity, for the security of the Country and in the interests of economy, of providing for the continuous execution of the works and the manufacture of the material which are ascertained to be required for the protection of the coaling stations abroad; and of our mercantile harbours and military ports, and to urge that a Select Committee ought to be appointed to examine the Estimates for these services, and to report upon them to the House, said. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bryce) has drawn a distinction between British interests and Treaty engagements which we on this side should not be inclined to accept. We believe that the observance of Treaty engagements is a British interest. If we have contended for British interests we have contended for the maintenance of the honour and obligations of this country. The hon. Gentleman has repeated what we have heard before, that this country has undertaken to defend the Frontier of Egypt. That engagement is a heavy one. Now, if there has been one misfortune more than another which has attended the operations of this country in Egypt during the last two or three years, it has been that we have given notice, from time to time, that we were about to reduce our Forces and to retire from the country. Nothing has more tended to disquiet the inhabitants of Egypt and to invite those disturbances from the frontier tribes to which the hon. Member has drawn attention. Then great harm has been done by the knowledge—the announcement beforehand—that we were going to do this or that, to take this or that particular step. I conceive that while it is our duty to lessen by all means in our power the very heavy drain which in imposed upon us and upon Egypt it is most unwise to announce beforehand that a reduction of any considerable amount in our Forces would be made before a certain period. I notice with some regret in the Estimates that the reduction is shown to be more than half the strength of Egypt at the present time. My right hon. Friend will, no doubt, tell the House that the Government have power to retain more than the 8,800 men which they now indicate as the force to be retained. They have that power, it is true; but what we regret is the announcement that we are going to retire from Wady Halfa, or from any other point which we now occupy. Now, Sir, I ask permission to turn for a moment to the consideration of the question to which I invite the attention of the House. I am aware it is not in my power to ask the House to affirm the Resolution of which I have given Notice; and I do not very greatly regret that that is so, because I raise the question in no hostile spirit to Her

Majesty's Government, nor with any Party object of any kind whatever. I have always endeavoured, when I have had to deal with questions of the defensive Forces of the country, to keep clear of considerations of that kind; but there is one very important matter to which I desire to direct the attention of the House, and that is that while the House is asked to approve Estimates—I am afraid I am treading on delicate ground, and that if I refer to anything that has occurred I may be accused of endeavouring to discharge in this House the duties of the Executive; but no one, I am sure, feels more strongly than myself that the duties of the Executive ought to be maintained in the highest possible manner—the House is asked to approve Estimates when it really possesses absolutely no more information than that which is afforded by the statements of Ministers. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite most persistently insist on economy, and move the reduction of the Vote from time to time by so much or by so much; but they are not allowed to see within the veil that is dropped down over the actual condition of things in the higher interests of the country. What has happened with reference to these coaling stations? The present Prime Minister in 1882, 1883, and 1884 carried on inquiries, most careful inquiries, as to the necessities, in the judgment of those to whom those inquiries were intrusted, with regard to the defences of the country in the matter of military ports and of commercial harbours; and the result was that Ministers in this House and in the other House of Parliament announced in December, 1884, that proposals would be made to Parliament, and they gave the ground on which those proposals would be made—namely, that they considered that the condition of those defences of the country required the serious attention of Parliament. The language that was then used by Ministers was of a very strong character. I remember the noble Lord the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) said, on the 19th of March, 1885—

> "When the fortification of those stations was provided for by Lord Palmerston—by the raising of a long loan for between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000—it was intended that the cost of the necessary armaments should be defrayed out of the annual Estimates; and in 1860 it was estimated that £5,250,000 had been employed for this particular purpose. From 1860 to 1878 £3,250,000 was expended, leaving a balance, according to the original Estimate, of £1,750,000 still to be provided. About £750,000 has since been spent, so that about £1,000,000 is still due on the original Estimate; but increased cost of heavy ordnance, although, of course, the number of guns required at the works has considerably diminished, has considerably increased the total cost of the necessary arms, and it is now considered that about £1,250,000 are still due to complete the approved defences of the principal military stations at home and abroad. The alterations in the character of ordnance have also rendered necessary certain structural alterations in the works themselves, and also, in some cases, the construction of new works, and works in new and more advanced positions; and for these purposes, and for the completion of preparations for the new mode of defence, it is estimated that something like £1,000,000 will be required in addition to the works for submarine mining. There is, therefore, about £2,250,000 to be expended before the defences of the great military ports at home and abroad can be considered completely satisfactory. I am very far indeed from saying that this expenditure ought to be very long delayed; but the question of how and when, and in what mode it should be proceeded with, is one of very considerable difficulty and embarrassment."—(3 *Hansard*, [295] 1724.)

I entirely agree that that question is a question of very considerable difficulty and embarrassment, and I could go on to quote similar statements by Lord Northbrook and by the present Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) when Chancellor of the Exchequer, and other Members of the then Government, by which the Government of the day came under an engagement to the House of Commons to make proposals to Parliament for the completion of these works of defence. These Estimates, with the plans, are not schemes of mine, but are the deliberate results of many years of anxious inquiry, and formed, in the judgment of the Government, an expenditure which was really necessary for the safety of the country. I gave a statement of these facts last July from my place on the other side of the House, and I was then reminded by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stroud (Mr. Brand) that the statement I made was the statement of his Chief, the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division, and was, in fact, the statement of the Department made after very careful inquiry. Now, Sir, these warnings have been given to Parliament, the statements have been made, and it becomes a question whether the Government should be aided by the House of

Commons in the consideration of the steps which, if the allegations are true, it is necessary to take to secure the safety of the country, and to enable them to resist those claims which arise in times of panic, or whether the House of Commons should refuse to aid the Government, and leave upon them the responsibility of moving in the matter just when they can. I think that if Parliament remains indifferent to the circumstances which are made known by the speeches to which I have referred it is because Parliament does decline to move. I shall at least have cleared myself from any responsibility; but we shall still have the assertion of Ministers of high rank—of Ministers of great personal responsibility—that these works were required two years ago, and only postponed because of the heavy demands on the Exchequer a year ago, and now postponed again simply for that consideration. I shall not refer to any of the confidential information that came into my hands when I was in Office; but I may say simply that my authorities speak in the terms to which I have referred. The circumstances of the Military Forces are such that if we were exposed to the apprehension of war the most economical Minister would have to come down to the House and say—"Give me a Vote of Credit"—not, I hope, of £11,000,000, or even of £6,000,000—"to enable me to redeem the deficiencies that at present exist." Now, I have had some experience of Votes of Credit, and I believe that no more extravagant system prevails. If you can only look at facts as they are calmly and coolly—if you can only get some half-dozen economists, some half-dozen military gentlemen, and some half-dozen responsible officials to proceed to an inquiry into the facts—if necessary, by an examination of witnesses, even of the actual sites of these defences—then, I say, I shall be quite satisfied with the decision of the House based upon the Report of such a Committee. Nothing is to be done with our mercantile ports during the coming year. Less is to be done than I could have hoped for our coaling stations. If we have a quiet year we shall be told next year that the expenditure of the country has been very large indeed—rightly and justly told, no doubt—upon naval and military purposes, and that it is right and proper that there should be some lessening of taxation. But, on the other hand, if we have another scare, my right hon. Friend opposite will have some £5,000,000 put into his hands, and he will be called upon to work all the factories overtime, and the amount of work which would now cost £1 will not be done for 30*s*. It is in the interests of economy as well as of security that I ask Parliament to undertake this inquiry, under the direction and with the full responsibility of the proper officers of the Secretary of State; and if the House of Commons and the country still affirm that it is no longer necessary to undertake defensive works, then, I say, I shall be satisfied with their decision. I do not know that I ought to weary the House very much more on this subject, but I will give just a little information as to the class of work which is being done at present, and that which was done in defence of the Empire 26 years ago. I will state, with the permission of the House, what was the cost of the armament of a first-class ship in 1854 and 1855. When I give these figures I think the House will understand why it is that the Army Estimates are larger than they used to be. The *Duke of Wellington*, the most powerful ship in the Navy in 1854-5, carried 131 guns. The total cost of her guns amounted to £7,000, the gun-carriages to £2,500, the projectiles and ammunition to £5,200, and the stores, side-arms, powder-cases, boats, equipments, &c., to £2,300. All this showed a total cost of £17,000. The *Benbow* is one of the latest additions to our Fleet. The total cost of her guns was £58,339. The mountings cost £82,858; the projectiles, powder, and cartridges, 100 rounds per 110-ton gun, and 85 rounds per 6-inch gun, £38,500; cartridge cases, £7,000; miscellaneous stores and equipments, £13,800; 18 Whitehead torpedoes and equipments, £7,200; the total amounting to £207,697. This is the cost of the armament and ammunition of one ship in the present day, as against £17,000 in 1854-5. Now I will give other figures showing a greater proportion. The cost of a single charge for a 68-pounder gun in 1856 was 15*s*. The cost of a single charge for one of the 110-ton guns on the *Benbow* was £153. The 900 lbs. of powder of which it consisted cost £70, the steel common shell £80, and the cartridge silk cloth £3. The cartridge cover of the charge cost four times the amount of the entire charge of a 68-pounder gun 30 years ago. The cost of guns for batteries has increased not quite in the same proportion. The cost of Fort Cunningham, as armed in 1860, amounted to £5,600; but, as armed in 1886, with nine guns, it amounted to £32,600. I do not ask for increased expenditure in putting these facts before the House; I only ask for inquiry. I ask that the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) shall sit on a Committee, with other of his Colleagues, and shall examine these facts, and arrive at some conclusion as to the necessity or otherwise for these works. If they find that such works are necessary, I ask that they shall put it in the power of the Government to carry them out; or if they find that the works are not necessary, I ask them to say that we should abandon this system of protection, which, individually, I believe to be necessary. I think very much is said in this House, in discussing these Estimates, that is fallacious and useless. Hon. Gentlemen do not know at what they are hitting when they move for reductions. The Estimates, prepared as they are, cannot disclose the work done for the money voted, nor the motives which influence a Government in asking for money; and it is far better, if hon. Gentlemen are called upon to exercise an intelligent judgment upon these matters, that they should do so with the proper information before them.

MR. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) said, he had visited a great many of these coaling stations, and had gleaned the opinions of the Colonists on the spot, both in times of panic and in times of peace. In the past 30 or 40 years English enterprize, energy, and capital had spread over the world a network of commercial interest. The strongest lines of that network were the lines of our communication; but the knots of the network were our coaling stations, and if these knots were insecure the whole of the network would fall to pieces. It was of the utmost importance to remember that if our communications were not kept intact our foreign trade would at once pass into the hands of other nations. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty stated the other night that the coaling stations were being looked to, and that considerable progress with the works had been made in several instances; but he wanted to point out to the Government that these were only a few of the coaling stations that were absolutely indispensable if we were to retain our commercial supremacy in the further parts of the world. They were told that £50,000 was to be spent on these defensive works. He wished the sum was larger; but he supposed they would have in these days to be thankful for small mercies. There was a larger sum of £138,000 to be spent in armaments, and he hoped the Government would be able to give some explanation of these armaments. The importance of at once putting our communications in a thorough state of defence was obvious, not only on the plea of security, but on the plea of economy. One of our chief British industries was the carrying trade. We were the carriers of the world, and if we did not maintain the security of our communications we were liable to lose that trade. There annually passed round the Cape of Good Hope a trade valued at between £180,000,000 and £200,000,000, and in time of war the trade could be taken out of English hands if we did not have coaling stations all along the routes. He considered that we could, at a very small cost, ward off all wars by making it perfectly hopeless for any enemy to attempt to attack us at sea; but we could not do this unless we organized in time. It was most important that we should not only have men to defend those stations, but that they should be well trained in the use of guns and torpedoes, and he would like to see some permanent Board to take charge of the communications of the Empire. He hope the Government would agree to the inquiry asked for, and would make a declaration which would show that they were determined to carry through a strong, continuous policy in defence of the communications of the Empire.

SIR LEWIS PELLY (Hackney, N.) said, that as one of those who had been in charge of the Mozambique Coast, he could testify that none of our coaling stations there were safe. In fact, the observation might be applied to the whole Coast line from the Mozambique Channel to Kurrachee. He urged the necessity of providing for the defence of various coaling stations in the East, which were at present entirely undefended. As the Coasts were reef-bound, they afforded means of security, for, once inside the reefs, there was anchorage for all the Fleets in the world.

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. WOODALL) (Hanley) said, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) had suggested the importance of referring to a Select Committee the consideration of the important matter which he brought to the attention of the House. But he found in the views which the right hon. Gentleman expressed last year sufficient reasons against bringing matters of such extreme delicacy not only to the knowledge of the House and the country, but of all the nations of the world. He might say, however, that there had been no break in the continuity of what had been undertaken at any time. The works with regard to land fortifications in connection with our military ports and commercial harbours must involve large expenditure; they had been under the consideration of successive Governments; and although their importance had been recognized, no definite scheme had been determined on by any Government, or submitted to the approval of Parliament. It was some comfort to know, on the authority of those who enjoyed the confidence of different Governments, that those military ports were capable of being enabled to resist the attacks of the most important Naval Power, or of a combination of the two most important. Her Majesty's Government did not underrate the advantage of placing those important places beyond risk. Certain works were still without a portion of the armaments with which they ought to be supplied; but even that had its consolation, for since of late armaments had become obsolete on an average of 15 years, they had the satisfaction of knowing that they could avail themselves of the constantly-increasing knowledge which every period of transition had brought with it. As to the importance of providing submarine defences to prevent the approach of an invading force to any of the military harbours, he had the satisfaction of being able to state that with regard to the Thames and the Medway, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Milford Haven, Cork, and other ports, the submarine mines were in such a state of completeness that they could at the shortest possible notice be put into action. The right hon. Gentleman would be glad to know that they had disciplined corps of skilful men capable of working those scientific forms of defence, and that Portsmouth, Plymouth, and the Thames were protected by the Engineer Militia of those ports. He was happy to be able to give an assurance as to the satisfactory nature of the submarine defences of Malta, Halifax, and Bermuda, which made those stations absolutely secure from attack by sea. The Government certainly attached greater importance to the proper protection of our coaling stations in the Eastern than the Western Seas; and he was happy to say that with regard to those the progress made was quite satisfactory and that at the present moment their *personnel* and *matériel* were complete, and could at the shortest notice be called into activity. Last year the right hon. Gentleman expressed a confident hope that the fortification works then in progress might be completed in March, 1888. He was glad to say that the progress made justified that expectation, and it was satisfactory to know that there had been very cordial co-operation in the matter between the Colonial Authorities and the Home Government in the provision of those defences. The highly patriotic spirit which had been exhibited at Hong Kong and Singapore, where large sums had been devoted to the necessary works to receive the armaments which would be furnished by the Home Government, was particularly gratifying. Still, there remained the important duty of organizing a flotilla of torpedo boats, steam launches, quick-firing guns, and the necessary *personnel* for keeping constant guard and watch over those hidden submarine works. That subject was engaging the very serious attention of the Secretary of State; and they believed, if the occasion should arise, there would be readily improvised from the naval and military resources of the Empire a force ready to man and guard those defences. With respect to the protection of the mercantile ports, he was happy to be able to give an assurance which he trusted would be satisfactory to the House. He was authorized to say that during the last 15 months there had been a steady, energetic, and even remarkable progress made in the completion of the system of submarine mines for the defence of the most important ports and harbours of the country. By the end of the coming financial year he believed that every important commercial port would be placed in such a position as to be able to give a very good account of an invading squadron. There remained the necessity of providing buildings and stores of every kind, and these were now in hand and steadily progressing. There had been organized a special Coast Battalion of Royal Engineers, for the exclusive duty of working these defences. They consisted of officers promoted from the ranks, specially trained for the work, kept in constant practice, and aided by a staff specially selected and highly skilled in electric and mechanical science. They had also the good fortune of being able to co-operate with local organizations, which during the last year had been most satisfactorily at work on the defence of the Mersey, Clyde, Tyne, and Severn. In each of those harbours there had been placed one lieutenant and 16 non-commissioned officers and men, with whom were associated the local Volunteer Engineer Company, specially devoted to this class of submarine mining, who were aided, instructed, and trained by the professional men. The Government were giving all the encouragement they could in the form of grants, and were holding out every inducement they could to local Volunteers to devote a large portion of their time to this highly skilled and technical work. The result of the experience of the four great estuaries he had referred to had been so encouraging that in the Estimates for the current year it would be found that money was asked to place a similar force for the Forth, the Tay, the Humber, the Tees, and for Falmouth; and though there was not a large Volunteer Force to co-operate with them, sections of battalions would be placed on duty at Belfast and Dublin. He trusted that the figures he had mentioned would give confidence and relief from danger of panic to the very important communities whose commerce it was so important should be carried on under a sense of security. With regard to the fortification of these important forts, he was unable to say more than that the subject was under the consideration it deserved. But the Estimates included a Vote of £10,000 for the Tyne, preference having been given on account of the Tyne being not merely a commercial harbour, but also a great arsenal. The House would see that regard had been had to the importance of the subject; and the Government must not be suspected of indifference, or less entitled to confidence, because they were not light-hearted about the enormous expenditure the works would involve. There was constant danger that works undertaken to-day with the full approval of professional men would become obsolete almost before their execution could be completed. He trusted the House would feel there was the most anxious desire to provide as far as possible for the wants of the day under the guidance of the science of the times. The Government felt they were best guarding the interests of the country by avoiding delay and procrastination on the one hand, while, on the other, avoiding hasty expenditure under a feeling of panic.

SIR FREDERICK STANLEY (Lancashire N., Blackpool) said, it was so far satisfactory to hear that there was no break in the continuity of what had been undertaken; but the case of his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) was that there was work which was part of a definite and well-thought-out scheme for the defence of the country which had never been commenced at all. The Committee asked for would by no means take upon itself the functions which belonged to the Executive; but the expense being so great, and the work being necessary by the admission of the present Government and of the noble Marquess formerly Secretary for War (the Marquess of Hartington), it might be a strength to the Government and an assistance to the House if there were associated with the Executive a Committee including Members like the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), who was not popularly supposed to be predisposed towards military expenditure, who would satisfy themselves that it was necessary and advisable, in the interests of peace and of our commerce, that these defensive works should be carried out. In speaking of the local forces that were to be organized for the defence of the mercantile ports, the hon. Gentleman said nothing about the provision of materials.

MR. WOODALL said, the provisions would certainly include ammunition and everything else, and he spoke about works that were now in progress, including the erection of storehouses.

Sir FREDERICK STANLEY said, he was glad to have obtained that assurance, which did not seem to be conveyed by the hon. Gentleman's first statement. A torpedo system alone was not everything; indeed, torpedoes were of little value against the means of dealing with them unless they were accompanied by protective works. Perhaps they might hear later on that the necessary works were included. Any suspicion he might have gathered strength from the manner in which the hon. Gentleman spoke of the works being pushed forward in the Colonies. But they were almost led to bear the expenditure. It was an expenditure of which they in no way complained; they had come forward loyally, and had voted money in support of the system of Imperial defence. With Volunteers at home, as in the Colonies, there was an excellent spirit if we made use of it; but it was a spirit that could be easily chilled and discouraged. He hoped that, as works of defence were pushed forward in the Colonies forming part of an Imperial and commercial system, it might be understood that armaments would be proceeded with *pari passu* at home. If one thing was clearer than another it was that the conditions of trade in time of war would have entirely changed. We should not, as formerly, have ships convoyed by men-of-war. The best authorities thought it would be necessary that the sea should be patrolled by armoured cruisers; and coaling stations would be of the utmost importance both for cruisers and for merchant steamers which trusted to their speed in running the gauntlet of hostile cruisers. The maintenance of our lines of communication would be absolutely necessary to the carrying on of our Colonial trade. He hoped he should not sit down without making this matter clear—first of all, that this was not a question in any respect a Party one; and, secondly, that they were not asking more than the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) told the House, after mature consideration with the Naval and Military Authorities, was necessary for the defence of the country. What they asked was that there should be no break of continuity, not in the work begun, but that laid down as necessary. On this he believed rested the best guarantee for economy. He was sorry to say that, like his right hon. Friend, he had had some experience of what Votes of Credit were when they came to be spent; and he firmly believed that the way for the country to get full value for its money was to spend it in times of peace, when every item could be properly looked at, rather than in time of war, when emergencies and confusions were apt to arise, and when, therefore, the expenditure could not be so well controlled. If the Government did not feel themselves able, in the face of the undoubtedly large expenditure, to carry out what the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) and Lord Northbrook originally proposed, then it was contended that it might be an advantageous thing, not for the Government or the House, but for the country, that there should be an independent body before whom the question could be clearly laid, and who could say that the Government in their opinion were justified in making a large and what, perhaps, might seem an excessive demand upon the finances of the country, and that a proper and early expenditure might result in that due economy which it was the special function of that House to insure.

Sir EDWARD HAMLEY (Birkenhead) said, he wished he could confirm the accuracy of the glowing picture which the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) had presented; but, unfortunately, he was unable to do so. There were two points on the Southern Coast on which our Fleets were absolutely dependent, and the loss of which would imperil the existence of our Navy—he meant, of course, the great Naval Arsenals and Dockyards of Portsmouth and Plymouth. But their importance was not limited to their use to the Navy. They had also a high military significance. In case of invasion they would be powerful supports of our Army in the field; and if an enemy should capture them he would thereby enormously increase the chances of effecting the conquest of the Island. Therefore, Portsmouth and Plymouth were as the very apple of our eye. This fact had long been recognized, and with this result—that many years ago a very considerable sum of money was laid out on their defence. These works, when constructed, were sufficient for their purpose; but in the course of time the progress of artillery had been so great, leaving fortifications far behind, that these works were no longer reliable for their defence. Things had come to a pass that would formerly have seemed miraculous. Modern guns hurled what were not so much shells as loaded mines, dropping them with wonderful precision within a limited area, and insuring their explosion there. By these missiles magazines and forts formerly bomb-proof were now penetrable, and he need not describe the effect of one of these vast projectiles exploding in a magazine. Plymouth was formerly protected by the existing batteries; but it was now open to bombardment by ships of war which could lie beyond the range of those batteries, and, indeed, concealed by obstacles from their view. Several foreign men-of-war now in commission were capable of destroying the masonry and magazines of our sea forts. It was evident, therefore, that these works demanded renovation. But that was not all that had to be said. Nearly all the land defences of Portsmouth, and also those of Plymouth, were without artillery. Their deficiencies in guns were to be counted not by scores, but by the hundred. Now, he had been unable to discover in the Estimates that any provision had been made for remedying these deficiencies. Many hon. Members would agree with him that this was a perilous absurdity; that it was a blot on our common sense and prudence, and could not too soon be remedied. He appealed to hon. Members, when the occasion occurred, to give practical effect to their opinions on this subject. He knew that many of them had to encounter the prejudices of their constituents. He himself had been held up to reprobation by the Radical newspapers of the neighbourhood as one who was desirous of spending money on what it pleased them to call useless defences. As he was not a Radical, that did not greatly concern him; but he could feel for hon. Members who were Radicals, and if they were put to pressure of this kind he would appeal to their patriotism to resist it. Our military ports formed an important part, but not the only part, of this question. We had great and famous commercial ports which were absolutely defenceless, and might easily be attacked by means at the command of a sea Power. He would only instance the Tyne, the Clyde, and the Mersey. These were all ports of enormous commercial importance. They were ports where our vessels would refit, and two of them were channels upon which this country, so inadequate for the production of its own sustenance, would rely for its food. He conceded willingly that considerable good had been done during the past year in providing for the defence of these rivers by submarine mines under the lately developed system of warfare. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Frederick Stanley) who had just sat down had hit a blot. These submarine mines were of little value unless they were protected by guns laid in defensive works. Now, the only one of the rivers he had named which was in the least degree defended by guns was the Mersey, on which there was a battery, but so inadequate for its purpose that an enemy's ship lying beyond the range of the battery might shell the docks, which extend outside Liverpool far down towards the sea. He had no intention of wearying the House with examples; and he would only mention that there were numerous other ports which, for various reasons, called urgently for defence, and among them the capitals of Scotland and of Ireland were easily approached and offered tempting prizes to an enemy. The responsible authorities year after year had pressed this matter on the attention of the Government, and appeals had been made to the Treasury; but the Treasury, strange to say, was not a Department from which to expect money. It was a Department from which to expect the refusal of money. If other Departments chose to amuse themselves by framing elaborate Estimates, and supporting them by strong arguments, the Treasury did not object to that, as it would furnish it with the opportunity of exercising its especial function of cutting those Estimates down. These amputations seemed to admit of no kind of discrimination. The word was passed to shear off any number of millions to suit the exigencies of the Budget, and the thing was done. The earliest type of a Treasury official was Procrustes. The way in which the War Office put forward its plans was to calculate the total for any works and armaments required, and then to divide it so as to extend over a number of years. According to that plan, if these necessary defences were to be completed within the next five years, the House ought this year to see a very considerable sum allotted in the Estimates. But what did the House find? It would find that £10,000, allotted for the whole of these works, was given only to the Tyne, and therefore the defence of all our other ports was indefinitely postponed. It was in vain that works and armaments were estimated for and approved when they could be annihilated by a stroke of the pen. It is in vain that the Defence Committee plants and a Secretary of State waters, when in a moment the Secretary to the Treasury could interfere and stop fruition. It was in vain then that the national defences were to be trusted to the annual Estimates. Sound policy dictated the placing of the financial basis of any scheme of Imperial military defence on such a footing as would put it out of the power of any Government to tamper with the security of the Empire in order to provide for its passing needs.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, if he were to consult his own feelings, and to forget the interests of his constituents, he should absent himself from the House during these discussions. There was no novelty in the situation. Year by year the House was treated to a repetition of the views that had been expressed that evening. Once more hon. and gallant Gentlemen tried to make the House believe that if the lavish Estimates prepared by the Government were only exceeded—that if they would only do certain things this year—then they should arrive at the full efficiency when both old men and old women might sleep securely in their beds. He wished to impress upon the House the strong fact that there was no finality in this martial expenditure. Every new scheme of offence or defence appeared to become obsolete in about 15 years. He knew, from his own experience of engines and machinery, that a continual competition of inventions went on; but while inventions in peaceful industry were for the welfare of mankind, the rivalry that went on in this and other countries in those offensive and defensive undertakings would only end in confusion worse confounded. Each Opposition encouraged each Government in a profligate expenditure—[*Cries of* "Oh!"]—well, in an interminable expenditure. Whatever strength was given to defensive armaments, there was ingenuity yet in the world which would make offensive operations stronger. The expenditure on their armaments had increased within a comparatively short period from £18,000,000 to £30,000,000, and yet hon. and gallant Gentlemen told them that this country was now in a more defenceless position than it had ever been before. It seemed impossible to impress upon the mind of the House the hopelessness of the enterprize on which they were engaged. If the right hon. Gentlemen occupying the two Front Benches could for one single Session forget their own proclivities, and declare that the enterprize on which this and other countries were engaged was a mad and ruinous undertaking, and if they could appeal to other nations with all the authority which their position bestowed upon them, he believed they would do infinitely more good for the whole world than by all the talk they had indulged in during the last 20 or 25 years. There was a strong warlike element in that House, which seemed for a night or two to be omnipotent; but he believed the common sense of the country would, in the end, put a curb upon their demands, and he seriously assured those gallant Members that it was his solemn conviction that they were not really serving the interests of the country, although they were so loud-mouthed in their professions of patriotism.

Sir JOHN COMMERELL (Southampton): I rise, Sir, to give my most emphatic denial to the opinion which has been expressed by the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) in reference to the defences of Bermuda. The hon. Gentleman said that Bermuda is perfectly protected by torpedoes, which are ready to be laid down at a moment's notice. Now, six months have not elapsed since I was at Bermuda; and I have no hesitation in saying that not one-tenth of the number of torpedoes required for the defence of the Island are on the spot. Within the last 18 months the number of men and officers who form the torpedo corps has been reduced; and at the present moment the Island of Bermuda, which is our most important Naval Station in North America and the West Indies, is protected by one weak regiment distributed over a district 27 miles in extent, two companies of Artillery, and two companies of Engineers, one of which forms the torpedo corps. The torpedoes which it is proposed to lay down will, for the most part, be under the protection of no guns whatever, and might, therefore, be easily taken up by an enemy after they were laid down. As far as Halifax is concerned, it is in a little better position; but the armament of the forts there is very indifferent, and it will be absolutely necessary to improve it. When I listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), who has just sat down, I could not help feeling that he spoke not as if he represented Bradford, but rather the Hartz Mountains, because a more Rip Van Winklish speech I never heard. Can it be supposed that we are to stand still in respect of military and naval armaments, and that we are to remain satisfied with guns and charges which may have been found sufficient 30 years ago, but which would not be of the slightest avail in the present day? What chance would the guns and fortifications of 1854 have against the 150-lb. charge of modern times? The question we have to deal with is not the question of money, but the absolute necessity of keeping pace with the times. We knew that by going to the Treasury for money we will get very little. We may get morals, but we will not get money. I am happy to say that the two Services are well represented in the present House of Commons, and that the demands which are made upon the Government in respect of our defences receive the approval not only of this House, but of the country. Hon. Members may depend upon it that those who represent the two Services will do their duty to the best of their ability. We will endeavour to speak up like men, and to express our opinions in the interests not only of the Services we represent, but of the country at large. We believe that it is for the interests of economy, as well as for the best interests of the Empire, that we should maintain our Services in the condition they have been handed down to us by our forefathers. The hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) does not like our speaking out; but we shall do so, nevertheless, when we think it necessary.

Colonel WARING (Down, N.): I rise, under circumstances of some little difficulty, to perform a task of no small importance—namely, to endeavour to induce the House to give me its attention while I bring before it a matter which, though small in itself, is of considerable interest to those concerned. I had intended to move, if I could have obtained an opportunity—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the great discrepancy between the pay and allowances of Staff Sergeants of Militia serving on Army engagements, and those serving on Militia engagements, while performing the same duties, is unfair to the latter class, and should be reduced by an addition to their remuneration where they can show long and meritorious service."

The House has listened patiently to the story of the Prodigal Son of the British Empire, and I hope it will listen as patiently to that of an elder brother who has never yet made an appeal to the House for assistance. The question to which I ask the attention of the House is the difference between the pay and allowances of Staff Sergeants of Militia serving on Army engagements and those serving on Militia engagements. I will not, at this late hour, detain the House by going into all the details of the question. I will simply say that the facts are on record, and that they are these—that while the Sergeants serving on Army engagements receive a certain sum per diem, those serving on Militia engagements receive precisely one-half the amount. I shall be told, no doubt, that they are an expiring class, and that they now only number 700, whereas there were as many as 4,567 a few years ago. So far from that being an argument against their case being considered, it is a good reason why so small a matter should not be allowed to stand between the country and fair play. There is another objection which may be urged, and that is that these men have not been liable to Army service abroad, and that they have not had experience of service in a foreign country. That it is quite true; and I would allow that argument to have its due weight. Therefore, I do not ask—and that Resolution is carefully worded in that respect—that they should be placed on a footing of equality with the Sergeants on Army engagements, but only that some small addition should be made to their present inadequate remuneration. Another reason which may be urged against the proposition to improve their position is that they are not now liable to serve with the Army in case of emergency. I hold that plea to be altogether a chimerical one. They are the instructors of the force which forms our second line of defence; and in a time of emergency it would be necessary to augment their number largely by efficient men from the Regular Army, who would assist them in performing their duties. It may be said, possibly, that these men are not as efficient, and have never been as efficient, as men of a similar description drawn from the Line. I think I have a right to say a few words on that subject. I am now in the 32nd year of my service in the Militia, in the same regiment—a regiment I have now the honour to command. The regiment was originally worked by non-commissioned officers almost exclusively drawn from its own ranks, and an adequate supply was kept up from that source; and it was not until it was made illegal to promote non-commissioned officers from the regiment that we were obliged to resort to Sergeants from the Line. I believe that any official in the House connected with the Horse Guards is able to express an opinion upon this subject; and I see an hon. Member opposite who has had the opportunity of seeing this regiment under arms. I believe that he will testify that it is not inferior to any regiment which belongs to the same branch of the Service; and I hold that men who are called upon to perform certain duties, and who perform them to the satisfaction of the authorities, should not be placed in the invidious and unfair position they now occupy in regard to pension, pay, and allowances. I will pass, however, from a comparative state to a positive one. The men are now receiving pay for which you could not get an ordinary labourer in most of the counties to do agricultural work. The pay of a Sergeant of Militia amounts to 1*s.* 9*d.* per day, and he is liable to serve for more than 30 years before he becomes entitled to a pension on retirement. Surely that is not acting either fairly or justly towards those who may be looked upon as the nurses of the Army. The consequence of this state of affairs is that day by day our best non-commissioned officers are seeking civil employment, and leaving the Militia. From whence are we to look for a supply to replace them? It is well known that there is by no means a large supply of non-commissioned officers in the Line, and the number of non-commissioned officers is getting day by day more scarce. We have, further, to compete with a large number—some 150 or 200 battalions—of Volunteers, every one of which offers more inducements than we can offer to get the best men from the Line. The consequence is that we are able to obtain very few men for the Militia. So much is that the case that we have been obliged to promote men from the position of bugler to that of Sergeant on the Staff, because the men we get from our Line battalions are utterly inefficient to perform the duties required of them. I think that the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in a private conversation I had with him, had but a very vague idea of the expense which the country would have to incur if my proposal were adopted. In my opinion, a sum of £15,000 would cover all the demands we make; and surely this is not a very large amount to concede for the purpose of rendering a very admirable and old Constitutional Force of the country more popular with some of its best and most deserving members.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): I rise for the purpose of calling the attention of the House to the question of the better arming of the Volunteer Artillery. I feel that it is most important, in order that the Artillery Volunteers should obtain the greatest efficiency, that better guns, of precision and otherwise, gun-carriages, and Martini-Henry rifles should be placed at their disposal. We have heard a good deal from the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) about the vast expenditure upon the two great Services of the country, and the right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the two Front Benches have given concurrent testimony to the fact. Now, the Motion which stands in my name on the Paper is one which, if it could be adopted, would tend rather to produce economy than expenditure; and, therefore, I think it is one which will commend itself to the House, and especially to that school of opinion of which the hon. Member for Bradford is so conspicuous an advocate. We were told at the beginning of this evening's proceedings, by no less an authority than the Prime Minister, that any increase of the Volunteer Estimate must be considered as an addition to the Public Expenditure. I strongly protest against that view of the case. At present we have a force of some 250,000 men, who give their time and services for the country's good in exchange for no pay whatever; and, therefore, any step that can be taken to improve their position cannot be held to be an addition to the expenditure of the country. We were further told by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that this Vote would be of no avail this year; but those who have the honour to command Volunteer regiments know very well what the Capitation Grant is which is paid by the Treasury; and if the same course is to be pursued with regard to it this year I am afraid that we shall find matters gradually growing worse. It is on this ground that I regretted to find the Government, in the early part of the evening, disinclined to concede the moderate request made on this side of the House for an addition of 10*s.* to the Capitation Grant for the Volunteers. In speaking on this subject—namely, the Artillery Volunteers—I believe that I am standing alone, because I believe that I am the only Commandant of Artillery Volunteers who has a seat in this House; and considering the importance of the question I am anxious to raise—and it has an important bearing upon the defences of the country, especially on our commercial ports—I think it is second to no subject which has been before the House this evening. We are all most desirous that not only should the Volunteers be put upon a better footing, but that the equipment of the force should be in such a satisfactory condition as would enable the Volunteers to afford real aid to the Army in a time of war. We have some 45,000 Artillery Volunteers in this country, and they are zealous and earnest in their work. Representing a force which extends over three counties, I can bear my testimony to the great advantage this Artillery Force would receive, if it could not only have the extra Capitation Grant which we endeavoured to obtain at an earlier part of the evening, but also if it could be furnished with 40-pounder guns wherewith to exercise the men. There can be no doubt that during the past few years the Artillery Volunteers have suffered through not being supplied with proper guns and arms of precision. The old 32-pounders with which we have been supplied have been rendered unfit for work long ago, and it is very difficult now to bring up our men for that gun practice which it is desirable they should have. When a few nights ago I addressed a Question to a right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House, whom I do not see in his place now, I was told that a good many 32-pounders had already been served out, and that there were no more in store of that calibre. Now, it is of the utmost importance that we should get guns of some kind in our batteries, so that we may thoroughly exercise our men in the use of arms of precision; or otherwise they may become indifferent and careless. It is of no use employing the old 32-pounders with any idea that we may thereby perfect the drill of the men; and yet that is an object the importance of which I am most desirous of impressing on the House with all the force I can. I think it is of extreme importance that for the purpose of exercise Artillery Volunteers should be furnished with 40-pounder guns. If it is the case that a 40-pounder gun costs a large sum of money, and that there are very few in store at present, or that there have not been so many made as ought to be made, could not the Government see their way to provide 9, 10, or 12-pounders for practice in field evolutions, so that the Artillery Volunteers may be enabled to take their proper position in the field if necessity should arise? I suggested to the right hon. Gentleman that we might be supplied with 20-pounder guns; but the answer was that guns of that description were never served out to the Artillery Volunteers. Very likely not, but we merely ask to be supplied with them for practice. There is another point to which I should like to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, and it is this—even those corps and batteries which have been so highly favoured as to have 40-pounders or 60-pounders served out to them are unprovided with proper gun-carriages, and have no means of transporting the guns from their winter quarters, and from the drill-sheds which have been put up by the Artillery officers at considerable expense, in order to use them at their summer quarters and at their ranges and places of practice. What happens? It is not unusual to see a large force of Artillery Volunteers marching behind carts carrying 4-pounders down to the ranges at which they are to practise. I think it is of the utmost importance that the Volunteers should be better equipped and furnished with arms. Now that the Rifle Corps have the Martini-Henry rifle it is hard that the Artillery Volunteers should not have the Martini-Henry carbine. Why should not the Government give us equal advantages with the Rifle Volunteers, by enabling us to furnish our regiments with adequate guns out of the Government stores? I throw out that suggestion, and I would urge upon the right hon. Gentleman that, considering the Rifle Volunteers have the benefit of the Martini-Henry rifle without charge, the Artillery Volunteers should receive the same benefit; and surely 45,000 stand of arms could be turned out in a very short time in the Government factories. Therefore, I think that the country should be called upon to make this provision without further delay. It is not very much to ask, and I believe that in the end it would, if granted, promote economy in the Estimates. I would also ask the Government to afford the Volunteers an opportunity of obtaining their uniforms from the Government stores at a cheap rate, and I would suggest that a waist-belt and pouch should be granted. They cost the Volunteer about 12*s*. or 14*s*.; and considering the officers have to make good any deficiencies, and that they already are required to advance considerable sums of money, it is rather hard, now that the real value of the Volunteer Force is becoming more fully recognized, that the Volunteers themselves should be required to purchase all the things which are necessary in order to maintain them in a proper condition. I have already said that my command extended over a wide area of country. That is a circumstance which renders it a matter of great moment to assemble the different batteries together at least once a-year. All connected with the Volunteer Force will agree with me in saying that it is of importance that men who may be called upon to act together should have an opportunity of knowing each other. At present they are unable to do so on account of the expenditure involved, and if they go into camp they receive nothing beyond a bare 2*s*. a-day from the day they go into it until the day they leave it. I think it is absurd and monstrous to expect that men will give up all their time to the service of their country unless they are more liberally treated. The men themselves are called upon to make great sacrifices; and if their travelling expenses are not paid, it is hardly reasonable to expect that the officers will bring pressure to bear upon the men to induce them to leave their families and their industrial occupations in order to go for three or four days into camp, notwithstanding the importance of bringing the men together and showing them the details of their duty. If the right hon. Gentleman will consent to do something in this direction, he will confer an immense boon upon this branch of the Service, and his name will be held in very high estimation indeed by the Volunteer Force. There is another point upon which I desire to say a word, and that is to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman not only the importance of giving us better guns, but of giving us better carriages for the guns; of giving us travelling carriages and limbers, Martini-Henry carbines, and better arms of precision generally. Any advances which may have been made during the past year I hope will be continued during the present. I believe that the present is the time to give all legitimate assistance and encouragement to the Volunteers, and not when under the influence of panic or invasion. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider the case of the Artillery Volunteers from an economical point of view. I ask him to enable us to bring these large bodies of men together without throwing all the expenses upon the men themselves. It is absolutely necessary that the detached and isolated batteries which exist in the East and West of Scotland should be allowed to come together once a-year for practice; that they should be furnished with the best weapons that can be procured; and if the right hon. Gentleman, if he cannot supply us with 40-pounders, will allow us to have some of the 9 or 12-pounders now in store, we shall then be able to enter into real practice, and, I have no doubt, with the most successful result.

ARMY—THE SOLDIER'S RATION.

OBSERVATIONS.

DR. R. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I rise for the purpose of calling attention to the deficiency in quantity and defectiveness in arrangement of the soldier's ration, and of the desirability of appointing a Select Committee to consider the best manner of improving the soldier's ration. I think this question is one of very great importance. We all admit that the soldier is an expensive machine, and if he is to be kept in a state of efficiency he must be liberally and substantially fed. The Medical Department of the Army have frequently recommended additions to the soldiers' diet, and have declared that it is necessary the soldiers should be provided with a larger allowance of meat than the three-quarters of a pound which they now receive. The recommendation of the Committee presided over by General Peel was that an extra quarter-pound of meat should be given; but General Peel himself did not concur with that recommendation, and preferred a small augmentation of the pay, in the belief that if the soldier had more pay he would supplement his ration out of his own pocket. Now, the soldier is told before he is induced to join the Regular Army that he will be fed and supplied with what are commonly called free rations; but such free rations are well known to be an entire fiction. Instead of getting free rations he only gets three-quarters of a pound of meat and one pound of dry bread; so that if he were left to live on what a grateful country supplies him with he would have very short commons indeed. He is allowed to supply himself at breakfast, out of his own pocket, with a little coffee and some milk and sugar; and if he likes to go a little further and spend his money on his stomach, he may go to the canteen and spend any amount he likes on an extra breakfast. After that he gets his dinner in the middle of the day, and he finds that the three-quarters of a pound which he is supplied with without bone, in the process of cooking, is dwindled down to four or five ounces. Then he may have coffee to his tea, and more bread, and he gets nothing more until the following morning. Hon. Members will understand what an injurious effect it must have upon a man to be kept fasting so long if he has laborious work to do. When a great and growing lad is suddenly called on to do a new kind of work the expenditure of a good deal of nervous energy is involved, and there is a good deal of strain upon the system. The recruit is usually a growing lad in good health; he is required to do a couple of hours' work before breakfast, and perhaps four-and-a-half hours' drill during the day. He has also to perform fatigue duties and to take part in gymnastic exercises, and all this strain upon the nervous resources ought to be met by a liberal diet. That the recruit does not get enough in the shape of rations is proved by the Reports of the medical officers, and it will be found that these men are spending their own money every day, perhaps 4*d.* or 5*d.* a-day, out of their so-called pay, in order literally to keep body and soul together. It is all very well to say that they have money which they may spend on food. There can be no doubt that young men in this position very much prefer to study their pleasure instead of their health and *physique*; and although it may be said that the ordinary agricultural labourer is not as well fed as the soldier, it is nevertheless the fact that he gets a kind of diet that is better calculated for enabling him to perform his work. Although he may not have quite as much meat, he has more fatty matter, and farinaceous food which more than makes up the deficiency. At present the soldier is in the habit of supplementing his diet by procuring, when at work outside his quarters, such things as butter and cheese. The remedy for this grievance is, I think, pretty obvious. I think that the soldier and the recruit ought to be provided with a better breakfast. They ought to have something more than dry bread to the cup of tea and coffee they have at 8 o'clock in the morning. Then, again, I think they ought to have something between their meals before they go to bed at night, and I think that bread and cheese would be a very good sort of food to give them. Of course it may be said that all this will cost money. I am afraid that it would cost a considerable sum; but it is a question whether it would not be preferable to cut off 2*d.* or 3*d.* a-day of this delusive pay—to give him less money, and a more reasonable amount of cooked food free of cost to himself.

[*Cries of* "No!"] Hon. Gentlemen say "No;" but I maintain that if the country cannot afford to give to the recruit and the soldier the extra food their constitution requires it would be far better to give him less pay, and make up for it by an increased amount of food. Then, again, we ought to do away with the fiction of free rations, the result of which at present is that the recruit, when he joins the Colours, finds that he has been practically deceived by the Recruiting Sergeant, and immediately becomes dissatisfied. I think it would be much better to state what the exact facts are. The most important matter, however, is the supply of an adequate quantity of good and substantial food. A recruit when he joins the Army, is generally not fully developed; and unless the unnecessary waste of tissue is prevented, and his bodily strength and constitution preserved, he will inevitably break down under the pressure and strain of the new work to which he is subjected. I therefore think that the expenditure of more money in food would, in the end, be economical. Two years ago, when this subject was brought before the House by the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), whom I regret not to see in his place, and still more on account of the cause of his absence, the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), who was then at the head of the War Office, promised that the subject should have full consideration. The noble Marquess soon afterwards left the War Office, and I should like to know whether he transmitted the result of his deliberations to any of his numerous Successors? At all events, I would press these points upon the attention of the right hon. Gentleman who now so ably fills the post of Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman). I know that many Army authorities themselves consider that this question is one of much greater importance than has hitherto been attached to it. The subject of dieting a soldier is the subject of a prize essay next year, and I think that fact alone is a proof of the importance which is attached to it. I must apologize for intervening between the right hon. Gentleman and the House; but I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will consider the subject carefully, and decide upon securing for the soldier the advantages which I claim on his behalf.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House that the rations now supplied to the soldier are quite insufficient, and there is no good reason why they should not be increased. Both bread and meat are now much cheaper than they were, and at the present moment the War Office must be realizing a large saving out of the bread and meat contracts. Therefore, this would be an excellent opportunity for giving the soldier a really free ration. He ought to get his bread and tea and something for supper. It would not cost a very large sum of money, and the question is one which certainly deserves the serious consideration of the War Office. There was, however, one recommendation made by the hon. Member for Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) with which I cannot agree—namely, that a deduction should be made to cover the expense of this addition to the soldier's rations out of the small pay which he at present receives. The soldier is badly paid at the present moment, and it will be most unwise to deduct anything from the small amount of pay he now receives. If you are really going to confer any advantage upon him in the shape of an increase of ration, you must make it a free ration. The hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) has called attention to the grievances of the Militia Sergeants. Now, the case of all Sergeants is this—they are practically at the head of their Profession. As an ordinary rule a soldier rarely rises beyond the position of Sergeant, although a few may be picked out and made Sergeant Majors. I believe that only 20 commissions are given to non-commissioned officers in the course of the year, and I must say that I look upon it as a great shame and scandal. I have no doubt that hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway who agree with my first remarks will not feel inclined to concur with me in that. No doubt those hon. Members are fond of the Army; but they regard it from an aristocratic point of view. I also am fond of the Army, but I look at it from a democratic point of view, and from that point of view I say that you do not give deserving soldiers a sufficient number of commissions. The grievance of the Militia

Sergeants, especially in the remote parts of Ireland, is a very serious one, and I hope that the Secretary of State for War will look into the matter. The hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) has shown how wretchedly paid about 700 of these Sergeants are, and it would only cost the country something like £17,000 to meet their claims. That is exactly the cost of the ammunition of one large gun in the Navy. You provide all these expensive things for the Navy, and yet you grudge this small additional charge for the Militia Sergeants. I do not know what the case may be in England, but in Ireland there can be no doubt that the Militia Sergeants are very badly paid indeed, and I hope something will be done to remedy the grievances of which they complain.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn): Sir, I am very sorry, at this late hour, to intervene between the House and the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War; but I understand that any grievances which hon. Members are to bring forward should be ventilated before Supply is taken, and the subject to which I desire to call attention is an undoubted grievance both to the taxpayers of the country and the British Army. It will not amaze me to find myself supported by the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), because one of my chief aims is to secure a reduction of charge to the taxpayers. I also imagine that I shall find myself supported by the Front Bench opposite, because I do not propose to add to the public charge, but to reduce it. I think that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) ought especially to support me, because he spoke with marked emotion to-night of the inconvenience which might be entailed by the success of such Resolutions as that which was brought forward early in the evening, involving, as it would have done, a greatly increased charge upon the public. The right hon. Gentleman also alluded, in language which was both philosophical and the true language of political economy, to the injustice of saddling posterity with any heavy charge which it might find it difficult to meet or remove. During the time when the system of purchase in the Army was abolished, England was crossed by one of those emotional waves which do so much credit to the heart of the people, but which are often followed by a period of re-action and of bewilderment as to finding a substitute for that which has been rightly swept away. At such a time the Government of the day seem to place themselves heart and soul in the hands of actuaries. Now, actuaries are a class of men whom, from long experience, I regard with a sort of wholesome scepticism, for I have hardly found a single instance in which Ministers—either optimists or pessimists—have not been misled by them. I have here a book which gives an example of retired pay for 20 years prepared four years ago, and I find that their calculations for the retired pay of officers of the Army has already exceeded the Estimate by 50 per cent. When steps had to be taken to replace the purchase which was rightly abolished, the method suggested was compulsory retirement after certain ages or after certain periods of service in the several ranks. It began with the faulty and imperfect test of age. Some men are young and others old at the same age, and the result has been what was never contemplated or desired—namely, that the higher ranks of the Army are, owing to this test, practically closed to officers from the ranks. Again, in times of emergency when the military schools were unable to furnish a sufficient supply of officers, they had to go to the Universities and to take other steps to obtain a supply of efficient officers, and it was found necessary to raise the age, leading to results which have been prejudicial to the Service. At the moment nothing was thought of that; but a Nemesis was in front of the unfortunate officers. They were brought into the Army and hurled into the pit of professional extinction before younger men who joined at the same time. The principle of making a man leave after serving for a certain number of years has been found not only unsound, but bad for the Service. I might illustrate this by instances from my own branch of the Service, where a certain knowledge of science is absolutely necessary. We have heard from the right hon. Gentleman who was formerly Secretary of State for War of the great cost of our armaments and ammunition, and it is essential that the officers in charge of them should have a strictly scientific knowledge of what costs the country so much. But at the end of, say, seven years, service in the ranks of Major a man is put on half-pay with the prospect, if he lives long enough and vacancies occur, of being brought to a higher rank. If he is a rich man, he remains idle until a vacancy occurs; if he is a poor man, he is obliged to take a pension that is higher than half-pay, and thus to commit professional suicide. It is, indeed, a terrible system of the survival, not of the fittest, but of the richest; and it makes those who do receive promotion more or less stale and inefficient by being unemployed, and it entails a loss to the country much greater than hon. Members may imagine. It was the late Emperor Napoleon who said, in a true Napoleonic way, that the history of artillery is the history of civilization, because it is the history of the progress of science. But, at the very time that you are spending so much money on the material for your Artillery, you are forcing into private life men whose brains become fallow from want of experience, who, when they are brought back to a higher rank, have to go again, as it were, to a professional school and learn. It is for this reason that I implore the House, irrespective of Party—for Army and Navy questions are not Party questions—to reconsider the Rules which at present exist with regard to this matter. Over and over again it is found that good men are being forced out of the higher ranks into the ranks of those on retired pay, while, at the same time, it is found that you cannot feed the lower ranks sufficiently fast. That shows the necessity for some rearrangement. At present a man when he enters the ranks knows that he is going professionally to die, and whether he is an efficient and active officer or not he dies just the same, on the same day. At present an officer is, say for five years, in command of a battalion, and he knows that at the end of the five years he must leave. The last year of his service is, consequently, a most disturbed year to him, and a year of hope to the man who may succeed him. His time is occupied in making up his mind as to what further employment he can get or what he can do. What I say is—let that man work on to the last day of his five years with the belief that if his work is satisfactory he will have an extension of two years. By so doing, you would not only save the money of the country, but would give to the officers an inducement to work well and efficiently during the whole of his service, which would produce an effect that can hardly be exaggerated. Why should you send a Major into professional extinction or into half-pay after seven years when he is in the prime of life? Why not award to him the punishment of dismissal if he fails to make himself efficient, or give him a certain reward if he is efficient, in retaining his rank for a longer period, and thereby saving a heavy expenditure to the country? I have stated the case with perfect simplicity. I wish the House to realize the facts, and to think over them. It is a very important question for the officers. At the present time a feeling of despair has practically settled down upon them. I think it was quaint old Curtius who said in his history of Alexander the Great—"*Saepe desperatio spei causa est.*" Sir, in those days that grim parent may have been a fruitful mother, but to-day she is as barren as Sarai. This House will have to work a miracle ere officers see the Isaac of their hopes. It is as if in the midst of professional life they are always in professional death. That is the Nemesis they have to struggle against. What they dread is that practically during the whole of their professional career they are threatened with a death they can only avoid by a period of inaction distasteful to themselves and very costly to the country. They go about like gladiators during their professional career—"*Morituri te salutant.*" In the interests of the taxpayer of the future I now desire to say a word. Strange as it may appear to the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), most of the Members representing the two great Services of the country have been sent here by very large and populous constituencise; and, therefore, they have no more desire to impose undue taxation upon the people than hon. Gentlemen opposite. If this system is not changed the amount of retired pay, which is already £1,000,000 a-year more than it was when purchase was abolished, will roll up to such dimensions that it will become absolutely unbearable to the taxpayers. Then will happen one of two things—either the people will be driven altogether to repudiate these pensions, or they more probably will say to the Minister of the day—"We give you so many millions for the Army; we leave you to decide how that is to be distributed; and if you cannot do something to get rid of the ineffective Army burden you must cut down the effective force." I therefore ask the House to face this subject in the interests of the taxpayers of the future, which ought to be just as dear to us as the interests of the taxpayers of the present. Why, in these days of depressed trade, should we add to the claims of the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon us by turning adrift into the world men who are willing to work and swelling the crowds in the Service Clubs, who at present make night and day hideous with their moans? When a civil office becomes vacant, whether it be that of City Marshal or that of Governor of a gaol, you have candidates from every rank, from that of General down to the lowest subaltern. By adopting the suggestion I have offered you would get rid of this. You would encourage the employment of officers as officers; you would reward a Profession which deserves to be rewarded; you would increase the efficiency of these men as officers; and, at the same time, you would immensely relieve the taxpayers of the country.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): Sir, I think it may, perhaps, be for the convenience of the House—and that is my only object in the matter—if I now reply, as well as I can, to the different observations that have been made, hoping that hon. and gallant Members, and other hon. Members who do not enjoy that distinction, will defer their observations on other points until Thursday. I believe that the old practice was, when the discussion on Vote 1 was not considered adequate, and when it was necessary to take the Vote, that on the next occasion when the Army Estimates were moved the Clothing Vote No. 11 should be taken out of its order; and on this Clothing Vote, in the circumstances, the Committee allowed unusual latitude to hon. Members for the purpose of discussion. I hope the House will agree to that arrangement, in the belief that it will be for the convenience of all of us; and, at the same time, I think it will be a satisfactory fulfilment of the engagement made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister at an earlier stage of the Sitting.

Mr. TOTTENHAM (Winchester): Is it to be understood that on Thursday we may take a miscellaneous discussion on any question that is not germane to the Vote?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes. I think I may go back for a good many years, and find that this has been the usual custom. It has always been agreed that, as the soldier has to be clothed as well as paid, the most convenient Vote to take for the purposes of a general discussion, when the Pay Vote has been agreed to by the Committee, is the Clothing Vote. On that Vote there will be allowed, by the courtesy of the House, full opportunity for discussing any matter that may be raised on either side of the House. I am afraid that in replying to the speeches which have been made this evening it will be necessary, in the first place, to go back several hours to the observations which were made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith). The right hon. Gentleman commenced his speech by alluding to a question which had previously occupied the attention of the House—namely, the question of Egypt; and the right hon. Gentleman made a remark which so obviously provokes a retort from me that, perhaps, the House will allow me the satisfaction of making one. He complained that much evil had been caused in the past by premature announcements of the withdrawal of troops either from Egypt or in Egypt itself. I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman in that observation. But the Government were not guilty of any premature announcement in this case. The Estimates must necessarily be framed for the coming year, and it is impossible to conceal in them what we conceive to be the policy of the year. But if the right hon. Gentleman considered it a wrong thing for the Government to announce that they intend to retire to Assouan or Wady Halfa, why was he, of all persons in the world, the one to ask a question on the subject which gave me the opportunity of making the very announcement which he tells us himself has been so unfortunate? The right hon. Gentleman also spoke of the fortifications on which we are engaged all over the world at the present time. The position of the Government with regard to that matter is extremely simple. In the first place we have to deal with the coaling stations, and the defence of these stations is the only branch of the question with reference to which definite promises and undertakings have been made. The work was to be spread over a particular period, and our position in that matter at this moment is this—the Earl of Northbrook in the other House, and, I believe, my hon. Friend the Member for Hastings (Sir Thomas Brassey) in this House, in the last Parliament made a statement of what the total cost of the defence of the coaling stations would be and what would be spent this year. The total sum was £825,000, and this was to be spent in three years; but I am sorry to say that sometimes, in the large amounts involved in expenditure on objects of this kind, there is an ugly faculty of growing as the expenditure goes on—sometimes it even grows—or at least a portion of it — before the scheme is born. In this case it was added to considerably after it was born, and now the total sum which will have to be spent on these stations, including submarine mining, is £1,137,758. Towards that we have already spent £448,000, and we expect there will be spent this year £308,200, while there will remain to complete the work about £381,000. I think under the circumstances of the year, to which I intend afterwards to refer, we have done a very fair part of what was undertaken, and practically fulfilled the engagement of the late Government. With regard to that I have very little to add to what has been said by my hon. Friend the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Woodall); but I do wish to take this opportunity of emphasizing what was said of the spirited and patriotic conduct of the small Colonies of Singapore and Hong Kong. We have all been gratified in the last year or two by the spirit shown in this direction by some of the Australian and other Colonies; and it is satisfactory to find that in the small Colonies like those I have just named there is the same spirit and desire to co-operate with the Mother Country in this matter. As to the submarine mining operations, exclusive of the coaling stations, the cost upon that service, including buildings and stores, will be £287,000, and after the expenditure of this year there will remain £100,000 to complete. Then we come to the great question of the defence of the military ports and commercial harbours. I may at once say that this matter has been the subject of inquiry by Committee after Committee. Plans have been prepared, then added to, and then cut down; but at last something like a comprehensive and final plan was fixed upon, and the general grounds of the plan were stated to the House by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith), and, I think, by my noble Friend the Earl of Northbrook; but as the work had not been begun it was obviously a matter which could stand over. It was not in the same position as the defence of the coaling stations, where the works were in progress. It was a matter which could stand over, and stand over bodily; and under the circumstances of the year and the great expenditure we have to meet, of the character of which the House is well aware, we thought that the present was not a time to undertake so great and costly a work. I agree that once we commence these fortifications the more rapidly we press them on the better. Finding nothing had been done, and that the matter stood entirely by itself, we have been content to leave it over for this year, and I do not think that many hon. Members will consider that we have acted unwisely in doing so. The one thing we have gone on with, and, as my hon. Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall) said, successfully, is the submarine mining defences of the harbours and military ports. I attach importance to this from a moral as well as from a military point of view. The fact that these mysterious mines are capable of being laid down will give a sense of security to those interested in the locality, and, conversely, will inspire some degree of dread in the minds of those who might otherwise be disposed to approach them. My right hon. Friend opposite has suggested that this matter should be referred to a Committee; and if I understand him rightly the principal object of his Committee is to capture my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth). Now, my hon. Friend, with most of whose opinions I am glad to say I agree—except those which he propounds upon military questions—my hon. Friend is to be singled out because of his particular hobby of the reckless expenditure of the country, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite is to treat him as in some countries they treat an elephant. They seduce a wild elephant into a reserve, and when he is tamed they use him as a decoy for others. In the first instance it is proposed to induce my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford to serve on the Committee, then to bamboozle him with technical evidence, and when he is thoroughly trained and converted into a right frame of mind he is to be set loose in order that he may exercise a wholesome effect upon all other hon. Members who think with him. That may be a very good idea; but I doubt very much whether my hon. Friend is the man to be caught by it. This is not a matter which can be properly referred to a Committee—I mean this question of details in reference to the defence and fortification of military ports, commercial harbours, coaling stations, and so forth. A Parliamentary Committee must be a public Committee, and some of these matters, as the right hon. Gentleman has himself sometimes stated to the House, are not exactly subjects which can be dealt with in a public and open way. If, on the other hand, the object of the right hon. Gentleman is to refer all the military expenditure of the country to a Committee, then I do not say that there may not be a great deal to be urged in favour of that course; but there is this great objection to it—that it would seriously impair the responsibility of the Executive Government; and, to repeat what we have heard from more than one hon. Member, that would constitute an assumption of authority on the part of the House of Commons which it ought not to undertake. That is the great objection to it. On the other hand, there are undoubtedly some advantages in the proposal, and it is, at all events, well worthy of being discussed, though I doubt whether the particular question of fortifications and harbours is one which could well be treated in this manner. We have been taunted with apathy in the matter; and an hon. and gallant General opposite (Sir Edward Hamley), who has spoken with great experience, accused us of tampering with the security of the Empire in order to meet the pressing needs of the Government. But I can assure the hon. and gallant Gentleman that it is no pressing need of the Government we desire to meet, but the pressing need of the nation; and I am afraid that some hon. Members opposite have not got rid of the old fallacy that the Government have an unfailing and inexhaustible source of money at its back to enable it to do everything that is desirable. Now, the Government has to go for money to the taxpayer, and, in our opinion, it is impossible to put any such great burden upon the taxpayer. I will now turn to one or two of the other questions which have been brought forward in the course of the evening. The hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) called attention to the case of the Staff Sergeants of Militia. I admit that the Staff Sergeants of Militia are in a somewhat anomalous position, serving, as they do, alongside of men on Line engagement who are receiving a much higher rate of pay. But the position of the two classes is not similar with regard to their duties. I question whether there is much chance of anything being done to improve the condition of these Staff Sergeants. The matter has passed through the process of having been considered by successive Secretaries of State, one after another, and all have agreed that nothing can be done. After that conclusion has been come to, it would be, in my opinion, a very serious matter to re-open the case. I will, however, promise that I will look into the matter. The hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) has asked for certain additional advantages for the Artillery Volunteers. I can only say that, as soon as it is possible to do so, improved gun-carriages and Martini-Henry carbines will be given to them; but, although the hon. Member makes light of the expense, and seems to think that it would make very little difference, I can assure him that it is impossible to meet all the demands of this sort which are made upon us. The hon. Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson) wishes us to increase the ration of the soldier. My hon. Friend spoke from good experience as a surgeon in the Guards; but I find that the authorities who have at different times inquired into this question have not recommended any increase of the ration. In 1858 a Sanitary Commission discussed the question, and refused to increase the ration; in 1860 Lord Herbert refused to give an increase; and in 1866, after the Report of the Recruiting Commission, which proposed to raise the meat ration of three-quarters of a pound to 1 lb. General Peel preferred to give the soldier an increase of 2*d.* a-day in his pay. That the soldier's ration is not insufficient is proved by the notorious fact that recruits greatly improve in *physique.* It is also higher than in foreign Armies; but that, I admit, is a point upon which no strong argument can be founded. But it must be borne in mind that there has been a great and substantial increase in the pay of the soldier, so that he is very well able to supplement his ration for himself. To increase the meat ration from three-quarters of a pound to 1 lb. would cost £300,000 a-year; and if the stores now bought at the canteen are to be supplied gratis it would cost another £450,000 a-year, making altogether an additional cost of £750,000. Two or three years ago there was an inquiry at the War Office, carefully conducted, into the question whether an additional meal might be given to the soldier, and the question of the soldier's ration was fully considered. I am not prepared now to give a positive opinion either one way or the other; but what I have just stated shows that it is necessary to act with great caution in the matter. The hon. and gallant Gentleman below the Gangway—the hon. Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan) —has alluded to a subject to which I am not surprised that the attention of the House has been directed—namely, the enormous cost of compulsory retirement, the bitter cry of the outcast officer, and the dispiriting effect it has upon the officers of the Army. I quite admit all that the hon. and gallant Gentleman has said. It is not a system of which I am myself enamoured, or that anyone can defend as perfect. It was adopted, however, in order to secure a flow of promotion; and no one knows better than the hon. and gallant Member that every little change which is made in the arrangements for compulsory retirement must affect the flow of promotion in that branch of the Service to which the officer who is retired belongs. It is a very delicate and difficult matter, and I admit the great force of much that has been said in regard to it. I can only add that if, after a time, it becomes possible to make a change such as the hon. and gallant Member advocates, I shall not regard the abolition or modification of the system of compulsory retirement with any regret. I think I have now, as far as I recollect, answered all of the points which have been raised. If I have omitted anything I shall be glad to be reminded of it.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I will stand but for a very short time between the House and the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman); but I am anxious to say a few words on a subject to which I have devoted a good deal of attention, and which has been brought before the House this evening by my right hon. Friend the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith). The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War has made an announcement to the House of the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with reference to the defence of the coaling stations and also of the military ports and commercial harbours. I am bound to say that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the defences of our coaling stations is more satisfactory than I had anticipated. But when the right hon. Gentleman said that the expenditure estimated for that purpose has increased from £825,000 to more than £1,000,000, I would venture to suggest that that ought to be a warning to him that economy would be best secured by proceeding, with the least possible delay, with this work; and that, in fact, the increase of expense is very often caused by the delay in completing works of this kind, by altering them from time to time until the completed works in no way or shape resemble those laid down in the original plan. With regard to the question of military ports and commercial harbours, I must refer for a moment to what was stated to the House by my right hon. Friend the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith) in July last. The House will remember that this question is no new question. As long ago as 1884 it occupied the serious consideration of the Earl of Northbrook and of the noble Marquess who was then Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), and both of them informed Parliament that they hoped before long to make some important proposals on the subject. The Session of 1885 began, and, in reply to Questions in this House, the noble Marquess (the Marquess of

Hartington) stated that he would give the House full information with regard to it on the Army Estimates. Well, the time came for moving the Army Estimates; but the noble Marquess was not in a position to give full information, and he postponed his statement till a later Vote, and before that Vote was reached he was, owing to the change of Government, no longer in Office. My right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) succeeded the noble Marquess as Secretary of State for War, and what did my right hon. Friend say in July last? On the 27th of July he said—

> "I think it would be right the Committee should know what has already been provided out of the Votes of Parliament, including the Vote of Credit, and the amount which will have to be included in the Estimates of the next four years, if the proposals which have been accepted and approved by the late Government are carried out."

Therefore, what I am about to state to the House was the Estimate approved of by the preceding Government of the right hon. Gentleman who is now Prime Minister (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The details, in the words of my right hon. Friend, are these—

> "I have already said that the Navy and coaling stations required a sum of £2,425,000 in three years. The Estimate for armament and works for the military ports is £2,230,000, and for the mercantile ports £1,770,000; making a total of £6,425,000. Of this £6,425,000, £900,000 has been met out of the Estimates of this year and the Vote of Credit, leaving an abnormal expenditure of £5,525,000 to be provided on Army Estimates within the next four or five years, and in addition a sum of something more than £250,000 would be required to complete the reserve of stores commenced in the Estimates for the present year."—(3 *Hansard*, [300] 123.)

Therefore, my right hon. Friend contemplated this large expenditure as being necessary in his own opinion, and as an expenditure which had been approved of by his Predecessor for this important matter of the defence of military ports and commercial harbours. And what was the speech of the hon. Gentleman who was the Surveyer General of the Ordnance in the preceding Government—the hon. Member for Stroud (Mr. Brand)? That hon. Gentleman, in reply to my right hon. Friend, said—

> "Of course, the statement that had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. W. H. Smith) was extremely satisfactory to him, because it was really the programme of the late Government, both as regarded armaments, submarine stores, and fortifications."—[*Ibid.* 135.]

Therefore, Sir, we have had this question under the consideration of two Governments for something like a year and a-half, both of which were of opinion that it was a subject of immense importance upon which a large expenditure was absolutely necessary; and the Secretary of State for War now comes down to the House and tells us that the Government do not see their way to making any expenditure at all upon it. I am quite sure that the financial difficulties of the year are great. No doubt, it may be difficult to find all the money required for these and all other purposes. But here we have a matter of very urgent and primary importance, and the result is that nothing is to be done. Does the right hon. Gentleman want funds? If so, I refer him to the admirable speech which has been made by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan). If the right hon. Gentleman listened to the words of the hon. and gallant Member, and would consider the question of compulsory retirement, with a real endeavour to lessen the enormous and annually increasing Vote for the Non-Effective Services of the Army, due to the system so eloquently and powerfully described by my hon. and gallant Friend of retiring men who do not want to be retired at a time when they are perfectly efficient—as efficient as ever they were in their lives—for the service of their country, and retiring them with pensions which add enormously to the burdens of the taxpayer—if he would but consider this matter, and try to retrench with one hand and expend where expenditure is necessary on the other, I think he would do something to make his tenure at the War Office a valuable one to the country.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, N.E., Rossendale): I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman is quite correct in his references to what was said by myself and my hon. Friend behind me the Member for Stroud (Mr. Brand) last year. There is no doubt that a large expenditure was required to put our military ports and commercial harbours in a perfectly satisfactory state of defence; and this is undoubtedly the view which has been held for some time past at the War Office. But I do not think I ever said, or that anything has been said in the House, which distinctly committed the late Government to the initiation of an expenditure of this kind. I have not the smallest doubt that a large expenditure is required. The right hon. Gentleman has said that this question has been under the consideration of two Governments for a year and a-half. He very much understates the fact, for it has been under the consideration of successive Governments for 15 years at least. When Viscount Palmerston made provision for the erection of fortifications on the Coast by means of a loan, he did not provide, and no Government has since provided, for their armament. There is some consolation to be found in the fact that if the armaments had been provided, as ought to have been done, when they were first adjudged to be necessary, the greater number of them would be obsolete by this time, and would have to be replaced by new armaments altogether. I went somewhat into this subject in moving the Army Estimates last year, but I never professed that we had reached a state of finality; and I think that a very considerable risk is incurred by an indefinite postponement in the hope of reaching an ideal perfection of the measures recommended by the professional advisers of the Government. I think that any Government which undertakes the completion of these defences will undoubtedly incur a considerable amount of responsibility. At the same time it is perfectly true that if a work of this kind is to be undertaken at all, it ought to be undertaken with the view of bringing it to a speedy completion. I cannot, therefore, find fault with the conclusion arrived at by Her Majesty's present Government. They are, as has been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), dealing directly with what is the most pressing of all these works—namely, the defence of our coaling stations. I do not know whether we shall be enabled to do that work effectually and well at the present time; but the matter ought to be kept before the country, and as soon as the fortifications of our coaling stations abroad shall have been completed—and I admit that that is a pressing necessity—the subject of the condition of the defences of our military ports and commercial harbours, ought to be taken up. But there is no use in beginning the work in a half-hearted spirit. There is no use in voting £300,000 for a work which will cost, as the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) admits, from £6,000,000 to £7,000,000. In my opinion it is improbable that the work will ever be satisfactorily finished until some Government thinks it right to borrow the £6,000,000 or £7,000,000 necessary for the conclusion of the undertaking in one or two years. On the whole, looking at the uncertainty which exists as to the state of our scientific knowledge, I think the Government are well advised in deciding to complete that part of the work which they have in hand, and to postpone until a more convenient opportunity, and until our knowledge upon the subject is more complete than it is at present the great undertaking of fortifying our military and commercial harbours at home.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) 151,867 Men, Land Forces at Home and Abroad.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): In moving the first Vote it becomes my duty to make the usual Statement in explanation of the Army Estimates as a whole. The net amount of these Estimates is £18,233,200, of which £15,156,900 is for Effective and £3,076,300 for Non-Effective Services. This shows an increase over the Estimates of last year of £444,000 for Effective and £38,500 for Non-Effective Services, or £482,500 in all. But I must call the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Estimates of last year were framed and submitted subject to exceptional conditions. At this time last year we were engaged in military operations on a great scale on the Nile, the extent and cost of which it was impossible to foresee; and therefore the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) plainly informed the Committee that the Estimates which he moved on a corresponding occasion to this last year were not final, but only provisional, and that the full demands to be made in the House for the Military Services of the year could not be made known until a Vote of Credit was asked for after Easter. A test of their provisional character may be found in the fact that whereas there was at that time in Egypt and the Soudan a force of 18,000 men, the Estimates, as the noble Marquess informed the Committee, provided only for keeping 6,000 men in Lower Egypt. Now, I would say frankly to the Committee that when a few weeks ago we were called upon to frame these Estimates, with scanty time for their full consideration, we were confronted by a difficulty of the same nature, though not quite of the same extent, as that of last year. It is the very natural desire of the Military Authorities to reduce as soon, and as much, as possible the occupying force in Egypt. This is equally the desire of the Government, and also, I feel assured, of the country. But it is impossible to say when and to what extent this can be effected. Up to quite recently we have had 17,350 men in Egypt, including 15½ battalions of Infantry, and parts of the force are stationed high up in the Nile Valley, where their maintenance is difficult and costly. We have been obliged to found our Estimate upon conjecture, and we have thought it more regular, and more convenient to the Committee, that we should fix our basis upon a moderate force, rather than that we should anticipate a greater expenditure which might not eventually be incurred. We therefore, in these Estimates, reckon upon the Army in Egypt being reduced to 8,000 men; but the Committee will of course understand that, should it be impossible to realize this result, it will be necessary to supplement the Estimates on this account. Now, Sir, before I proceed to state to the Committee the main causes of the increase of the Money Vote, it will be more convenient if I explain the reasons for the additional number of men provided for. Speaking broadly, it is due to the requirements of India and of Egypt. The Committee is aware that the Government of India have recently determined that it was necessary, in connection with the scheme for strengthening the North-West Frontier, to add to the Army in India; and in the course of the autumn the late Government decided to take immediate steps for the augmentation of the British Force in India by 10,000 men. The augmentation decided upon consists partly of an increase to the Establishment of regiments serving in India, and partly of a transfer of additional cadres to the Indian Establishment. Each battalion of Infantry is to be increased by 100 men, making the Establishment 920. This for 50 battalions makes 5,000 men. Three additional battalions sent out, 920 strong, account for 2,760 men rank and file. Two troops are to be added to each Cavalry regiment, nine in number. Eleven batteries of Artillery are to be added, five of which have already gone—six remaining still to be sent. In this way the round figure I have named is made up. The Committee will observe that not only have we to replace these men on the British Establishment, but, in order to furnish drafts for this increased force, we must provide a proportionately greater number; because you cannot produce sufficient drafts without adequate means of training and creating them. So much for the requirements of India, which are now being met according to the plan decided by the late Government. But I have said that our proposals are also affected by Egypt. Now, Sir, I do not hesitate to say that the prolonged occupation of Egypt has caused a most unusual and—if I may use the word—unfair strain upon the organization of our Army. Our Infantry is organized in units of two battalions, and the system is that every battalion on foreign service should thus have a sister battalion at home, from which the drafts to fill up its casualties should be furnished. And, as is known to those who are interested in these questions, it was laid down in the original plan that whenever, owing to some exigency of the Service, both battalions came to be abroad, the small depôt of the regiment should be immediately increased in size, so as to form, practically, a third battalion on which both the foreign battalions might rest. But during the last three or four years we have had many cases of both battalions of a regiment being abroad, and yet this step was not taken. The truth is that the nature of our military position in Egypt is peculiar. Our organization is calculated to enable us satisfactorily to meet the demands of a small Colonial war, and also, by the help of our Reserves, to take part in great military operations for the defence of our shores or our national interests. But in Egypt we have not been engaged in either a small war or a great war, but in a prolonged military occupation of a foreign country. It is this, which was never contemplated in the organization of the Army, that has strained our resources. And if the step which I have described of raising at home a special depôt for every pair of battalions on foreign service has not been taken earlier, it is because during all this time the hypothesis has been that our occupation of Egypt was temporary. Sir, it has been temporary in feeling and intention, but it has been continuous in fact; and, although this hypothesis may be most salutary and consolatory, there is one thing which no hypothesis can do, and that is to furnish drafts for an army in the field. It was therefore resolved last summer, under the power given by the Vote of Credit to raise 35,000 men, that in each case in which both battalions of a regiment are abroad the depôt should be raised to 600 men; and this plan, so necessary, as all will admit, will be continued, and is provided for in the numbers now proposed to be voted. The number—9,673—which is proposed to be added to the Army is thus mainly accounted for, partly by these increased depôts, and partly by a larger Establishment being given to the Infantry battalions at home, in order to meet the strain of the larger drafts. No battalion will be under 750 rank and file, which number does not seem excessive considering the diverse, and in some sense incongruous, duties which a large part of our Home Army has to discharge. Coming back now to the money to be voted, if hon. Members will turn to page 2 of the Paper giving an explanation of differences, and circulated with the Estimates, they will see that the increased charge due to these additional numbers, as I have described them, is £246,000. But against this is to be set a sum of £200,000, which the Indian Government will contribute during this year as an advance to meet the charge for supplying India with the increased force I have described. The steady development of deferred pay accounts for £30,000. An increased sum of £10,000 is taken for additional horses. The Auxiliary Forces require an additional sum of £50,100, and the Army Reserve of £38,500. The Store Vote is increased by £361,200 for Land and Sea Armaments, and the Works Vote by £72,000; of these I shall say something more in detail. The direct expenditure in Egypt causes an increase of £474,000; but against this, in the comparison with last year, may be set the amount of £500,000 taken for Bechuanaland which drops out this year. Lastly, we have a falling-off of £38,600 in the contribution from India towards the share of non-effective charges, which, according to the arrangement now in force, happens to tell to our disadvantage on this occasion. On the other side of the account we calculate upon a saving of £120,000, owing to a reduction in prices of supplies. These are the chief items which go to make up the excess over last year, resulting, as I have said, in the net increase of £482,500. Now, Sir, I have a few words to say on the subject of the recruiting for the Army during the past year; but I cannot refer to this subject without expressing my regret, which I am sure will be shared by many who hear me, that this is the last time we shall have a Report on the subject from the pen of General Bulwer. The extraordinary success of recruiting during the last few years has been largely due to the energy, tact, and intelligence with which that gallant officer discharged his duties; and I venture to say that he has left a permanent mark on this part of the administration of the Army. I daresay there are in this Committee hon. Members who are warm advocates either of long or short service. I am not about to say anything which will tend *infandum renovare dolorem*—to provoke a fresh outburst of an interminable controversy. Personally, I am not a fanatical supporter of either extreme. I am a follower in the school of which General Bulwer has been, if not the most eminent, certainly the most practical and effective exponent. We trust to voluntary enlistment in this country. In my opinion the terms of service ought to be as varied, as free, and as elastic as is consistent with discipline and with the strict requirements of the public interest. The old conception of the relation between the Crown and its soldiers was widely different. I hardly overstate it when I say that there were two principles of action—in the first place, you were to contrive, by any manœuvre, to entrap an unwary recruit; and, in the second place, when once he had placed himself in your power, it was your business, whatever the disposition of his mind might be, to stick to him at all hazards to the end. I believe this to be entirely wrong. It deters good recruits; it makes the Service unpopular; and I cannot believe that an unwilling and discontented soldier can be a good soldier. On the other hand, when a good man is interested in, and satisfied with, his career, it is most unfortunate that any regulation should debar him from continuing it. Our present system seems to me to avoid these evils From the first moment when a village youth reads a notice setting forth the conditions of service in the Army, down to the day of his discharge, he has from stage to stage in his career a free opportunity, if he is a well-conducted man, of determining his career for himself, of electing whether he shall go on in the profession of arms, or whether he shall return to civil life. I believe that the more this is known and experienced the more popular will the Service become, and the greater will be the influx of young men anxious to have a trial, at least, of a soldier's life. The number of recruits during last year was 39,971, thus far exceeding the number in any recent year. These are the men passed into the Service; but even more surprising is the number of men who offered themselves, amounting to 69,401, or more than 23,000 in excess of those who offered themselves only five years ago. No doubt depression in trade goes far to account for these large figures; but I would invite the attention of the Committee to the remarks on this subject of the Inspector General—

> "Recruiting has been always more or less affected by the state of the labour market; but never to the extent shown by the Returns of the last three years. It must be admitted that the existence of bad trade is a great element of consideration when seeking for recruits; but I do not think that the great jumps made during the last three years are to be attributed solely to this cause; on the contrary, I am of opinion that the changes which have been made in the localization and organization of the Army, in the administration and development of the recruiting districts, in the freer and fuller advertisement of the Service, have all contributed very largely to the popularity and knowledge of the Army among the people at large."

He also attributes part of this result to the fact that the standard has not been altered, and that it is such as to admit of our taking all men who offer themselves, and who are likely to make efficient soldiers. The results of localization are most satisfactory, inasmuch as the Army is yearly brought into closer connection with the Auxiliary Forces, and the number of men serving in regiments belonging to the locality in which they were born is constantly increasing. In 1883 there were 24,247; in 1884, 32,376; in 1885, 34,654; in 1886, 40,265. The recruits obtained from the Militia were 14,821; and even the Volunteers furnished 1,964, instead of the very small number who formerly entered from this source. So much as to the quantity of recruits; the Reports show that their quality also is, on the whole, satisfactory. I believe that it is sometimes asserted that our physical standard is low, especially as regards the height of recruits; and this is a subject upon which, perhaps, the Committee will allow me to make a few observations, especially in view of a comparison with other Armies. With voluntary service we are obliged to take our recruits at an early age; and our experience is that if they are healthy and sufficiently well grown for their years, a few months of steady life and regular food develop and fill them out greatly. What we require in those young men, whose precise age may be in some doubt, is that they should have the physical equivalents of 18—that is, the degree of development which an ordinary healthy young man of 18 should have reached. In height the standard is 5 feet 4 inches; but men under 20 may be specially enlisted for the Infantry who are over 5 feet 3 inches. Can anyone say, or has it ever been asserted, that a short man, if otherwise properly developed, cannot do the work of a soldier? What are the heights in Foreign Armies? Be it remembered that in those countries the age of enlistment is 20, with the exception of Russia, where it is 21. In France the minimum height is 5 feet $\frac{1}{2}$ inch; Austria, 5 feet $1\frac{1}{6}$ inches; Germany, 5 feet $1\frac{8}{10}$ inches; Russia, 5 feet $\frac{1}{4}$ inch; Italy, 5 feet 1·45 inches. Again, we require a minimum chest measurement of 33 inches. In France it is 30·867; Austria, 30·06; Germany, there is no limit; Russia, no rules; Italy (for active service) 31·5. Further, we prescribe a minimum weight of 115 lbs., regarding which the other countries issue no instructions at all. I think that these facts show that our Military Authorities are not neglectful in laying down such rules as may insure a fair physical development in the soldiers. The rule to be followed appears to be this—that as under a conscription the standard is regulated so as to insure that no man escapes his liability, so in a voluntary service the standard should be fixed to secure, as far as the requirements go, the enlistment of all willing men who are likely to make efficient soldiers. The waste from the Army continues high; but there is nothing abnormal to notice in it. The net loss by desertions in the year was 2,975. Recruiting for the Militia has also been most successful, and the Reports on the Militia regiments are highly favourable. I am glad to say that, although there are great difficulties, owing to the shortness of the training, and, in some cases, want of range accommodation, there is shown to be a decided improvement in shooting under the new Musketry Regulations Two regiments of Artillery Militia and six of Infantry Militia were embodied last year for six months, and the General Officers commanding speak highly of their discipline, zeal, and efficiency. Hon. Members are aware that for some time there has been a considerable lack of officers for the Militia Force, a Return last year showing no fewer than 773 vacancies. It is so far satisfactory to know that this deficiency has been reduced to 603 at the present moment; notwithstanding the fact that during the year the Militia gave 223 subaltern officers to the Line. The Committee will observe that there is a small increase in the Yeomanry Vote, which is due to greater efficiency. I may mention that we expect that during this spring the Martini-Henry carbine will be issued to the whole of the Yeomanry. With regard to the Volunteers, the facts laid before me appear to show a steady and decided improvement in almost every respect. This Vote is increased by £18,500, which is nearly all due to Capitation Grant. Not only have we close upon 10,000 more efficients in 1885 than in 1884, but nearly the same additional number were actually present at inspection. This shows that the patriotic spirit is not dwindling, but was rather stimulated in such a year as last, when active military operations were in progress; and it is also the effect of the extraordinary interest which officers take in the efficiency of their corps. The increased attention given to shooting since the issue of the Martini-Henry rifle, the great interest taken in Camps of Instruction, which so powerfully contribute to the improved discipline of the Force, and the desire on the part of officers to perfect themselves in their knowledge of military duties, are all most creditable and satisfactory as proofs of the essential vitality and spirit of the Volunteers. The Army Reserve is estimated to number 51,000 men; showing a steady though not a very rapid growth. The Votes upon which I have hitherto dwelt have this characteristic in common—that there is but little elasticity in them; and, from an administrative point of view, little room for discretion. The larger sums required for the different branches of the Auxiliary Forces represent no new development of their establishment, but simply and solely greater efficiency and better work done; and we can only grudge or refuse such increases on grounds which would involve the rejection of the entire Votes. Again, the great Pay Vote, and Votes 9, 10, and 11, for Transport, Clothing, and Food, which follow in its train, depend immediately upon the number of men you maintain; and the number of men you maintain depends on the military policy and requirements of the country. If you find it necessary to reinforce your Army in India, or if you resolve to continue the military occupation of Egypt, you must provide the means of doing it; and it is my belief that this necessity is adequately met in these Estimates, but met on a scale which is reasonable and modest. But now we approach a Vote of a different order, the great Vote for Warlike Stores; a Vote which is much more directly under our control, and which, in fact, supplies in itself the subject of a great branch of military policy. The amount which it is right to ask Parliament to devote to the supply of arms and munitions of war does not depend solely or mainly on the immediate requirements of the Army; it must be settled upon a careful review, in the first place, of the present condition of our armaments; in the second place, of the changes which the rapid and increasing developments of modern science may be creating in the art of war; and, lastly, of the financial position of the country. No one of these questions can be left out of sight if the Minister is properly to discharge his duty. I believe another conception of his duty is sometimes formed; and pictures are sometimes drawn and held up to our admiration, on the one hand of a stubborn War Minister, grasping at every shilling he can compel the reluctant Treasury to grant, and on the other hand of an imperious Chancellor of the Exchequer, ready to sacrifice the safety of his country to the necessities of the Budget. Why, Sir, if either of these pictures were true, whatever the result of the struggle, there would be an end of true economy and of true efficiency. I can assure the Committee, at any rate, that such pictures do not represent the relations between my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer and myself. I believe quite as strongly as he does that it would not be reasonable, or even possible, in the circumstances of the year, to propose a larger Vote than this. Let me call the attention of the Committee to the recent history of this Vote. The net total now to be voted is £2,569,000, which is a net increase of £341,200 over the amount taken in the Estimates of last year. But the amount of last year's Vote exceeded that of 1884-5 by no less a sum than £965,300, so that this great Vote has been raised in two years by more than 100 per cent over what is still considered its normal amount—namely, £1,250,000, which was voted in 1884-5. But this is not all, because £2,500,000 were allotted to this Vote out of the Vote of Credit, of which upwards of £1,500,000 was devoted to the very purposes to which the abnormal increase over the ordinary and average Vote is being annually dedicated — namely, naval and land armaments, submarine mining defences, gunpowder, small arms, field guns, and reserve stores. How, I would ask, in the face of these facts, could the Government have consented to, or could I have urged, a greater increase to the Vote than I now propose? Nay, I will at once change my front, and ask how, in the face of these facts, can I justify our present proposal? I will endeavour to show to the Committee how it is that I do so. Hon. Gentlemen who were not Members of the last Parliament may not be aware of the tremendous revolution that has taken place within the last few years in the designs of guns, both great and small. The change from muzzle-loading to breech-loading has been due not so much to any caprice or ingenuity of gun inventors, as to the discovery of the great results attained by slow-burning powder, which require for their development a long gun, and thus necessitate breech-loading. Again, the gun is now made of a new material, steel, which has been perfected for the purpose. The new gunpowder also, of which I have spoken, is greatly more costly, and requires special appliances for its manufacture. Then there are machine guns and torpedoes, and all the paraphernalia connected with them. Now, in all these matters we in this country have been slower than our neighbours to adopt the new systems, and we may at least hope that we thus gain the advantage of benefiting by the latest improvements; but the result is that the whole of this costly expenditure falls upon us now. This is the cause of the startling increase to the Vote of recent years. Let me take for example the amount of the Naval Gun Estimate, which is borne on Army Estimates, and included in this Vote. In 1880 1 it was £303,000. In the following years it was £369,000, £616,000, £500,000, and £500,000. This brings us to last year, when it rose to £850,000, while this year it will be £1,000,000. The fact is that the types are now settled, the designs are completed, the ships are being pushed on, and the guns must be ready; and so with all the other kinds of warlike machinery. I assure hon. Members that it has been no easy task, though it was a necessary one, to restrict the Vote within its present limits. Many excellent, ambitious, and praiseworthy efforts have had to be checked and delayed, or sacrificed; and I must bear testimony to the reasonable spirit in which the officers of the Department accepted the restrictions, which I frankly admit that I have felt it my duty to impose upon their most creditable desire to extend and accelerate its work. Now, as to particulars, as I have referred to naval guns I may state the condition of things in this respect. Of the 110-ton gun there will be three completed by March 31, and there remain four under orders. Of the 68-ton there are one completed and 28 under orders; of the 45-ton there are 14 completed and eight under orders; of the 10-inch there is one under orders; of the 9·2-inch there are 22 completed and 19 under orders; of the 8-inch there are 35 completed and two under orders; of the 5-inch there are 334 completed and 136 under orders; and of the 4-inch there are 113 completed and 37 under orders. There have also been made or provided for 315 6-pounder and 298 3-pounder quick-firing guns; 1,366 Nordenfelt and 491 Gardner machine guns, and 1,262 Whitehead torpedoes. I may add that experiments of the most interesting kind are being made at Aldershot with different sorts of machine guns, for use with Cavalry and Infantry. Of the new 12-pounder breech-loading field gun we expect that 19 service batteries, in all, will be provided by the end of the year. With regard to small arms, the Committee is aware that during last summer the pattern of the new ·4 bore rifle—also, I believe, called the Enfield-Martini—was settled; and, owing to great exertions in the Department, 1,000 will have been turned out by the end of this financial year. Preparations had been made for great activity in production during next year. This is, however, one of the services in which it has appeared to us that, with the smallest detriment to the public interest, the rate of manufacture may be slackened, and we provide for turning out only 55,000 of the new rifle for Imperial service in the coming year. We, however, proceed with the increase to the plant at the factories, which will add to the power of the Department to manufacture a large quantity of these weapons at a rapid rate in case of urgency. I need not say that the lowering of the rate of production, both at Enfield and at Woolwich, from that which was maintained under the Vote of Credit, will involve some reduction in the numbers employed, although, as I have already stated in the House, we trust that the reduction will be so arranged as to cause the smallest degree of hardship. But the Committee will not think some reduction unreasonable in the light of the figures which I have quoted, and of the fact that out of a total number of work-people of 13,213 no fewer than 4,569 were entered since April last. Now, Sir, the progress that we intend to make with the fortification of coaling stations has been already stated this evening, and also some information has been given as to submarine work. I am not aware that I need detain the Committee at greater length, or that there is any other question of magnitude which requires explanation. I admit that these Estimates involve a heavy charge on the taxation of the country; but I believe that the expenditure proposed in them is wise and reasonable, and I submit them with confidence to the Committee.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I think we should not do justice to the very able Statement which has been made by the right hon. Gentleman if we attempted to discuss it in any way at this hour of the night (1.0). I rely entirely upon the assurance which he has given to the Committee that there will be ample opportunity afforded on Thursday next for the discussion of any of the questions which might arise upon this Vote or the Votes which have to follow. Upon this understanding, I trust the Committee will give the right hon. Gentleman the two Votes which I believe are necessary for the Public Service.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £4,457,300, Pay and Allowances.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £4,457,300 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

MOTION.

HIGHWAYS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Duckham, Bill to amend the Law relating to Highways, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Duckham, Mr. More, and Mr. Thomas Blake.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 149.]

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 23rd March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Idiots* (46).

Second Reading — Union of Benefices (20), *negatived*; Burgh Police and Health (Scotland) (28).

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after *Friday* the *25th day of June* next:

That no Bill originating in this House authorising any inclosure of lands under special report of the Land Commissioners for England, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a first time after *Tuesday* the *11th day of May* next:

That no Bill originating in this House confirming any provisional order or provisional certificate shall be read a first time after *Tuesday* the *11th day of May* next:

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons authorising any inclosure of lands under special report of the Land Commissioners for England, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a second time after *Friday* the *2nd day of July* next:

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any provisional order or provisional certificate shall be read a second time after *Friday* the *2nd day of July* next:

That when a Bill shall have passed this House with amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended:

That this House will not receive any petition for a Private Bill after *Friday* the *16th day of April* next, unless such Private Bill shall have been approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice; nor any petition for a Private Bill approved by the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice after *Friday* the *14th day of May* next:

That this House will not receive any report from the Judges upon petitions presented to this House for Private Bills after *Friday* the *14th day of May* next:

Ordered, That the said orders be *printed* and *published*, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. (No. 45.)

UNION OF BENEFICES BILL.—[No. 20.]

(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in moving that the Bill be read the second time, said, that its object simply was to extend to churches in the Metropolis and their sites the same protection which was now provided for similar edifices everywhere else in the country. Churches which had been consecrated were protected both by the Common Law of the country and by Statute Law. Only so recently as 1884 their Lordships passed a Bill dealing with disused burial grounds in the Metropolis. That Bill had been passed in consequence of the great indignation throughout the country at the desecration of old burial grounds in the neighbourhood of London by utilizing them for building purposes, and were it not for the peculiar way in which that Bill exempted from its provisions the Union of Benefices Act 1860, he would not have troubled their Lordships with the present Bill. The Union of Benefices Act of 1860 was passed with the object of consolidating certain church parishes in the neighbourhood of London and elsewhere, on the ground that their churches were no longer necessary for Divine worship, and it provided funds, which were vested in the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to be used chiefly for the extension of churches elsewhere. It was provided by that Bill that where a church was to be pulled down another was to be built elsewhere. There was a provision that ancient churchyards were not to be sold, but were to be preserved; but, curiously enough, though the churchyards were exempted from desecration, the church itself was permitted not only to be pulled down, but its site to be sold to the highest bidder by public auction, so that it might be used for any purpose whatever. It was a singular thing that while the minor was protected the major was exposed to desecration. Now, he did not require to demonstrate that it was unnecessary to pull down these churches. All he asked was that if it was necessary to pull them down their sites should be respected. It would be easy, if necessary, to demonstrate that the destruction of these churches was wholly uncalled for. These City churches, with few exceptions, had a double claim to protection, not only as being the last resting-places of the dead, but also as having been the site of buildings which had been for generations the temples of the living God. It was true the City churches were no longer surrounded by such large populations as formerly; but still the week-day population of the City was enormous—something like 1,000,000—while the Sunday population was considerably more than was generally supposed. The City churches had been grossly neglected; they had not had fair play. What could be done by a great and earnest clergyman had been demonstrated in the case of St. Paul's, which, though chiefly visited by sight-seers years ago, was now crowded on Sundays with congregations of 9,000, and attended on week-days by very large congregations indeed. St. Paul's was not the only instance of this kind. It was a remarkable fact that the City churches which were scantily filled were those which had non-resident incumbents, whereas in others where there was a resident and hard-working clergyman the congregations were by no means so trifling as was usually supposed. Of the four churches referred to in the Bill, the first to which he would call attention was the church of St. Thomas, in the Liberty of the Rolls. It was a church of comparatively recent construction, having been in existence only 50 years, and immediately adjoining it was a large vacant space of ground, more than three-quarters of an acre in size. The ground belonged to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who some five or six years ago cleared the ground of houses, whose inmates represented a very poor class, and having thus got rid of the population they now wished to sell the church. He could not help thinking that if this ground were utilized under the Artizans' Dwellings Act of his noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury), it would furnish an important addition to the homes of the working men of London, and that the presence of the church in their neighbourhood might prove a great blessing. The incumbent was an old man, 77 years of age, who lived outside the parish. The next church to which he would refer was that of St. Olave, Old Jewry. In this case the living had been vacant for four years, which was not a satisfactory state of things. It was not always the resident population that formed the congregations of City churches, for many of the congregations came from a very considerable distance. The vestry clerk of St. Olave, Old Jewry, stated that the incumbency had been vacant for four years, and that the services were performed temporarily by a gentleman who did not live in London. There were an enormous number of bodies buried under the church. The third church to which his Bill related was that of St. Catherine Colman, in Fenchurch Street. This living had also been vacant for four years, and the Bishop allowed a miserable stipend to the curate in charge who did the work. The clergyman in charge informed him that he had ascertained that since 1625 about 10,000 persons had been buried in the church and churchyard, and that many hundreds of people were interred there during the prevalence of the plague and the sweating sickness. To disturb the remains might be dangerous to the living; and that really was the case some years ago at Eyam, in Derbyshire, where the old burial ground was disturbed. The last church to which his Bill referred was that of the Holy Trinity in the Minories. It was a quaint old building, erected on the site of an ancient house of Minor friars. Large numbers of persons had been interred in the church, some as late as the year 1849. It was impossible to exaggerate the immense amount of decaying humanity which really constituted the soil. Yet on this site, which it was proposed to sell by public auction, it would be necessary, if a gin palace or a warehouse were erected in place of the church, to dig up the most horrible mass of decomposition which could be imagined. It was stated that deconsecrating services were held before churches were pulled down; but he could not imagine what those services were. Whether the prayers were read backwards or not it was difficult to say. *The Law Times* stated that when a burial ground had once been consecrated nothing short of an Act of Parliament could divest consecrated ground of its sacred character, and that "the sacred character of the ground is part of the Common Law of Europe." Such were the facts, shortly stated, as regard these four benefices. He asked their Lordships to pass his Bill on four grounds—first, that it was offensive in the highest degree to Christians that the House of God should be desecrated for perhaps the vilest purposes; secondly, that the desecration was a disturbance of what was intended to be the last resting place of the dead; thirdly, on sanitary grounds, because the removal of the remains would cause great danger to health; and, fourthly, to enable the number of open spaces in the City to be increased, supposing it were necessary to pull down the churches. To show the injury to health which resulted from the disturbance of these old graveyards, he might refer to the opinion of Sir Gilbert Scott, who stated that in these old churchyards the whole soil was composed of a mass of decayed human remains and half-decayed bodies, which could not be removed without injury to health. He would ask their Lordships to accept the Bill, because it would increase the singularly limited number of open spaces in the City. The sites of the old City churches which were burnt down in the Fire of London and not rebuilt were carefully preserved. He regretted that the right rev. Prelate should have placed on the Paper a Notice in opposition to the Bill. He did not think that in these days when Disestablishment was in the air this was a wise course. Even the Liberation Society did not ask that the churches should be destroyed and their graveyards desecrated; and it was a source of infinite pain to himself and many others that the man of all others to be engaged in this work should be the Bishop of London. He would ask their Lordships by reading his Bill a second time to put an end to this scandal—he asked in the name of decency, which was outraged; in the name of the living, whose health was seriously endangered; in the name of the dead, whose last resting place was disturbed; and finally, and most reverently, in the name of God, that an end might be put at once and for ever to this uncalled for and horrible desecration of the place where His honour dwelleth.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE BISHOP OF LONDON (Dr. TEMPLE), in moving that the Bill be read a second time this day six months, said, that the Bill would have been more correctly designated as one not to amend, but to repeal, the Act of 1860, because to give practical effect to it would necessarily be to repeal that Act. The Act of 1860 was passed on the ground that there were a large number of churches in the Metropolis which had become useless in consequence of the population having entirely left them, and that there was at the same time a large population all around, and increasing yearly in almost unmanageable proportion, for whom it was exceedingly difficult to provide accommodation for worship. It was thought but reasonable that churches standing where they were not wanted should be transferred to places where they were so much required. That was the principle of the Act of 1860. The chief answer to this Bill he should put before their Lordships would be to lay some of the leading facts before them, so that they could estimate what had actually taken place under the Act of 1860. Under that Act the sites of 11 churches had been sold. A Return moved for in 1879 showed that 10 churches had been then sold, and one sale had occurred since. These 11 churches had been removed, the sites sold, and the proceeds applied in accordance with the principle he had indicated. After meeting all expenses and compensating all interests that had to be compensated under the Act, the whole amount realized by the sale had been £242,650. Out of that sum £180,152 had been spent in the erection partially or entirely of 43 new churches in poor and populous districts of the Metropolis. The sum of £17,950 had been appropriated for the endowment of five of these churches; £12,980 had been spent in the erection and improvement of parsonage houses, and £27,168 on the repair of the churches of the united benefices. There remained a sum of £4,400 which the Commissioners were obliged to keep in hand for the present to meet certain contingencies. Their Lordships would, with these facts before them, see what the meaning of the Act of 1860 was, and understand what had been done. Numerous scattered populations existed around London without churches at all. The difficulty of providing them with churches was enormous. The want was partially met by what was known as the Bishop of London's Fund, which was started 23 years ago, by private munificence, and by the sale of the sites of churches under the Act of 1860; but they were still short of churches and were still unable to keep pace with the growing population. The rate of growth of the population in the Metropolis was 45,000 a-year, a little more than the total number of inhabitants in the City of Exeter. They sought for money in all directions in order to provide churches; but even with the £250,000 derived from the sale of 11 City churches, they were unable to do the work. Was this work now to be suddenly cut short? Was it consistent with their duty to the people that in order to indulge a very respectable, a very honourable sentiment, they should refuse the means that had been hitherto employed for providing places of worship for the people? He would give the House a few instances of what had been done. The parish of St. Martin Outwich contained a population of 421 souls, although it was united with the neighbouring parish. The church was sold for the sum of £37,631, out of which the Commissioners provided, at a cost of £24,138, churches for the new district of Holy Trinity, Dalston; Christ Church, Stepney; and St. Peter's, Limehouse, the populations being respectively, 7,332, 8,186, and 10,000. The church of St. Helen, Bishopsgate, was also repaired, at a cost of £3,000, and a sum of £8,000 invested in Consols to meet certain annuities would be available at a subsequent date for church building. All the people in the parishes he had mentioned had been provided with places of worship by the sacrifice of a church of the parish in which there was not 400, and which by union with an adjoining parish only amounted to 420. The church of St. Benet, Gracechurch, was sold for £23,894. The population of that parish and of another with which it was united amounted to 481. Out of the proceeds of the sale the Commissioners erected, at a cost of £7,257, a new church for St. Peter's, Stepney, with a population of 9,448 souls, and provided £9,000 as an endowment; £4,000 was appropriated to the improvement and enlargement of All Souls', Holloway, and £1,500 was spent on parsonage-houses for the benefice. If it had been possible to provide for all the religious wants of the Metropolis without touching these churches he should have been glad, although it must be remembered that very fierce attacks had been made upon the Church for retaining such a valuable mass of property as the City churches locked up in a useless form. The population in many of the City parishes was almost nominal. There was, for instance, a church in Thames Street with a population of 92, another in Wood Street with a population of 84, and there was St. Alphage, London Wall, with a population of 45; it was only right, therefore, that the churches should go whither the population had gone. He met the objection of the noble Earl that these City churches ought not to be touched because they had been consecrated to God, by pointing out that there were many cases in the Old Testament of land and other things which had been given to God being redeemed to secular uses. Although he admitted that consecration was a very solemn thing, and that it ought only to be set aside by Act of Parliament, yet he doubted whether any part of Europe was under so strict a law in this respect as the noble Lord proposed to enact for this country. He was certain that the Roman Catholic Church permitted consecrated lands and buildings to be redeemed to secular uses, and it would be contrary to the character of the Church of England to lay down a hard-and-fast line that would prevent the exchange of consecrated property for that in which the service of God could be better and more appropriately conducted. He thought that the argument of the noble Lord with regard to the removal of the dead necessitated by these exchanges was of far more force than that which related to consecration; nevertheless, where such removals had hitherto been effected every proper precaution had been taken to insure decency. With regard to the sanitary question raised by the noble Earl, he wished to point out that no evil results had followed the removal of the dead in the case of the 11 City churches which had already been removed. It was absurd to object to the sale of the sites of these churches on the pretence that they would afford open spaces in the heart of the City, inasmuch as the sites of the 10 churches already removed—he had not the measurement of the 11th—did not form an aggregate space of three-quarters of an acre, and it was not to be supposed that such an area cut up into 10 small pieces would be any very perceptible addition to the open spaces of the City. He was fully aware of the objection there was to a non-resident clergy. No one regretted this in the case of the City churches more than he did; but it was due to the difficulty and, in many cases, absolute impossibility of obtaining parsonage-houses. The importance they attached to having a resident clergy was proved by the provision they had made with reference to the new churches in this respect. He fully admitted that the sentiment which had been displayed by the noble Earl was a very proper one; but he thought that it should not be allowed to override such considerations as those which he had stated. If they were to override those considerations, he put it to the House that if Parliament was in all cases to stop the removal of a church on the ground that it had been given to God, they must apply the same rule whenever a new street or a new railway were made in a town, and it was proposed to remove a church for such an improvement. They must resolutely put a stop to every improvement, either in London or any other large city, wherever it interfered with consecrated ground, and still more if it interfered with a burial ground. He knew that local improvements involving operations of that kind had been made in different places; and the alleged scandal in the present case therefore appeared to be not that they were removing churches or the dead, because they did that for secular purposes, but that they were doing it in the service of God. But if the convenience of mankind and the ordinary improvement of cities were sufficient to justify such things, far more so were the spiritual needs of the large population with which they had to deal; and he trusted that the House would not put a stop to a work which was doing God service to such a degree as he was constantly a witness of wherever he went in the Metropolis. As he went from church to church he found an active clergy devoting themselves with all their strength to the good of the population among whom they lived. Only yesterday he was at an 8 o'clock evening service in a church far in the East which was provided by such means as those. He saw a large and earnest congregation with a clergyman who was evidently carrying his people with him, and he thought that such a work as that which was now going on at all times ought not to be checked. Therefore, while fully admitting the force of the sentiments expressed by the noble Earl, he said that they ought to be limited by the consideration of what was best for God's service and the good of mankind.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now,") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord Bishop of London.*)

THE EARL OF POWIS was understood to say that the Act of 1860 dealing with that subject was the result of a careful and well-considered compromise, and he did not think that the noble Earl had made out a case to show that it was now necessary to interfere with the arrangement then made.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, he felt very strongly the force of the arguments against disturbing the remains of the dead or interfering with buildings which had been so long consecrated, and he owned that for a very long time those sentiments had prevailed with him; but when he looked at the spiritual necessities of the neighbourhood of London, which were so constantly multiplying, he was not able to maintain his sentiment against his sense of those necessities. He desired to see all that was possible done to restore the use of those ancient churches, and to bring their clergy near to them and congregations within them. But when all was done that could be done, there would remain many churches which had little practical use. They ought not to be misled by the speech of the noble Earl as to imaginable uses to which the relinquished sites of churches and churchyards might be put. It was only in one sense they were parted with when the worth of them was applied to the noblest and holiest uses. When they saw that the population of London was increasing at the rate of 40,000 or 50,000 a-year, they must ask themselves whether sums could be raised by gift or in any way by which the spiritual needs of those people could be adequately met and the services of the Church provided for them; and even if such could be raised—as they knew they could not—they needed to be spent in still further increasing the spiritual ministrations required for that population. But at present the very existence of those churches, with the immense wealth attached to them so unserviceably and uselessly, was an actual hindrance in men's mouths to the progress of church extension, and would remain so, while their sale would enable thousands to be provided with religious services where but scores were so provided for before. The utmost care ought indeed to be taken in making the choice of those to be removed, and further in dealing with the buildings and with the ground; but he could not agree with the noble Earl that every parting with things that had been given to God was unknown to the Church. The term desecrate was corruptly used in the sense of profaning; but the word *desecrare* was technically parallel to the word *consecrare*, and meant to remove the sacred character attached to a thing. In old times some of the most touching and most striking incidents in Church history was the way in which great famines and pestilences were met. It would be within the recollection of their Lordships how the most precious treasures of the Church—even chalices which had held the consecrated element—had been sold in order that the proceeds might be distributed among the poor. He thought they would not dispute that this was a holy use to which jewels could be put. If they looked at the object with which the pious founders of old days granted these gifts, surely it would be acknowledged that in the churches already removed, seed had been sown which had wonderfully increased and grown, and was now, through that removal, bearing fruit to man and to God thirty-fold and even sixty-fold.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he did not propose to go to a division after what had been stated by the most rev. Prelate. At the same time, he was bound to say, with reference to the statement that the new churches were well attended, that he was credibly informed that many of the new churches were not so well attended as those which had been pulled down. The people of the City of London thought it a hardship that they should be called upon to supply this spiritual destitution of others by the sacrifice of their own churches. They considered it a system of robbing Peter to pay Paul; and they naturally asked whether the charity of this great country was not sufficient to supply the spiritual destitution without pulling down the ancient houses of God.

On Question, That ("now") stand part of the Motion?

Resolved in the *negative.*

Amendment *agreed to.*

Bill to be read 2ª *this day six months.*

INDIA—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

LORD FITZGERALD, in moving for—

> "A Return of the taxes and duties raised or levied on the administration of justice in India during the year 1885, whether by stamps, ad valorem duties, or otherwise, under the Act of the Governor General of India in Council in 1870, or any of the Acts referred to therein or otherwise; and that the subject of the taxation of justice in India may be referred to the Select Committee on the operation of the Act for the better government of India (1858), and certain other Acts relating to India,"

said, that this was a matter of considerable importance, affecting, as it did, the welfare of the inhabitants of India, representing a population of 250,000,000 persons. The matter might appear to be a very small one in the eyes of their Lordships; but he could assure them that it was of very great interest to the Indian people. He was impelled to bring forward this Motion by a sense of public duty; and he would endeavour to explain why he had taken the subject up. He was a Member of the Indian Committee which sat in 1853, and to whose labours they were indebted for the Government of India Bill of 1858. While sitting on that Committee his attention had naturally been directed to three subjects—the administration of justice in India, the judicial appointments, and the taxation of justice in India. Petitions were presented to the Committee from Indian subjects relating to the taxation of justice. The following was an extract from one of the many Petitions presented:—

> "Your petitioners have to complain of a heavy taxation on all law proceedings by means of using stamped paper rising from 2*s.* to £200 on plaints and petitions alone, and which waylay the suitor at every subsequent step. 'Where is your stamped paper?' asks the Judge; if not produced he is obliged to stop the pleader and the suit. An error in the stamp is often irremediable, and the constant cause of a failure of justice."

Pestonjee, a leading Indian witness before the Committee of 1853, in giving his evidence, said—

> "I have another grievance to mention. Parties engaged in litigation are obliged to undergo very heavy taxation for stamped paper; the revenue from this is very large. Every plaint and every petition to either Court of Appeal must be written on stamped paper from one to 2,000 rupees, according to a certain scale. In addition, all supplementary sheets, all pleadings, exhibits, and all papers and documents relating in any manner to the suit are not received unless on stamped paper. It sometimes rises to 32 per cent."

All economic writers agreed that—

> "The worst of all taxation is that on the administration of justice. It acted as a 'prohibition' and deprived man of everything by depriving him of justice. By means of this taxation the poor—that is, the bulk of the community, and especially the oppressed—were put out of the protection of the law."

The proceedings of the Committee of 1853 terminated with the great Constitutional Act of 1858, which swept away the Board of Control and substituted for it a Government of the Queen and the present Government of India. Two years afterwards he ceased to be a Member of Parliament; but, returning to London 22 years after, it was his privilege to become a Member of the Privy Council. While sitting as a Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, he found that many appeals from India were brought under the notice of Her Majesty. He returned to the questions which had interested him 20 years before, and with reference to the judicial appointments he found a wonderful improvement had taken place. Great progress had been made in India during that period in reference to the appointment of the Judges and the administration of the law. It was one of the greatest blessings to the Indian people that now they had a pure administration of justice, under Judges who might be thoroughly trusted. There existed among the Indian population the utmost confidence in the administration of justice; but while he found this improvement had taken place in the interval, he also found that nothing had been done potentially to reduce the amount of taxation on the administration of justice. There were general Indian Stamp Acts passed prior to 1870; but they culminated in the Court Fees Act of 1870, passed by the Governor General in Council during the time of Lord Mayo. That Act was a regular sweep-net, from which there was no exception and no escape. It extended to the whole of British India, and to all Courts, great and small, including the Small Debts Courts in the Presidency towns. By Schedule 1 of that Act the fee on the initiation of the suit advanced on a graduated scale from a suit where the value of the subject of litigation did not exceed five rupees—which was taxed at eight annas—up to an initiatory tax of 3,000 rupees—that was to say, £300)—according to the value of the matter in controversy. This was only the initiatory tax. Among the suits specified was one to recover possession of a wife. Then there were complicated and vexatious provisions for ascertaining the value of the subject of litigation. Every step in the cause was subject to a fee or tax. The defendant had his share to pay as well as the plaintiff. There were fresh taxes when the case was moved to the District Court of Appeal and to the Supreme Court. From the Parliamentary Abstract of 1877-8 he gathered that the receipts under the head of law and justice in India amounted in that year to £813,221. Stamps yielded £2,993,483, the greater part of which, according to a note by the compiler of the Abstract, was derived from fees on litigation. The expenditure on law and justice, on the other hand, was £3,555,000. The accounts for 1882-3 showed that the receipts for law and justice were £657,000, and for stamps £3,380,000, while the expenditure was £3,255,000. In 1883-4, again, the sale of Court fee stamps yielded £2,416,825. Probably the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India would tell their Lordships that the expenditure on justice in India was not, after all, more than the receipts, and that the charges, large though they might be, were not more than the people were apparently prepared to pay. But that was no answer at all; nor was it an answer to say that taxation on justice tended to prevent litigation. He had always looked upon the noble Earl as a sound economist, and he would doubtless remember the doctrine laid down by Bentham on this subject, to the effect that "nothing can be worse than the taxation of justice." Expensive law deprived the poor man of his rights, it did not check litigation, and left a power of oppression in the hands of the rich. Justice was taxed in India in a way that would not be tolerated in this country; and his desire was to call attention to the grievous injustice inflicted upon the millions of India in this matter, in the hope that some means might be devised to mitigate a great and crying evil.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return of the taxes and duties raised or levied on the administration of justice in India during the year 1885, whether by stamps, ad valorem duties, or otherwise, under the Act of the Governor General of India in Council in 1870, or any of the Acts referred to therein, or otherwise; and that the subject of the taxation of justice in India be referred to the Select Committee on the operation of the Act for the better government of India (1858), and certain other Acts relating to India."—(*The Lord Fitzgerald.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Earl of KIMBERLEY) said, the noble and learned Lord had brought under the consideration of the House a subject of very great importance; and no one was better qualified to explain it in all its details. It was, at the same time, a subject of extremely technical nature; and he did not propose to follow the noble and learned Lord through the details which he had placed so clearly before the House. He would, first of all, observe that his noble and learned Friend had been good enough to credit him with being a sound economist; and the quotation from Bentham, no doubt, went to show that justice should be made cheap. Notwithstanding the great authority of Bentham, however, one had yet to learn that justice was extremely cheap in England. In India, as his noble and learned Friend rather admitted, there was an extreme desire for litigation; and it was certain, at all events, that the fees which had been levied had not stopped litigation. Whether these fees had given too great an advantage to the rich he was not prepared to say; but that litigation went on in India on a very large scale was apparent to everyone. Undoubtedly the matter required attention; and complaints had been made that the fees were too high, and these complaints had been seconded by persons in authority. Sir Richard Garth, the Chief Justice of the High Court, Calcutta, had drawn attention to the subject in an interesting memorandum. The Viceroy and a Committee of the Legislative Council were now specially dealing with the question; and as long ago as 1881 a Bill was brought in by the Council which, though it was originally of a financial character, had led to an examination of the whole question. In 1884 a Circular was sent round to all the Courts in India requesting information. There was a strong opinion in favour of revision of the institution fees; but, at the same time, it was impossible for Governments to leave finance out of sight. India was just now under great financial pressure, and it was absolutely necessary to consider the question, not merely with reference to the particular tax or fee, but to the whole financial position of the country. The Viceroy and the Government were desirous of removing any grievance which might be found to exist. As the question was of an extremely technical character, and was already in the proper hands for its investigation, he would appeal to his noble and learned Friend to withdraw his Motion. He deprecated his noble and learned Friend's proposal to refer this question to the Committee on Indian affairs which was about to sit. That Committee would not be precluded from inquiring into it. But, looking to the technical character of the matters involved, the Committee probably would not think it desirable to deal with them. He hoped, therefore, that his noble and learned Friend would be content with his assurance that the subject should receive the careful consideration of the Government, with a view to the redress of any grievances which might be proved to exist. With regard to the Return asked for by his noble and learned Friend, he might inform him that in the finance and revenue accounts of the Government of India a general statement would be found which would probably answer his noble and learned Friend's purpose. The Return asked for could not be obtained for a considerable time, and would involve a rather heavy expense, which he did not think ought to be incurred.

In answer to Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY,

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that if the Committee should think fit to inquire into the subject, all the information in the power of the Government would be afforded.

LORD FITZGERALD said, that as he was satisfied with the assurances that had been given him by his noble Friend the Secretary of State for India that the question was under consideration, he had no objection to withdraw his Motion. But, in doing so, he must point out to their Lordships that the taxation of justice in India was tenfold what it was in England.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

DISTURBANCES IN THE METROPOLIS —THE DUTIES OF SOLDIERS.

OBSERVATIONS.

LORD DE ROS, in rising to call attention to the uncertainty which existed as to what was expected of the military during mob riots in the Metropolis, in order to have their duties more clearly defined, said, that when the subject was under discussion the other evening in that House divergent views had been expressed by noble and learned Lords, and views which had not been generally accepted by officers in the Army. The Queen's Regulations said that the troops were not to be called out, except upon the request of the magistrates in writing, or upon occasion of great and sudden emergency. In case they were called out and loss of life should ensue in consequence of orders being given to fire if the troops were Infantry, or to charge where they were Cavalry, the question arose who was to decide whether the action was justified. The only tribunal he could think of was a jury who might be empannelled to try the officer for his life who had given the order. An officer in such circumstances would be placed in a very awkward position, and one in which he ought not to be placed. The officer would practically have a rope round his neck, as if he acted precipitately he would be exposed to a trial by jury, and if he thought the circumstances did not justify his taking action he would be liable to be tried by a court martial for neglect of duty. He held that such a state of uncertainty ought no longer to be allowed to exist. When an officer was engaged in foreign war it was his duty to get as many of the enemy killed as he could, whereas in a civil disturbance he was bound to spare human life as much as he could. There was a well-known case in the year 1852 when soldiers were employed to escort voters to the poll. Disturbances arose and the soldiers fired without the command of their superior officer. Some lives were lost, and the men were put on their trial; but the Grand Jury threw out the bill on the ground that the men were acting in defence of their lives. His own opinion was that the military ought not to be called out in aid of the civil power, except in the most extreme cases and in opposition to an armed mob, and should always be accompanied by a magistrate. He trusted that these few remarks might lead to a clearer definition of what was required of military officers when they were called out to aid the civil power.

LORD HALSBURY said, he wished to point out the mistake of the noble Lord in regarding as a proposition of law what was simply advice as to the most prudent course to adopt. For instance, it was said that soldiers should not be called out, except in extreme cases. But the difficulty was that a case would arise when neither a magistrate nor a military officer was present. Since the discussion which took place on this subject the other evening he had perused the Judgment delivered by Lord Chief Justice Mansfield in the Exchequer Chambers. His Lordship said—

> "Since much has been said about soldiers, I will correct a strange mistaken notion which has got abroad that because men are soldiers they cease to be citizens. A soldier is gifted with all the rights of others, and is bound to all the duties of other citizens, and he is as much bound to prevent a breach of the peace or a felony as any other citizen. In 1780 this mistake extended to an alarming degree. Soldiers with arms in their hands stood by and saw felonies committed, houses burnt and pulled down before their eyes by persons whom they might lawfully have put to death if they could not otherwise prevent them, without interfering, some because they had no commanding officer to give them the command, and some because there was no justice of the peace with them. It is the more extraordinary, because formerly the *posse comitatus* which was the strength to prevent felonies must in a great proportion have consisted of military tenants who held lands by the tenure of military service. If it is necessary for the purpose of preventing mischief or for the execution of the law, it is not only the right of soldiers, but it is their duty to exert themselves in assisting the execution of legal process or to prevent any crime or mischief being committed."

That which the noble Lord opposite desired to lay down as a proposition of the law was impossible in the very nature of the case. It was a question as to what was necessary and appropriate violence to meet violence. The resistance must be made appropriate to the occasion, and to the degree and extent of the force against which it was to be used. No absolute rule could be laid down, because the thing must depend upon the degree of the necessity and the urgency of the occasion. He did not believe that on the former occasion there was any real difference of opinion between his noble and learned Friends, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Bramwell, and himself, on the subject.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH said, he thought that military officers had a considerable grievance in this matter, and ought to have some decisive legal opinion upon which they might rely in justification of their action when called upon, and the more so since the opinion of the Attorney General of the day, given in 1801, had until recently continued in the Queen's Regulations; but, in common with the modern childish practice, had been removed from Her Majesty's Regulations without being replaced by any similar authority of the present time for the guidance of officers placed in trying and difficult positions at a time of sudden tumult.

LORD FITZGERALD said, the true answer to give to the noble Lord who had introduced the subject was to refer him to the Queen's Regulations, which set forth the duties of soldiers when called out in aid of the civil power. It was almost impossible for either officers or soldiers to err as long as those Regulations were followed. The Queen's Regulations laid down the duty of military men in the event of riots; but it should be remembered that they did not supersede the Common Law, and it was to that they must look to find what the soldier's duty really was. A soldier was bound by military law to act under the orders of his officer; but if the officer gave an unwise order, or one that he ought not to have given, and that could not be justified, the soldier, if he acted under it, was liable to the Civil Tribunals, and might be brought to justice. On the other hand, the soldier, had he refused to obey the orders of his officer, might be tried by court martial and punished. That was not a pleasant position for the soldier. Chief Justice Tindal, at the the trials following the Bristol riots, charged the Grand Jury as follows. He said—

> "By the common law every private person may lawfully endeavour on his own authority and without any warrant or sanction of a magistrate, to suppress a riot. He may disperse or assist in dispersing, those who are assembled. He may stay those who are engaged in it from executing their purpose; he may stop or prevent others from joining in the riot; and not only has he authority, but it is his bounden duty as a good subject to perform this to the utmost of his ability. If the riot be general and dangerous he may arm himself to keep the peace. Such was the opinions of all the Judges of England in the time of Queen Elizabeth; but they added that it would be more discreet to be assistant to the justices in doing this. . . . . But if the occasion demands immediate action and no opportunity is given for procuring the advice or sanction of a magistrate it is the duty of every subject to act for himself and on his own responsibility in suppressing a riotous or tumultous assembly, and he may be assured that whatever is honestly done by him in the execution of that object will be supported and justified by the common law."

In 1801 Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough, when Attorney General, gave an opinion on this subject, in which he said—

> "However, it is by all means desirable to procure a justice of the peace to attend, and for the military to act under his immediate orders, when such attendance and the sanction of such orders can be obtained, as it not only prevents any disposition to unnecessary violence on the part of those who act in repelling the tumult, but it induces also, from the known authority of such magistrates a more ready submission on the part of the rioters. But, still, in cases of great and sudden emergency the military, as well as all other individuals, may act without their presence, or without the presence of any peace officer whatsoever."

In the absence of his officers and in the absence of a magistrate a soldier was bound in a sudden emergency to act as an ordinary citizen in suppressing riot. When a magistrate was present, and a soldier acted in execution of the orders of his Commanding Officer he was indemnified by statute. This was the state of the law, and in his opinion it would be better to leave things as they were rather than to disturb and upset a fabric which had been built up in the course of generations, and was well understood.

LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA observed, that the House was exceedingly indebted to the noble Lord who had introduced this subject, because the soldier required, and ought to have, the most precise instructions in the civil law, which was superior to the military law under which he served. Soldiers were informed that in whatever they did honestly in the *bonâ fide* belief that they were discharging their duty they would receive the utmost consideration; but if a soldier were put upon his trial by the civil power in respect of any act done by him, the Judge would have to be guided by the evidence and could show him no consideration whatever. The position of a soldier, therefore, under existing circumstances was very difficult. If he were attacked while on sentry duty by several people and he had the misfortune to kill one in defending his post he might find himself indicted for manslaughter. Thus he might suffer at the hands of the civil power for merely carrying out the orders of his superior officers. Not very long ago a sentry, having challenged a man who attempted to pass his post in the night, killed him and a verdict of "Manslaughter" was brought in against him. He thought, therefore, that the duties of soldiers in all circumstances ought to be very distinctly defined.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, he was afraid that the noble Lord who had brought forward this subject had not obtained any very useful information, or derived any complete comfort or satisfaction, from the variety of views that had been expressed on this question by the different lawyers who had taken part in the discussion. He, however, did not think that there was so very much difference of opinion among them as regarded the law—it was the particular facts of each case that struck legal minds differently. But, however that might be, it could not be denied that officers and soldiers acted to a certain extent at their peril, or refrained from acting at their peril; and he quite agreed that it was desirable to make that peril as slight as possible. He did not think it was possible to remove that peril altogether, but, at the same time, he thought that when the matter was looked at from a practical point of view that peril would be reduced to a minimum. When they discussed the question theoretically it was possible to conceive all manner of cases in which a soldier might incur danger, which, however, never arose in actual practice. In looking at this question it could not be too strictly borne in mind that the duty of keeping the peace and of preventing riots rested primarily upon the civil force of the country acting under the civil power, and it was more important to bear that in mind now than ever it was. In former times it had been the practice to call in the aid of the military on frequent occasions; but at the present day, when the organization of the civil force had been carried to so high a point of efficiency, it was very seldom that recourse need be had to the military to maintain order. There were, however, occasions when the civil power might properly call in the aid of the military force, and that aid should be given when regularly called for by the civil power. There might be cases in which it would become the duty of the military to give their aid to the civil power without its being regurlarly called for, and with regard to such cases it was impossible for any hard-and-fast rule without exceptions to be laid down. In general practice common sense would tell the military man when it was his obvious duty to take action without waiting for the authority of the civil power. But these cases would be very rare. It was impossible to define what a great emergency was, and it must be left to the military authorities to take upon themselves the responsibility of acting in each particular case. For instance, a soldier who saw a policeman being trampled to death by a riotous crowd would be justified in interfering for the protection of the policeman without waiting to be called upon by the civil power to take action. If the military acted on those lines he did not think that they would be likely to go wrong, or that they would often find themselves placed in positions of danger or difficulty. Of course, difficulties might arise in certain cases as to the amount of force which it was justifiable to use—thus, more force might lawfully be used in arresting a man who was committing a felony than one who was merely committing a misdemeanour, and these were legal distinctions which a soldier was not expected to understand. The case he had put was that of a soldier acting, not in his military capacity, but rather in that of an ordinary citizen, and he did not think that the instinct and judgment of a soldier was likely to be worse than that of any other man. He had endeavoured to place this matter before the House as free as possible from legal technicalities. The great thing to be borne in mind being that the duty of keeping the peace lay primarily upon the civil force, that the military were only to be called for in the regular way by the civil power, and, the other cases being exceptional, trust must be placed in the good sense and the good faith of the military to act properly.

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE said, that, as far as he understood, the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack had said that the Queen's Regulations could not override the law. Nobody ever imagined that they could. But what military men wanted to see was that what was contained in the Queen's Regulations was really the law of the land. That was the point which, with all respect for the observations made by the noble and learned Lord, he had not been quite able to make out. It was laid down in the Queen's Regulations that wherever it was possible a magistrate was to attend. He understood from his noble and learned Friend that it was not necessary to read the Riot Act, but he himself believed that it was necessary. He did not pretend to say that it would be necessary in the case of an attack, because, if troops were attacked, they had a right to defend themselves, just as any one of their Lordships, if attacked, had a right to defend himself. And, if in doing so they had the misfortune to kill their adversary, they would, of course, be acquitted. The troops, if attacked as a body, would defend themselves as individual citizens. But he was under the impression that if the troops were called out to support the civil power, and the civil power found themselves no longer in a position to hold their own, or to carry out the necessary requirements of the law, then the Riot Act ought to be read before the troops were allowed to act. And yet after what had been said that night there was some doubt whether that was so or not. There ought to be no such doubt. He concurred with the Lord Chancellor that there must be great exceptions to ordinary proceedings. There were instances in everyday life which no one could foresee. A commotion might suddenly arise when there was no idea that anything was going to happen. In these cases, of course, they ought not to wait for the Riot Act to be read, but to act on the spur of the moment on their own responsibility. But the ordinary rules laid down in the Queen's Regulations did not make it at all as clear as he should like to see, and as every officer and man would like to see, how and in what circumstances he was to do certain things. He thought that it would be a very desirable thing that, as far as possible, the Queen's Regulations should be made absolutely compatible with the ordinary and existing law of the land. It would be very desirable, after the discussion which had taken place, to put a case before the Government in order to ascertain the law on the subject, with a view to have the Queen's Regulations and the ordinary law so clearly going together that there could be no mistake or misunderstanding as to how, when, and in what spirit the troops ought to act when called upon to support the civil power.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, there was no doubt that an ordinary tumultuous assembly could not properly be dispersed by the military force until after the Riot Act had been read, because after that Act had been read it then became a felony to remain after being told to disperse; and the troops might use all the force that was legitimate for the purpose of preventing felony. But in the case of a mere ordinary tumultuous assembly, not meeting for felonious purposes, it was obvious that they would not be justified in resorting to the force that might be used in the case of felony.

BURGH POLICE AND HEALTH (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*The Earl of Elgin.*)

(NO. 28.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Elgin.*)

LORD BALFOUR thought it necessary to say a word or two with regard to this Bill. Their Lordships were aware, when the Bill was before the House last year, he had called attention to some of the provisions contained in it. It came before the House last Session, and ultimately it was referred to a Select Committee of their Lordships. As he believed he was the only Member of that Committee present, it was necessary to say a few words in regard to its procedure. They went through the Bill, which was a large and a long one, very carefully—first with written statements before them, and then called for oral evidence on such points as seemed necessary. Ultimately they went through the Bill again, making amendments. He ventured to say that, as this Bill was introduced in almost exactly the same state as it left the Committee last year, their Lordships might safely pass it, and let it go to the House of Commons. He did not mean to say that, as it stood, it was a perfect Bill; he thought there were some points in it open to grave objection. But it seemed to him that those who were best entitled to speak for the inhabitants of the burghs to which it referred were practically unanimous that some such Bill was required. It was an attempt to codify the law which had reference to police matters; and although he and several of the Lords who sat on the Committee thought that any attempt to codify the Law of Burghs of all sizes in Scotland on all points was attempting too much, and that it would be much better to leave the larger towns and cities to their own Private Acts, and to attempt a codification of the law only for those smaller burghs which were more numerous throughout the country, he was not prepared to force his opinion upon the House or those chiefly concerned; and in all the circumstances, as the Bill had been carefully considered, he thought it would probably be the wisest course that it should go as soon as possible to the other House of Parliament, and be dealt with there. There were some points to which he should like to draw attention if the Bill reached the Committee stage. If the noble Lord who had charge of the Bill would allow him to confer with him before that time, probably 10 or 14 days before taking the Committee stage, he thought they should be able to arrive at a pretty general agreement with regard to most of the provisions contained in the Bill. If the noble Lord would put off the Committee stage, as he had suggested, that would give time for full consideration to the various parties interested in Scotland.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he would confine his observations to one portion of the Bill—that referring to the police. Now, with respect to that, both the last and the present Government had given a pledge to bring in a Bill for the establishment of local government. The present Government he might describe, in the language of Mr. Chamberlain, as a "stop-gap Government;" but whether that were so or not, the present Government, as well as the last, were under a pledge to bring forward this Session a Bill to establish Local Government Boards. The provisions of this Bill for placing the police under the different Municipal Authorities in Scotland would naturally be extended to the new Local Government Boards. It would be well, therefore, before passing those clauses in the third division of the Bill for the present Government to consider whether this was not now the time, rather than increase the number of local forces in the Kingdom, to establish one general Police Force of an Imperial nature. It was not by what had happened recently in the Metropolis, or in some other towns, that he made the suggestion but it certainly seemed to him that the Police Force, as at present constituted in Great Britain, might be made far more valuable. Their Lordships were aware that the Police Force was constituted half-a-century ago, when they were not acquainted with steam or electricity—or, at least, when steam was in its infancy. The result of those great discoveries brought us very much nearer to one another, and there was thus a necessity for a modification of the scheme of police. The Irish Police Force, for instance, was one of the finest Police Forces in the country, and that was principally because it was an Imperial Force, and not confined to one district. This Bill gave large powers in regard to the appointment and distribution of police in small burghal communities; and as they had the promise of a Bill somewhat of a similar nature dealing with all the rural districts of the country, he thought it would be well before passing this measure to give some further consideration to the matter of an Imperial Police.

THE EARL OF ELGIN said, he did not think it necessary to enter into any defence of the principles of a Bill which had already been confirmed by their Lordships. What had fallen from the noble Earl really touched the principle of the measure, and he could not agree to what his noble Friend had proposed. The noble Earl was in error in thinking that this Bill would increase the local Police Forces to any appreciable extent, for it was laid down in the Bill that no burgh which had less than 20 000 inhabitants should, after the passing of this Act, have a new separate system of police.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he did not say it would increase the number of police, but the number of jurisdictions.

THE EARL OF ELGIN said, the Bill would not increase the number of Police Forces. With regard to what had fallen from his noble Friend opposite, he thanked him for what he had said, because the Bill now presented to their Lordships was, as the noble Lord had stated, the Bill which came from the Select Committee last year. He believed there had never been any discussion upon it since it was presented to the House by the Select Committee; and, therefore, anyone who wished to discover what changes had been made by the Select Committee would have to compare it with the original Bill, which, in the case of a Bill of 550 clauses, would be a somewhat laborious task. It might, therefore, be necessary for some discussion to take place upon questions of detail in Committee. The Government proposed to give ample Notice of any Amendments which they might think necessary; and he should be very glad if his noble Friend opposite would confer with him as to anything which he wished to suggest. He would now propose that the Bill should at present be set down for this day week, not with the intention of taking it that day, but in order to fix a day for the Committee stage.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

IDIOTS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill for giving facilities for the care, education, and training of Idiots and Imbeciles—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1ª. (No. 46.)

House adjourned at half past Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 23*rd March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEES—Forestry, *appointed;* Ventilation of the House, *appointed* and *nominated.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [March 22] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolution* [March 22] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Army Annual * [150].

Second Reading—School Fees of Non-Paupers [114].

Committee—Copyhold Enfranchisement * [26]—R.P.

Committee — Report — Lunacy (Vacating of Seats) [85]; Marriages (Hours of Solemnisation) [62]; Consolidated Fund (No. 2).*

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1),* and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—COLLECTION OF RATES AT CREWKERNE.

MR. H. R. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that on 1st March Mr. Walter Mumford, tax collector and assistant overseer at Crewkerne, went to the house of Mr. R. Higdon, baker, of Crewkerne, to apply for the rates due for the current quarter, and, not finding Mr. Higdon at home, declined to allow the removal of one of several sacks of flour from the house until the rates were paid; whether Mr. Higdon, on being telegraphed for, returned home at considerable inconvenience and expense, and at once paid the rates; and, whether such a mode of collecting the rates is legal, and meets with the approval of the Local Government Board; and, if not, what compensation will be paid to Mr. Higdon, and to what authorities should application be made to bring the conduct of Mr. W. Mumford, who holds the offices of tax collector and assistant overseer at Crewkerne, under the notice of his superiors?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.): We have made inquiry respecting this matter. Mr. Mumford is the collector of Imperial taxes, as well as the collector of the poor rate. So far as regards taxes, the Board of Inland Revenue state that a collector deeming the duties in danger would be perfectly justified in distraining. The collector of poor rates has no such power, and Mr. Mumford denies that his action as to the flour had any reference to parochial rates. The sum necessary to pay both taxes and rates was borrowed from a neighbour by Mrs. Higdon, and the payment was made by her. The telegram was not sent to Mr. Higdon until some time after the payment had been made, and Mr. Mumford had left. Mr. Higdon did not therefore return home at considerable inconvenience and expense for the purpose of paying the rates. Upon the facts at present before the Board, they see no grounds for any claim for compensation by Mr. Higdon. As collector of taxes, Mr. Mumford is responsible to the District Commissioners of Taxes, by whom he was appointed; and, as to his office of assistant overseer, the inhabitants of the parish in vestry assembled can, if they think fit, determine his appointment. Any representations which Mr. Higdon may desire to make may be made to those authorities.

ARMY (IRELAND)—DEATH OF PRIVATE AHERNE AT BELFAST.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the morning of the 1st of January last, Patrick Aherne, a private in the Fusiliers, stationed at Belfast, was found at an early hour lying in the barrack square in a state of insensibility; whether his teeth had been kicked out, his lip split in two, his ribs broken, and his skull fractured; whether he was carried to the Barrack Hospital, and left there with his wounds undressed and unattended to, until inquiries were made, two days after the occurrence, by Head Constable Tilson and another police officer; whether these officials were informed that nothing unusual had taken place in the barracks, and whether they learned only on the 5th or 6th of the same month, from the undertaker's man, that a soldier (Aherne) had died from the effects of violence; whether it is a fact that no inquest was held, that the dying man's depositions were not taken, and that the civil authority was not called in; and, whether the resident magistrates failed to perform their duty in not causing an investigation to be held, and what account they give of the case, and their course in reference to it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that the story was rather a long one, but he would endeavour to make it as short as possible. At about half-past 2 o'clock on the morning of the 2nd of January last, Patrick Aherne was found in the barrack square, having received the injuries mentioned in the Question, except as to his skull, which was not fractured. He was carried to the barrack hospital, but the medical officer unfortunately was not sent for until 9 30 o'clock. For that delay the hospital sergeant appeared to have been responsible. It was a fact that in answer to an inquiry on the evening of the 2nd, the statement was made that "nothing unusual had taken place." On the 4th of January a military inquiry appeared to have been held. Several witnesses were examined, including Aherne himself, who was unable to identify his assailant, and no evidence could be obtained as to the person or persons who committed the assault. Aherne died on the 8th of January. Head Constable Tilson heard of the death from the undertaker, and then inquired at the barracks, where he was officially informed that the death had taken place. A Coroner's inquest was held on the 9th, which was attended by District Inspector Green, and medical evidence was taken. The District Inspector applied for an adjournment, and that adjournment the Coroner refused to grant. Several witnesses were examined, but no evidence was obtained as to who it was had committed the assault, and the jury ultimately found a verdict that death had been caused by injuries inflicted by some person or persons unknown. It was a fact, as stated in the Question, that Aherne's depositions were not taken, as the civil authorities had not been afforded an opportunity of doing so. The man was delirious from the 6th January. The Resident Magistrate subsequently held a private inquiry, to which he summoned all the witnesses who were supposed to know anything about the matter; but he could get no evidence to justify the prosecution of anyone. Having studied the full facts laid before him, he (Mr. John Morley) was bound to say that the course which the case appeared to have taken did not appear to have been satisfactory; but he had no reason to question the action of the civil authorities, who appeared to have done all in their power to clear up the case.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as this unfortunate soldier had contributed to the support of his widowed mother, having regard to that fact, the Government would give some compensation?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I was not aware of that circumstance.

HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS (SCOTLAND)—DISTRESS IN THE HEBRIDES.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Secretary for Scotland, Whether his attention has been drawn to distress in the Hebrides, and particularly on the estate of Kilmuir, in Skye; whether assistance in the form of seed, &c. has been asked for; and, what is intended to be done?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. TREVELYAN) (Hawick, &c.): I have received a Memorial from the district referred to, and at once communicated with the Board of Supervision. One of their officers is now in Skye, and will be directed to present me with a Report on the subject without delay. When I have received that Report I shall consider what can be done.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—RETURN OF SALARIES, &c., OF CHIEF OFFICERS.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will lay upon the Table a Return showing the names, ages, salaries, and emoluments of the chief officers of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland; the ages, salaries, and emoluments of the Inspectors of Lunatics in Ireland, together with the total number of lunatics to be inspected by them, and the number of institutions in which such lunatics are domiciled, and a similar Return for England; and, if he can state what are the existing guarantees or checks for the efficiency of such inspection or supervision in Ireland, seeing that the Inspectors, as Commissioners, are themselves the heads of the Lunacy Department in Ireland?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that in the admirable Report issued by the Inspectors of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland, in 1882, the hon. Member would find the information referred to in the first part of the Question. The number of inmates and a Return of the salaries, emoluments, &c., could be given if the hon. Member would move for it. There were no Commissioners of Lunacy in Ireland, the Inspectors being the persons responsible to the Government, to whom they report; the internal control of the asylums was in the hands of the local Boards of Governors. As to the question of management in England, he must refer the hon. Member to the Home Secretary.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES).

MR. YEO (Glamorgan, Gower) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether Her Majesty's Government, in coming to their decision with reference to Intermediate Education in Wales, has considered that in the last Session of Parliament the information contained in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales was deemed sufficient for the purpose of legislation on that subject; and, whether he will inform the House as to the reasons which have induced Her Majesty's Government to regard the information contained in the above Report as insufficient?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir LYON PLAYFAIR) (Leeds, S.): The Government last year introduced a Bill based on the Report of the Departmental Committee on Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales. Some of the provisions of that Bill did not meet with general support in the Principality. Since then the House has appointed a Select Committee to consider the working of the Endowed Schools Acts of 1869 and 1873. As the powers of these main Acts must be incorporated with any Welsh Bill, the Government have deemed it to be expedient to delay its introduction till they see the changes recommended by the Select Committee. If it reports sufficiently soon, the Government will lose no time in introducing a Bill dealing with intermediate education in Wales this Session.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—WICKLOW HARBOUR—THE BARONIAL GUARANTEE.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a passage in the Instructions issued by the Lord

Lieutenant for the Justices and Associated Cesspayers at Extraordinary Presentment Sessions of the county Wicklow, in 1880, in regard to the Baronial Guarantee for the repayment of the Loan for the construction of a harbour at Wicklow, viz.:—

> "The tax necessary for this purpose is divisible between landlord and tenant, like the Poor Rate, and is paid by the landlord exclusively in all holdings valued at and under four pounds a-year;"

whether it is true that the tenants have been paying the whole of the tax up to the present time; what steps, if any, were taken by the Grand Jury in making the presentments, to inform the people, either through their secretary, through the barony cess collectors, or by advertisement, of the nature of their rights; how many instalments, and to what amount, have already been repaid to the Commissioners of Public Works in respect of the Loan; and, what steps can the people take to get back the landlord's moiety?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that the presentment in this case had been made by the Justices and Associated Cesspayers at a special Presentment Sessions; and 100 copies of the Lord Lieutenant's instructions, containing the paragraph mentioned in the Question, were sent beforehand for their use. The presentment when made was forwarded to the Grand Jury, who, he was advised, had no power to review it; but, on the contrary, were bound to carry it out, which they did. He had no means of ascertaining the manner in which the tax had been divided as between landlords and tenants; but, as he had stated, the cesspayers were made aware of how it could be divided. Whether any of them had been paying more than their share, and, if so, whether they could recover, were questions on which they must be guided by their own legal advisers. The total Government Loan in this case was over £37,000, of which, so far, something over £3,000 had been repaid.

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—THE BENGAL CENTRAL RAILWAY COMPANY.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is the case that the Bengal Central Railway Company, finding that the Railway they made under a definite bargain was not a paying concern, have obtained a Government guarantee to set them up and restore the value of their shares; whether, following this example, the Rohilcund and Kumaon Railway Company, and other unpaying concerns, have applied for similar assistance; and, whether it is the intention of the Secretary of State for India to revive the practice under which Companies which succeed hold to their bargains, and those which do not pay manage, by putting pressure on the Indian authorities, to shift their losses on to the Indian taxpayer?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Bengal Central Railway Company having applied in June last for a continuance till June, 1885, of the advance by the Government of India of interest originally granted for five years, the Secretary of State in Council, after communicating with India, acceded to the application. A further application from the Company in July led to a further extension of interest till December, 1885; and a permanent guarantee of interest, under certain conditions, was agreed to between the Secretary of State in Council and the Company. A suggestion from the Rohilcund and Kumaon Railway Company that a similar agreement might be made with them has been referred to the Government of India for consideration. Although every case of this kind must be judged on its merits, my answer to the third Question of my hon. Friend as to the general policy of the Secretary of State in Council is certainly in the negative.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL gave Notice that at the earliest opportunity he would call attention to the facts mentioned in the Question, and would move a Resolution.

BURMAH—EXECUTION OF REBELS AND DACOITS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If particulars regarding the execution of rebels and Dacoits, in Upper Burmah, have been received; if he can say how many Burmese were shot or summarily executed; and, if her Majesty's Government are satisfied that those executions were necessary and justifiable, and that neither the civil nor the military officers put natives of the country to death for resisting the British forces in the annexation of the country?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): All the information at present in the possession of Her Majesty's Government was given in the Parliamentary Paper, Burmah No. 2 (1886), which was laid on the Table of the House on the 11th instant, and copies of which, it is hoped, will very soon be in the hands of hon. Members.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—SCHEMES OF ALLOTMENTS—LADY DODD'S CHARITY, ELLESBOROUGH, BUCKS.

Dr. FOSTER (Chester City) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the Charity Commissioners prepared and circulated, in August 1884, a draft scheme relating to Lady Isabella Dodd's Charity, in Ellesborough, Buckinghamshire, which omitted provisions for allotments; whether the Charity Commissioners have since inserted provisions for allotments therein, in accordance with section 14 of "The Allotments Extension Act, 1882;" whether the Charity Commissioners have omitted to insert provisions for allotments in certain schemes made by them after the passing of that Act, in relation to certain charities, part of the endowments of which consisted of land (other than buildings and the appurtenances of buildings); whether they have not, by such omission, disobeyed the Law; whether the Charity Commissioners have been asked to give a list of the Schemes in which such provisions have been omitted, so that their error might be remedied; whether they have refused that application; and, whether they will publish, or lay upon the Table of the House, such a list now?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir Lyon Playfair) (Leeds, S.): To the first four Questions I have to reply in the affirmative, with the addition that full explanations were given by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. E. Stanhope) in the House on the 4th and 11th of August last. It is true that he declined to publish a list of the schemes. Only 11 complete schemes which come under the Act of 1882 are in the list, and I will have pleasure in showing a list of them to the hon. Member, who can then consider whether he desires to move for them.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—PUBLIC SALE—THE QUARTERLY LISTS.

Mr. ARTHUR ACLAND (York, W.R., Rotherham) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in consideration of the difficulties experienced by many persons in various parts of the Kingdom in trying to obtain Government publications, arrangements can be made to provide at all the chief Post Offices the quarterly lists of Parliamentary Papers for consultation, together with printed forms (addressed to the Office for the sale of Parliamentary Papers) on which prepaid orders for Reports or other Papers may be made out?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): The Postmaster General is not prepared to recommend that postmasters should be supplied at the public expense with the quarterly lists of Parliamentary Papers published. If, however, the Queen's Printers will furnish them to the principal head post offices, and will provide forms for ordering copies of Parliamentary Papers, the Postmaster General will instruct postmasters to afford facilities for examination of the lists. Payment for such Papers as might be ordered from the publishers would have to be made by the ordinary methods.

LABORURERS (IRELAND) ACTS—LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN INNISHOWEN.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he would have any objection to lay upon the Table a complete copy of the Memorial presented to the Innishowen Board of Guardians on Monday the 8th instant, objecting to the erection of Labourers Cottages in the Innishowen Electoral Division?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that the Memorial in question had not yet been laid before the Local Government Board, and he could not yet say whether it could be laid on the Table.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS IN ROSCOMMON.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Postmaster General has received a memorial drawing attention to the very unsatisfactory postal arrangements between Ballygar and Roscommon, which seriously inconvenience the carrying on of a considerable trade between those and other towns; whether it is a fact that it occupies the same length of time for a letter posted in Roscommon to reach Ballygar, the distance being only seven miles, or for one posted in Mount Talbot to reach Ballygar, the distance being only one mile, as it does for a letter to reach London from those places; and, whether the memorial suggests practicable means by which the present state of things can be remedied?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, that the Memorial had been received as to the postal arrangements between Ballygar and Roscommon; but the Department had not yet had sufficient time to fully inquire into the matter.

POST OFFICE—REGISTERED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES.

Mr. DAVID SMITH (Brighton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there will be any objection to publish periodically a list of persons and firms who have registered telegraphic addresses at the General Post Office, together with the names or words thus registered, so as to save the public from the difficulty they at present find in ascertaining whether persons with whom they wish to communicate by telegraph have or have not a telegraphic address?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): There are, the Postmaster General tells me, several objections to the official publication of a list of registered telegraphic addresses, the chief among them being that inconvenience to the public would arise from messages being addressed to names which, although appearing in a periodical list, had ceased to be registered. Numerous alterations, I should explain, take place in the register every day, some names being altered and others withdrawn. I may add that certain persons strongly object to the publication of their registered addresses.

NAVY—PENSIONS FOR WIDOWS OF SEAMEN AND MARINES.

Captain PRICE (Devonport) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty intend to adopt the recommendations of the Duke of Edinburgh's Committee on Pensions for Widows of Seamen and Marines?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. Duff) (Banffshire): Yes, Sir; the Admiralty do intend substantially to adopt the Report of the Duke of Edinburgh's Committee.

POLICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—DISTURBANCE IN LEEDS.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the following account of the conduct of the Police in Leeds on Friday 19th instant:—

> "Yesterday afternoon a scene of an unusual and not very creditable character took place in Briggate, the principal street of Leeds. The management of the Grand Theatre had issued placards 'to the unemployed,' offering work to two hundred men. The men were to apply at the stage door of the theatre at half-past twelve, and some hundreds congregated in Harrison Street. Some of the theatre officials, it is understood, became alarmed at the language used by some of the men who were rejected, and word was sent to the Police Station that a riot was in progress. A few minutes later, while the crowd was peaceable and orderly, half a dozen policemen, mounted on horses from the Fire Brigade Station, dashed along Briggate, and, turning into Harrison Street, rode down upon the closely-packed mass outside the theatre door. A scene of great confusion and terror ensued, the people flying in all directions to escape the horses' hoofs, while those who attained places of safety hooted at the Police. The latter, turning, rode out again into Briggate, which was now full of excited spectators, and these latter, to their dismay, were then charged by the horsemen, who dashed along the pavements, driving the unfortunate bystanders and pedestrians into shops, &c. and pursuing them up the side streets they sought refuge in. Returning into the main street, now crowded, they dashed repeatedly along the pavements and road, one man even kicking at the crowd as he dashed by them. An order was given for the men to confine themselves to the road, and to behave with more moderation, and, after some time, the excitement abated, and in an hour or so the crowd dispered;"

and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): The Question of the hon. Member does not disclose in what periodical or publication this appeared. If he will tell me later on I will make inquiries.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: It appeared in *The Daily News* of last Saturday.

NAVY—ENGINE-ROOM ARTIFICERS.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT (Rochester) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will take into consideration the case of the Engine Room Artificers of the Royal Navy, with a view to an increase of pension, and to an amelioration of their position after eight years' service, having regard to the fact that their present rate of pension and retiring status are no higher than those of officers junior to them, as, for instance, First Class Petty Officers, whose daily pay during their service is less than half their own?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): The Admiralty have no intention of increasing the pay or pension of the engine-room artificers. Their pay ranges from £100 to £136 a-year, and after 22 years' service a man may, at the age of 43, retire with a pension of £54 a-year, and a gratuity for good conduct of £20. They have the great advantage, both as regards pay and pension, of entering the Service as chief petty officers—a rank attained in other ratings only after many years' service.

ARMY—CAVALRY TROOP OFFICERS.

LORD ERNEST HAMILTON (Tyrone, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government will consider the advisability of increasing the contingent allowance of Cavalry troop officers to such a sum as will enable them to meet the expenses connected with troop management which are intended to be defrayed out of that fund, without drawing on their private resources?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE) (Leeds, W.): The experience of the War Office is that the allowance made to Cavalry troop officers is, as a rule, sufficient to meet necessary expenditure; but in special cases, where, from peculiar circumstances, it is found inadequate, provision is made for payment by the public of excess expenditure.

COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH ITALY—ITALIAN SHIPPING BOUNTIES ACT.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What will be the combined effect upon British shipping of Article 8 of the Commercial Treaty between this Country and Italy, dated the 15th June 1883, which declares that the coasting trade is excepted from the provisions of the present treaty, and Article 15 of the Shipping Bounties Act of the Italian Parliament, which declares that Italian coasting trade is reserved to national vessels, but that the Government may permit foreign vessels to engage in the coasting trade for five years from the date of the present Law, on terms of complete reciprocity; whether a British vessel calling at more than two places on the Italian coast in one voyage is deemed to be engaged in the coasting trade; whether the result will be in the near future to destroy the trade at present carried on in British vessels of large tonnage which generally require to call at several ports to make up a cargo; and, whether any negotiations are pending with the Italian Government with reference to the effect of the Italian Bounty Act on British shipping?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The Italian Government stipulated that the coasting trade should not be included in the Treaty of 1883, but should remain subject to the laws of the respective countries. The combined effect of the Treaty and of the Italian Shipping Bounties Act is to be gathered from the text of these documents. The fact that a British vessel calls at more than one Italian port under the circumstances stated in the second paragraph of the Question ought not, in my opinion, to cause such a vessel to be deemed to be engaged in the coasting trade. I do not, therefore, see reason to expect in the near future the result suggested by the hon. Member in the third paragraph. No complaints have been hitherto received as to the operation of the Shipping Bounties Act on British shipping, and no negotiations are pending with the Italian Government on this subject; but in the event of any injury resulting to British interests contrary to the provisions of the Treaty of 1883, the House may rest assured that the matter would receive the immediate attention of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. TOMLINSON: Then may I take it that Her Majesty's Government will resist the application by the Italian Government of the principle that a vessel touching at two places is engaged in the coasting trade? It is so believed at present.

MR. BRYCE: As I have already told the hon. Member, no complaints have reached us, and no negotiations are pending. I do not think it is at all to the public interest that I should commit myself to any further declaration.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—CANDIDATES' SOLICITORS AND THE SCRUTINY OF VOTES.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Can he now announce what course the Local Government Board have decided to take with reference to the admission of candidates' solicitors to the scrutiny of votes at the pending poor law elections?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said, he found that the Local Government Board had no power to make an order compelling the Returning Officers to admit solicitors of candidates on these occasions. The most they could do was to include a recommendation to the effect in the instructions to those officers, and he had no doubt that such a recommendation would in most cases be acted upon. But the question whether the order should be amended in this respect was one which he found, on inquiry, to be of much difficulty; and after a good deal of consideration he had felt obliged to reserve it for his own personal consideration after discussion with the officials, solicitors, and others. This, he feared, must necessitate the forthcoming election being conducted according to the present practice.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—RELEASE OF IRISH MOONLIGHTERS.

MR. ALBERT GREY (Northumberland, Tyneside) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What were the sentences of penal servitude passed upon the "Moonlighters" who attacked the house of Mrs. Mayberry, near Tralee, on 17th March 1882; and, is it the case that all the prisoners have already been released; if so, upon what grounds was their release directed, and what portion of their sentence did each undergo?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, four men were sentenced to penal servitude in this case, one for 15 years and the other three for 10 years. They had all since been released on licences which were issued, three by the order of Lord Spencer when Lord Lieutenant, and the fourth by Lord Carnarvon. These decisions appeared to have been arrived at after consultation with the learned Judge, Mr. Justice Lawson, who tried the case, and careful inquiry as to the state of the district in which the convicts had resided. He (Mr. John Morley) understood that the conduct of the four men since their release had been satisfactory.

NAVY—ACCIDENT ON BOARD H.M.S. "ALBATROSS."

MR. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty is in possession of any information with reference to an accident which is reported to have occurred, with loss of life, on board Her Majesty's ship *Albatross?*

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. DUFF) (Banffshire): Yes, Sir. I regret that there has been a lamentable accident on board Her Majesty's Ship *Albatross.* The information which has reached us is contained in a telegram from the Commodore at Hong Kong, dated yesterday. It states that the accident is due to the bursting of one of the Nordenfelt guns. I regret to say that by this accident two men have lost their lives, and two others have been wounded. The names of those who have lost their lives are John Murray, able seaman, and Charles Dale, boy. The names of the wounded are Frank Harvey, petty officer, severely wounded, but progressing satisfactorily, and Charles Callaghan, able seaman, slightly wounded.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll): I wish to ask a Question in regard to the

Crofters Bill, which stands upon the Paper to-night.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I rise to Order. I wish to ask if the hon. Gentleman is in Order, after the Resolution which was passed the other night, in putting a Question of which he has not given Notice?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is perfectly in Order in putting a Question in reference to the Business of the House.

Mr. MACFARLANE: All I desire to know is what day the Prime Minister proposes to take the Committee on the Crofters' Bill?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): According to the arrangement made last night, the Army Estimates will be proceeded with on Thursday, and the Crofters Bill will be taken on the very first opportunity afterwards — as far as I can say at present, on Monday next.

MOTIONS.

—o—

LOCAL TAXATION (INCIDENCE).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS (Southwark, Bermondsey), in rising to move the following Resolution:—

> "That the present system under which, in England and Wales, the first Incidence of Local Taxation (with some slight exceptions) falls on the occupier and not on the owner of lands and tenements, is unjust; that such owners ought in equity to bear at least a moiety of those charges; that the system under which country mansions are rated is unfair; and that the owners of ground rents in towns are liable to no part of those charges, the outlay of which is essential in order that the property may possess any marketable value whatever,"

said, that since 1831 down to last year scarcely a year had passed without some Act bearing on local taxation being added to the Statute Book; and during the last 50 years there had been constant debates, generally on one aspect of the question, and very considerable changes had from time to time been introduced. To deal exhaustively with this question would require a speech of 10 or 20 hours at least; and he could, therefore, only call attention to a few important points. Practically, local taxation commenced with the Poor Law Act of Queen Elizabeth, and since that time, with short interruption, it had been the universal practice to levy the whole of local taxation on what was commonly called real estate, and in England and Wales upon the occupier only of real estate; whereas in Scotland and Ireland such local taxation was shared by the owner and occupier—that was to say, they were divided in a nearly equal moiety between the two parties interested. Originally, the whole of the local taxation of Scotland was levied on the owner; and it was only when the new Poor Roll was introduced in Scotland, owing to the disruption of the Scottish Church, that a division was made between the two parties. In the latter years of Queen Elizabeth's Reign, and for some time afterwards, there were in England a large number of occupying owners of land, tenant farmers being comparatively rare. The property of these occupying owners was then obviously the property on which to impose taxation, the division between owner and occupier being disregarded in consequence of the rarity of occupying tenants-at-will. In course of time, however, the ranks of these occupying freeholders were sadly thinned; for, acting under the 1st clause of the Statute of Frauds, great landowners declared that persons who were not possessed of documentary evidence of their title to the land occupied by them should be treated as tenants-at-will. A generation or two afterwards came the appropriation of common lands under various Acts of Parliament. Between 1710, the date of the first of these Acts, and 1854, 9,000,000 acres of land were appropriated by private owners. The resulting state of things in connection with the maintenance of the poor having become intolerable, various attempts were made to effect an improvement. In 1870 a Committee was appointed, at the instance of the then President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Goschen), to inquire into the whole subject of local taxation. The Members of that Committee were men of proved capacity, and were peculiarly familiar with the subject referred to them. They published a Report, but it had not yet been acted upon. In it they recommended the division of rates between owner and occupier, as he did in his Resolution. The chief reason which the witnesses examined before the Committee gave for suggesting this change was that it would be likely to result in a more careful and economical administration of the rates. Since the time of the appointment of the Committee diverse Motions had been proposed in the House, from which it was a matter for regret that Sir Massey Lopes, Mr. Pell, Mr. C. S. Read, and Sir Baldwyn Leighton were now absent, because they had made the subject of local taxation their peculiar study. Of late the efforts of the landowning interest with reference to this subject had been incessant, and attended with much success. Sir Massey Lopes successfully pushed the doctrine that the question of local taxation was one of national concern, and insisted that the maintenance of the poor and other charges ought to be recognized as national burdens. The result of such efforts was that the local rates had been relieved, he was afraid, without much resulting economy, of the maintenance of prisons and criminals, and to a large extent of the maintenance of turnpike roads. The result was that at present, so far as he could make out from the Returns of the Local Government Board, the Exchequer was paying nearly £2,500,000 in aid of local taxation.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.), interrupting, said, that £2,500,000 was the amount of the contributions made for the purposes mentioned by the hon. Gentleman. There were, however, many other contributions, which brought the total up to a much larger sum.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, that the sum he had named was all that he could find; but, of course, he was a person of limited intelligence.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN said, he would refer the hon. Gentleman to the Civil Service Estimates, where he would see the total amount to be something over £4,000,000.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the information. He had looked through all the Papers, and anything more hopelessly puzzling and confusing he had never met with. He hoped, therefore, he might be excused for having understated the cost; but it only strengthened his position. Now, he would ask, who paid this money? Where did it come from? Of course it came out of the Income Tax.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): Out of all.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, it no doubt came out of all the taxes, because they were consolidated; but, as a matter of fact, it was not the custom—it was not, at least, the experience of Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench—to put on new taxes, for that would be objected to; but they screwed up the Income Tax a penny, and he had little doubt the bulk of these £4,000,000 had been taken from the Income Tax, and it fell with peculiar severity on persons whose incomes were between £400 and £1,000. He thought there was no class of persons who contributed more to the Exchequer, in proportion to their resources, at such a sacrifice to themselves. It had been said very truly that the burden of taxes had a tendency to remain on those on whom the taxes were imposed. That was the case, except, perhaps, in the case of shopkeepers and tradesmen. They were able to, and no doubt did, shift the taxes imposed upon them on to their customers by raising the prices of their goods. He did not blame them. Every person who was able to transfer a tax from himself to his neighbour must have the sympathy of every right-minded person. But, with that exception, taxes would always stay with those upon whom they were imposed. He believed that was a statement that no economist would dispute; and not only so, but some of these taxes must remain there, and it always required a pretty strong effort to get them off. It would probably be said that the local taxes were always paid ultimately by the owners. If that were the case, there could be no harm in putting them entirely on the owners in the beginning. There was not the smallest doubt that if 1,000 occupiers were asked who paid the local taxation, 999 of them would reply that the greater part of it fell on their shoulders. They might be wrong; but he wished to urge upon the House the expediency of making the division he suggested. If the contention of the landlords that local taxation weighed unduly upon them was correct, they could not possibly lose by his proposal, because it simply amounted to a transfer to them of the process of paying that which, according to their own assertion, they had to pay in the end. The adoption of the division he proposed would certainly be a great concession to popular sentiment, and a very considerable means of stifling popular discontent. Again, why should great houses, splendid pictures, and a vast library altogether escape taxation? He did not know what price the founder of the house of Churchill gave for the Raphael, for which the nation paid £75,000; perhaps not £750. But why should pictures like that remain untaxed? The same complaint was made by the local taxpayer about paying for the cost of roads which were absolutely necessary to the landlord for the enjoyment of his property. He had no particular objection to the present state of things; but he deprecated that affectation of public spirit which held that these roads were of national importance like the road from Chester to Holyhead and the highway to the North. He thought that a great case was made out for the division of local taxation between the owner and occupier, and that such a change would materially modify a vast amount of discontent which now existed. He might be told that what he proposed would disturb existing arrangements; that it was an ancient custom for the occupier to pay the rates, and that it was an indelible part of the Constitution. He very much of the mind of an ancient friend of his—Dr. Buckland—who, having been shown over a cathedral, had a spot pointed out where the blood of a saint was said to be "indelibly" marked. Dr. Buckland was a man of an inquiring mind, so he wetted his finger, rubbed it on the ground, and putting it to his mouth, said, "Bat's dung." Then, as to the rating of country mansions, that was done in accordance with 5 & 6 *Will.* IV. The language of the Statute would justify the Justices in putting on those houses a nominal value. He would not be surprised if they were to put on them no value whatever. In the United States the value of property was taken at the letting value; and they did not give the owner the same advantage as he got in England, for they taxed the empties on the principle that the State ought not to assist a man in keeping his goods out of the market. He would remind the House that there was an awkward spirit in the air. There were numbers who argued thus—"I, with my wife and family, live in one room, for which I have to pay 3*s*. 6*d*. or 4*s*. a-week. I pay it with difficulty, all the more because the rates are so heavy; and I know that Lord So-and-so has a house with 150 rooms, for which in rates he pays next to nothing." It was a bad thing that this kind of spirit should get abroad. Those who profited by such a condition of things would do well not to mark the distinction between themselves and their neighbours by a sense of injustice. He desired to raise no prejudice against them; but unless something were done in the direction of his Motion there would be a growing feeling of grudge and dissatisfaction at the escape of wealthy men from local contributions. It had been always thought desirable to tax luxuries if they could be got at; and if a person abandoned the use of a half-a-dozen houses while he lived in one, he ought to be taxed for the whole. As to the third part of his Motion, he thought he had better not press it, as it had been already debated. The last part of his Motion referred to ground rents. He had no special grudge against ground rents, and saw no more reason for taxing ground rents exceptionally than for taxing a successful lawyer or physician. It was only one form of fertility, and had as much right to be protected as any other. But what he did complain of was that the ground rent was constantly being rolled up by the contributions of the tenant. They were engaged in London in improving the ground estates of landlords at a rate which was enough to make the hair of Irish Members stand on end. He found that the amount of local taxation or debt, the main part of which had been incurred in what might be called non-reproductive consumption, was no less than £159,000,000. This principal and interest, almost the whole of it, was being paid in terminable debts by the occupier. The occupier was engaged in England to the extent of £159,000,000 in making still more valuable the great estates, and particularly those great estates in London which had come into the hands of their possessors Heaven knows how. He had seen the lease of the Covent Garden estate, which was squeezed out of Westminster Abbey. The lease was granted to the first Lord Bedford in the time of Queen Elizabeth. The estate was about 300 acres, and it was let at the time of the lease for a period of 30 years at £40 a-year. He should not like to say what it was let for now; but he should think that it went a great way into six figures. This estate had been improved without the outlay of a single 1*d*. by the noble Duke. It had been improved by the tenants, and this was what he complained of as being grossly unfair. Seeing the necessity of roads, a supply of water, and the carrying away of sewage to property, he contended that if justice were done the highway rate, the water rate, and the sewage rate ought to be paid by the ground landlord. As it was, a great portion of these rates were being paid in instalments by the temporary occupiers. This was a question which ought to be debated; and the solution of it appeared to him to be imperatively necessary. There was a great deal of discontent abroad. People came to him from poor places complaining not only of the exorbitant rates which they had to pay, but that Public Bodies did not dare to undertake many useful and necessary works, owing to the cost that would be incurred. This was notably the case with the scheme which had been prepared by the Local Government Board for the purification of the Thames by conducting the sewage of the Metropolis down to beyond Condy Island, where it could be so dealt with that only pure water should be emptied into the river. That useful work, however, had not yet been undertaken, simply because it would cost £4,000,000. He submitted that the expenses of permanent works such as this should be borne by the estates of ground landlords, who benefited by them as well as by occupiers. Some alteration in the law with respect to the matters he had referred to was imperatively necessary if that galling sense of injustice under which the public found they were paying to improve the estates of their neighbours out of their own hard-earned incomes was ever to be removed; and it was, therefore, high time that this most important subject of local taxation, of its incidence and distribution, should be considered and dealt with by Parliament. In conclusion, he moved the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

MR. PICTON (Leicester), in seconding the Motion, said, there was one aspect of the question to which his hon. Friend had not referred. He did not think that his hon. Friend had spoken of the great improvement that had been made in the system of Imperial taxation. Thanks, in a very large measure, to the financial genius of the present Prime Minister, Imperial taxation was now much more fairly distributed than it was a generation ago. Local taxation, however, practically remained just as it was. Now, he objected to rent as the sole basis for assessing local taxation; and he contended that such taxation should be imposed, as far as possible, upon superfluities and accumulations. By imposing local taxation upon rent they diminished the amount of money available for employment in reproductive operations. This they should endeavour to avoid. It was altogether a fallacy, he maintained, to assume that rent was any fair or just criterion of the amount a man ought to pay to local taxation; and yet no other criterion was taken. Take, for instance, the large class of shopkeepers, many of whom had to pay enormous rents in order to secure proportionately small profits. These were the people who, as a rule, felt more keenly and resented more bitterly than any other class of the community the increased rates rendered necessary by modern scientific and social progress. They very often heard people say that shopkeepers were a narrow-minded and Conservative class. About their Conservatism he would not say much; but he knew that they were an ill-used race. But it should be remembered that when the struggle of life was made bitter to any man, that man concentrated thought upon himself and his own sufferings; and this involved probably, in many instances, a certain amount of narrowness and prejudice. Shopkeepers were a powerful class on account of their numbers, and they naturally offered a strong opposition to all schemes for improvement, and more especially in the direction of culture as represented by School Boards. If any vulgar ignoramus wished to be elected upon the School Board for the purpose of retarding the progress of education, ten to one that he looked to the shopkeepers for his chief support. Well, he (Mr. Picton) could not wonder at such action on the part of shopkeepers. As human nature was constituted, it seemed to him almost impossible that they should act otherwise, because the expense of the modern means of progress must bear more heavily and more cruelly upon shopkeepers than upon most others; and shopkeepers ought not to be condemned as a class till the cause which impelled them to this line of action had been removed. It should be remembered that they were not only aggrieved by the heavy taxation levied upon themselves, but were still further aggravated by the different line taken with regard to the assessment of magnificent mansions which were scattered throughout the country. It was said that those great mansions had no letting value; but that was not the point at issue. The question was, what was the amount of accumulated wealth which they represented? That was what should be made liable to taxation. Let them take a long lease of land in an open suburb where the rates were light in consequence of there being little or no population. Population, as the House knew, always brought unforeseen rates; but it also brought unforeseen value to the owner; but the fact was that the occupier paid all the local rates. This was especially so in regard to ground rents; and there was, consequently, a strong case made out for the taxing of ground rents. But the present system of levying local burdens upon the occupiers of land was unjust; it created discontent, and caused needless friction in our social progress. Believing this he, therefore, very heartily supported the Motion of the hon. Member for Bermondsey.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the present system under which, in England and Wales, the first Incidence of Local Taxation (with some slight exceptions) falls on the occupier and not on the owner of lands and tenements is unjust; that such owners ought in equity to bear at least a moiety of those charges; that the system under which country mansions are rated is unfair; and that the owners of ground rents in towns are liable to no part of those charges, the outlay of which is essential in order that the property may possess any marketable value whatever."—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells), in rising to move, as an Amendment—

"That, while the apportionment of the payment of Rates between landlord and tenant may be desirable, as part of a complete scheme for remedying the admitted inequalities of the Incidence of Local Taxation, this House is of opinion that the financial injustice complained of can only be removed by a comprehensive measure, and that an equitable re-adjustment of Taxation, as between real and personal property, is urgently required,"

said, there were many things which fell from the Mover of the Resolution with which he was in complete accord; but he still thought the hon. Member had failed to grapple with the root of the difficulty, and the remedies which he set forth were entirely insufficient to settle this problem. The hon. Member complained of the transfer of prisons from the Local Authorities to the State; but if there was one thing more than another which completely justified the action of Lord Iddesleigh upon this question, it was that the administration of prisons, as regarded both economy and efficiency, had been materially improved. The expenditure per prisoner was less than it was before, and it must be so when they considered how many prisons had been given up; and at the same time they had secured a system of absolute evenness in diet, discipline, and treatment. The prison expenditure had been transferred from the local to the Imperial authority, and it was misleading to speak of it as a subvention or grant in aid of existing local expenditure. As to the incidence of local taxation, the principle that had found general acceptance was this—that the natural tendency of the rates was in the main to fasten upon the owner; yet the occupier was always supposed to bear a portion of them. That portion was estimated by Mr. Dudley Baxter to be one-forth, and his estimate was generally accepted. Every farmer and every tenant knew that he was liable to the increase or decrease of rates which might occur after he had entered upon his tenancy; but, taking one year with another and spreading the rates over a long period, the result was that one-fourth of the rates fell upon the occupier of a farm. In the case of houses the proportion might approach a little nearer to one-half. As to roads, the proposal that the land should bear all the cost was manifestly inequitable, for all the great main roads were the property of the nation, and were so treated in every other country. In France roads were divided into three classes, and those of the first class, corresponding to our main roads, were maintained by the State. The law as to mansions had been accurately stated, but it applied to all houses. If there was do one to pay rent, you must assume a hypothetical tenant and ascertain what the rent would be. If you went beyond that you were landed in the principle of the taxation of personal property. If you went beyond what was assumed to be the rent, you taxed a portion of property which bore no rent; and if you taxed one portion why not all property of the same nature paying no rent? If an owner, instead of lavishing wealth in the luxury of architectural detail, had chosen to buy pictures, he would have spent his money in a form that could not have paid rent. If you were to tax buildings you must tax pictures and other personal property. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad to find that recognition from hon. Members below the Gangway; but if you taxed pictures, you must tax books, plate, and diamonds. If you taxed them in the mansion of the Duke, you must tax them in other houses too. If the Motion meant anything, it meant that all property in every house was to be subject to local taxation. If you levied taxation upon personal property and furniture, which bore no income at all, surely you must levy it upon the funds and the stocks which do?

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: That is my argument. I said I did not object to that.

SIR RICHARD PAGET said, he was glad to have that admission, which showed that he was not straining the hon. Member's argument, and was only showing what it would lead to. It came to this—that for the purposes of local taxation we should tax all furniture, all property, all stock-in-trade—in short, all personal property enjoying the protection of the State was to be liable to local taxation. If this were admitted they had advanced a very long way. He rather understood the hon. Member not to be prepared to levy a rate on any kind of stock-in-trade. He should not enter into this question, because it would occupy too long; but he would ask the hon. Member what shadow of benefit would a divided rate confer on yeomen owning the land they occupied? If any class deserved their sympathies that was the one. That was the class they were anxious to increase; but how could they recreate that class with the one hand if, with the other, they crushed them with the burden of taxation? He failed to see what benefit they would confer by this divided rate. The yeoman would receive no benefit whatever; and the Motion would fail to confer any advantage on the class they all wished to help. As to the principle of divided rates, he had nothing to say, except that it was no remedy. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the great difference as to the incidence of local taxation on the two great classes of property—he meant real property and personal property. There was an opinion which he knew was held out-of-doors that land and houses largely escaped their fair share of Imperial taxation. In the matter of Death Duties, he admitted that real property paid less than personal property; but he suggested that they could not argue from an isolated fact. They were bound to consider every item in the account and balance the totals, and then see on which side the advantage lay. The class whom he represented wanted nothing but justice; and if on investigation it was shown that land and houses were not sufficiently burdened, then he said let them bear the burden, however grievous it might be. If, on the other hand, it was capable of proof that the burdens which oppressed land and houses as compared with personalty were of a grievous and intolerable character, then they had a right to demand that those burdens should be decreased. He found, from a Return presented to the House on his Motion, that whilst the direct Imperial taxation on real property was apparently 4·2 per cent, that on personal property was 3·3 per cent. That calculation, however, required correction, in consequence of Income Tax on land and houses being levied on gross rental; and the amended figures worked out showed that direct Imperial taxation on income of real property was about 5 per cent, and on that of personalty barely 3½ per cent. But, in addition to that, there was the fact that local taxation fell almost entirely and solely upon what was called real property. This local taxation amounted to 7½ per cent, so that altogether real property paid 12½ per cent in taxation, while it could in no way be made out that personal property paid one-third of that sum. If these figures were right — and he maintained that they were indisputable—they were approaching the time when the justice of their contention would be made so clear that no delay in remedying the injustice could be any longer allowed. They all wanted that there should be a multiplication of those who owned the soil; but it was in vain to attempt to create this multitude of owners while they rendered it impossible by imposing taxation on them three times heavier than what would have fallen on them if their money had been invested in personal property. One answer to these arguments was that they had no case because their burdens were hereditary, and that the land had been bought and sold with these burdens on it. That argument, however, would not bear the light of day. How long must a tax have been borne before it assumed an hereditary character? Was the education rate of £2,200,000 an hereditary burden? Was the maintenance of the main roads thrown on property in consequence of the abolition of turnpikes an hereditary burden? Was the maintenance of the police an hereditary burden? Rate after rate had been heaped on the owners and occupiers until, indeed, the burden had become too grievous to be borne. The Prime Minister was in the habit of saying in discussions of this kind that there was an unsettled account between labour and capital. He was ready and willing to enter into the great question of whether a re-adjustment was necessary between the claims of labour and property; but that question was outside and beside the scope of this Motion. Another answer that was sometimes made was that land was a very small portion of the whole of real property, and that houses paid the greater share of the taxation. It was true that the value of houses had increased; but there was no evidence to show that there had been any transfer of the burdens upon land, which had remained intact, and there was no ground for the contention that the taxation upon land had been eased by this increase in the great body of house property. The last answer that was made was—"Wait for some great measure of local government reform." Again and again they had been told that it was their duty to sit still, and everything would be put right when they had got this grand scheme. But they had waited too long. What reasonable chance was there of any scheme of local government being brought into practical operation in the course of the present year? Were they to be told that it was impossible this year, but it might come next, and that, therefore, they were to be content to go on bearing these burdens under which they were now groaning? He hoped, therefore, that the House would assent to his Amendment as a matter of urgent necessity. At this moment all concerned in agriculture, whether as owners, occupiers, or labourers, were suffering under a depression so great, so grievous, and so rapidly increasing, as to fill all concerned with dismay. They were told that the remedy lay in a reduction of rent. But he could assure hon. Members that rents were being reduced rapidly enough by natural process; and they had only to look at the evidence given lately before the Commission upon trade to see the effects of this depression upon all classes connected with agriculture. If the vast amount of personal property could only be made as visible to the naked eye as real property was, then he felt certain the great majority of the new electors would, from their sense of justice, be of opinion that these local burdens should not be restricted to those connected with landed property, but should be spread over the broader shoulders of the whole community. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Mr. JASPER MORE (Shropshire, Ludlow), in rising to second the Amendment, said, when he remembered the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Resolution as a distinguished Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, he feared the hon. Gentleman might think him (Mr. More) presumptuous in seconding an Amendment which did not altogether seem on the same lines as the original Motion; and when he listened to the speech of the Mover he felt diffident in doing so. His apology was that they had lost the presence in that House of several Gentlemen who, when they were hon. Members, were great authorities on the subject; and also because he had, 20 years ago, presided at the first meeting held by Chambers of Agriculture on local taxation, when the Royal Agricultural Society held their show at the town represented by the hon. Member who seconded the Motion (Mr. Picton). At that time the new school of County Local Taxation Reformers were sanguine that they could rate personalty, and he then advised them to try to do so indirectly, as far as those branches of local taxation were concerned in which Government already interfered, the object of the advice being that when farmers had begun to stir in their own interests they might achieve some result speedily; secondly, that result might not lead to more centralization. He advised them, after that, not to push their application for grants from the Consolidated Fund too far, but to advocate a reform of local government; because he was always afraid of the retaliation upon Succession Duty, which the hon. Baronet did not seem to fear, as long as the reform of local taxation was a very comprehensive one. Since that the farmers had had to wait 20 years for a reform of local taxation and a reform of local government, and he hoped they would not have to wait another year. He was not aware whether the object of an abstract Motion in the hands of a private Member was to test the opinion of a new House on his particular views, or to impress those views on the policy of the Government by the extraordinary ability with which they were supported. But the circumstances of the Motion were peculiar in two respects—first, that the last part of it had been anticipated by a Resolution of the House; and, secondly, that a comprehensive scheme had been promised by the Prime Minister in his Mid Lothian Manifesto; whereas this Motion only touched the fringe of the question. With respect to the rating of mansions, if the hon. Member had served on assessment committees in the country he would have known that no country mansion was considered worth more than £200 rateable value. Country mansions might be rated at more, and it might not be worth while for owners to dispute the assessment with their neighbours; but let anyone try to let Blenheim, and they would find the truth of the small letting value and unequal assessment. But mansions were now raised in value where there were peculiar local advantages, as in Cheshire, where most of the large mansions had been rated over £300, and were now raised to four times that sum. With respect to the division of rates between owners and occupiers, that he had always advocated, and that a Select Committee of the House had reported in favour of; but not unless it was part of a comprehensive scheme. The last paragraph of their Report was to this effect—

> "Your Committee are of opinion that the inquiry on which they have been engaged forms only one branch of the general question of local taxation, and that other considerations besides those which have been submitted to their investigation should be previously taken into account in any general measure giving effect to the above recommendations."

The best argument for the division of rates between owner and occupier was that in Ireland, where the poor rate was thus divided, there had been no complaint of local taxation. He had acted on the advice of the late Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and had used the Report of the Commission on Agricultural Distress; but used it as a guide to Ireland, and found it an excellent help to the study of the Land Question on the spot. He never found any complaint as to local taxation in Ireland. The same might be said of Scotland; and there the same explanation might be given—namely, the division of the rates between owners and occupiers. But, whilst agreeing with the hon. Mover of the Resolution so far, he disagreed with him bringing in abstract and piecemeal Motions. The Prime Minister had promised a comprehensive measure. He said in his Mid Lothian Manifesto—

> "In the reform of local government, the first objects to be aimed at, in my judgment, are to rectify the balance of taxation as between real and personal property; to put an end to the gross injustice of charging upon labour, through the medium of the Consolidated Fund, local burdens which our laws have always wisely treated as incident to property; to relieve the ratepayer, not at the charge of the working population, but wholly or mainly by making over for local purposes the carefully chosen items of taxation; to supply local management with inducements to economy, instead of tempting and almost forcing into waste and expense; and, most of all, to render the system thoroughly representative and free."

He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would lose no time in giving effect to that statement. He believed the right hon. Gentleman was not unlikely to prove a better friend to the agricultural interest than they expected. When the right hon. Gentleman was President of the Board of Trade, the farmers approached him with the view of obtaining an equalization of weights for grain. Two deputations advocated different weights, and he invited them to meet each other; but, at the same time, he wrote a letter to show his appreciation of the agricultural interest. The right hon. Gentleman wrote to him as follows:—

"December 18.

"I am well aware of the efforts made in some quarters to represent the present Government, and myself in particular, as unfriendly to the farmers; but nothing can be more untrue or unfair. I have always said that agriculture was the largest and most important of English manufactures, and that the prosperity of all other industries is more or less dependent on its well-doing."

With respect to the difficulty experienced by the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers) in reading the Estimates, he could give the correct figures. The subventions to Local Authorities in England were just under £2,000,000; those to Ireland £339,000; to Scotland, £220,000; total, £2,555,000. But Ireland received £1,685,000 in grants spent by State officials to £1,054,000 received by England, and £103,000 by Scotland, besides the grants contributed to Bodies not Local Authorities—£206,000 to England, £70,000 to Scotland, £116,000 to Ireland. When he was in the House before, he adopted the course of the hon. Member for Northern Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone), and moved the House to reprint the evidence of Sir George Lewis on parochial assessments, which was consented to. Sir George Lewis was both Secretary of State for the Home Department and Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he was asked this Question by Lord Portman, the Chairman:—

"I think I collected from you, that the rate upon personal property is not altogether applicable to local charges?—What I stated was, that there is great difficulty in imposing any local tax upon money, for the reason which I mentioned—namely, that it is not easily identified with any one spot—and upon stock and furniture, on the ground that it is difficult to estimate their annual value.

"Why should not the rate upon personal property be made applicable to those charges of a local nature which the Government have already taken upon themselves, such as the salaries of schoolmasters and medical salaries?—There might, no doubt, be a general tax imposed exclusively upon personal property, for the purpose of defraying those charges; but then their amount is scarcely sufficient to justify the imposition of a separate tax for that purpose. I have here the exact amounts which have been paid of late years by Parliamentary grants both for the county rate and for the poor rate. The Government grants in aid of the county rate have risen from £82,000 in 1836 to £248,000 in the last year.

The grants were thus then only £250,000, too small a sum for a tax on personal property to be entertained. The grants to Local Authorities were, however, now £2,500,000. He had now to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to try to give them a real Bill, to discuss which would be a welcome change in that House after continual abstract Motions. One consideration he offered for the introduction of a Local Government Bill was that he was sure the right hon. Gentleman wished the labourer to have land as proposed by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings); and it was the general opinion that the existing Local Authority would not put the provisions of that Bill into operation, so that new Local Authorities must be formed before the poor were likely to have any land as proposed. He seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "while the apportionment of the payment of Rates between landlord and tenant may be desirable, as part of a complete scheme for remedying the admitted inequalities of the Incidence of Local Taxation, this House is of opinion that the financial injustice complained of can only be removed by a comprehensive measure, and that an equitable re-adjustment of Taxation, as between real and personal property, is urgently required,"—(*Sir Richard Paget*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): said the hon. Baronet who had moved the Amendment had raised an entirely different question from that which was covered by the Motion. He was in the position of poaching on another man's land. The Motion before the House was not as to the difference between the taxing of personal and real property, but the injustice with which the tax charged was levied on real property. He agreed that it was most unfair that personal property should be exempt from its due contribution to local taxation. The main question before the House was the division of rates between owner and occupier. There was an old saying that injustice always came home to roost; and the exemption which owners of property had secured for themselves from the direct incidence of local taxation would be no exception to the rule. The effect had been that, not feeling the direct incidence of taxation, owners of property in England had dissociated themselves in the most dangerous way from the active management of local affairs, especially in towns; and they had ignored the dangerous and rapid increase of debt for which their property was and must be the ultimate security. It was distinctly in their interest, therefore, as well as for the benefit of the occupier, that they should take upon themselves their share of the direct incidence of taxation while there was yet time to ask for direct representation in return. This was one of the most important reforms in local government, for no country could afford to have its leisured and wealthy classes dissociated from the duties which wealth and leisure ought to impose. This had been felt by such men as Sir Massey Lopes and Mr. Clare Read, and also by many Members on the Liberal side of the House. The Democracy of this country, if the majority of the wealthy classes continued to dissociate themselves from the work of the country, might soon begin to ask for the *raison d'être* of such a class. He did not mean that in this country, with its reverence for justice and law, any legislation of confiscation would follow, but taxes might be so levied as virtually almost to amount to that; and he ventured to assert that they would be so levied unless the leisured and property-owning classes, while there was yet time, came forward and took boldly and justly their fair share of public burdens and of public work. This subject could not be too strongly impressed upon the attention of the public. Easy, lavish, increase of debt meant wasteful, unprofitable expenditure. That danger had been recently dwelt upon by the Prime Minister as affecting Imperial indebtedness; but the increase had been far more rapid in local indebtedness. Indeed, while the Imperial Debt had been decreasing local indebtedness had been increasing. In the six years ending with 1883, while the total Imperial indebtedness decreased at the rate of £2,600,000 a-year, the amount of local indebtedness increased at the rate of £8,800,000 a-year; and though a considerable portion of the money was well spent in providing for the health and comfort of the people, undoubtedly much of it was not expended as carefully or as remuneratively as if it had been looked after carefully by owners of property, especially in many of the smaller local government districts. This evil of extravagance was one from which a Democracy such as we had now established was far from being exempt. Recently, for the first time, Mr. R. P. Porter, acting for the United States of America, had made some estimate of local taxation and the increase of debt there. There, as here, the increase had been most rapid in municipalities. He would not take the notorious example of New York. But there were nine cities in the State of New Jersey which actually paid an aggregate of $2,138,000 interest on debt, while their total annual expenditure for carrying on local government only amounted to $2,307,000; and the aggregate debt amounted to one-sixth of the total assessed capital value of the property in these cities; while one town, with a property assessed at $3,093,000, had a capital debt of $1,690,000; and another, with property assessed at $13,579,000, had a debt of nearly $6,000,000—in the one case more than half, and in the other case nearly half, the capital value of its property. It was worthy of note that in the United States contributions from the Federal, as in this country from the Imperial, Treasury, given without sufficient safeguards, instead of relieving the localities, only stimulated prodigality—as, for instance, when $28,000,000 was contributed towards the relief of the Local Bodies in 1836. That was not the occasion to deal with the various remedies which had been suggested to meet that danger; but he ventured to think one of the most valuable and important was to so levy taxation that it might be just to all, and bring home to all sections of the community that it was their interest and their duty to attend to those matters. On the grounds of justice to the occupiers and safety to the owners, he should heartily support the Motion before the House.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, the question appeared to him to be one of dividing all local taxation between the occupier and the landlord. It had for some time past been the custom to attack landlords; but he held that the men who employed their money in building houses in the towns were as useful a body of men as could be found in the community. Again, landlords were increasing largely in number in the country. There were not only the large and wealthy landlords, but also the small and struggling ones. By building societies and other means many working men had become owners of property; and whilst it was all very well for Liberal Members to "play up to the gallery" by calling for more burdens upon owners, they might, perhaps, discover by-and-bye that there were a larger number of owners in the gallery than in the stalls. He wished to ask the House to consider whether it was possible in any way to prevent the occupier from paying practically the whole of the rates and taxes? It was the consumers who in the ultimate resort paid the taxes, and therefore the Motion was founded on the same fallacy as Fair Trade, the promoters of which tried to make believe that by taxing imports we should make foreigners contribute to our National Exchequer. Of course, the tax must come out of the pockets of the consumers of the article imported. If an Act were passed for the purpose of dividing the taxes between the occupier and the landlord, still the result must follow that the occupier, who was really the user of the property, would pay the entire charge. No one, he thought, could say that those tenants in whose rents rates and taxes were included did not pay their full share. Some thought that the difficulty might be got over by putting an extra tax on the owners of ground rents; but that would lead to great anomalies and inconveniences, as in the case of two houses being next door to one another, the one freehold and the other leasehold, each would have to pay different local rates. He was one of those who wished to see freeholders become very much more numerous than they were at present, and he believed in that the real solution of the question lay. He believed that the whole system of local taxation should be carefully looked into. The way of meeting the question was by adopting the Amendment which had been proposed, so that there might be a complete investigation of the whole system with a view to the re-arrangement of the local taxation of the country.

Mr. L. A. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said, he could not help thinking that the hon. Baronet who proposed the Amendment and those who had followed him had attempted to raise a false issue. It was not a question whether the House, in supporting the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Thorold Rogers), should impose burdens on landed property, or whether they should remove burdens from small owners and put them on large owners; the question was the recognition of the principle that capital value should be the subject of taxation rather than earnings or income. He believed it was on that principle that taxation was originally levied in this country. Reference had been made to the rating of mansions. Now, he thought that the rating of mansions might be taken as a very fair illustration of the injustice of the present system of local taxation. He could conceive no greater scandal than the present system of taxing mansions. If a man were to build a house or shop in a populous district, at a cost of say £4,000, the rental by the Local Authorities would be estimated at about 6 per cent on the capital value. On the other hand, if a person were to build a mansion in a country district 20 miles away from London, on which £20,000, or even more, might be expended, what would happen? It would be found that so far from the taxable rental being based at 6 per cent it would be based at less than 1 per cent on the capital value, and in some cases on no percentage at all. Reference had been made to Blenheim; but in the case of Blenheim he might point out that while the acreage, amounting to 2,367 acres, was taxed at £2,580, or at the rate of £1 1*s.* 9*d.* per acre, the mansion itself was almost altogether left out of the rating, though the possessor might do what he liked with that capital value on the acreage. He believed it was in accordance with the original intention of the law that a hypothetical estimate should be taken in the case of mansion houses. That principle was carried into effect with regard to gas works, railway stations, and similar structures; but not in the case of mansions. It was the practice of magistrates and the owners of these mansions to affirm that the rating of mansions should be based on what the mansion should fetch if let to a tenant, according to a particular section of the

Act; but no human being in his senses would dream of taking Blenheim on a yearly tenancy. Probably it would not be let at 20 years' tenancy. But, at the same time, the persons who possessed Blenheim had the advantage of the position which was naturally incidental to the possession of a dwelling of that character. What he maintained was that it was only reasonable and just that if a person could afford to sink £20,000 or £30,000 or £100,000 on the erection of a mansion, that person should be taxed according to value; that was, its capital value at the time the assessment might be made. As a matter of fact, it would, he believed, be found that while Blenheim was paying nothing in the way of rating per room—and the same remark would apply to similar mansions—the rooms occupied by the working classes in such buildings, for example, as the Peabody dwellings were paying 200 and 300 per cent more than was paid for the rooms in the mansions of the rich. If it were necessary, he could multiply instances of this kind; but he had no intention to weary the patience of the House by entering into these details. He would give one instance, however, and that was in relation to a part of the country with which he was himself acquainted. In Northumberland there was a very beautiful place named Beaufront Castle. This castle was really a magnificent mansion, which stood in large ornamental grounds. The House, however, would be surprised to learn that this beautiful mansion was rated at the sum of £84 per annum. Now, in the same township, there was a house known as Stagshaw Close House, a comparatively small one, and greatly inferior, of course, to Beaufront Castle; yet the smaller house was rated at no less a sum than £220 per annum. Now, in the name of common sense, was there any reason why so ridiculous a disparity should exist in the rating of these two different dwellings? Again, this question of rating had never been decided by the Superior Courts, and why? Because when the case was brought before the county magistrates those gentlemen, with that natural sympathy which they might be expected to exhibit for their brother landowners, at once decided that it was not fair or reasonable to do anything but tax the rental at what the owner of the mansion could actually let it for. He might also mention Wootton, the property of the Duke of Buckingham, which was also rated at an exceedingly low figure, the magistrates refusing to allow the case to be taken on appeal to a Higher Court, on the ground that the figure in question was the letting value, and also that the appeal could not be taken unless with the consent of the parties interested. What he and his Friends contended for was the right of the State to insist that the capital value of the property which he had described should be taxed for the benefit of the State.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton) said, that the hon. Gentleman who moved this Resolution had jumbled up a number of questions into one Resolution, and asked the House to assent to several propositions which did not depend upon one another. If the hon. Member had stopped at the recommendation that it was desirable to divide the rates equally between owners and occupiers, he (Sir John Kennaway) would have been glad to support him, for with that proposition he agreed with all his heart. That proposal had, in fact, been recommended by a Committee which sat on the matter, and it had also been recommended by the Royal Commission on Agriculture as one of the points which the Members of the Commission considered afforded some hope of benefiting the agriculturist. If the Resolution had been confined to that point he would, as he had said, gladly support it. But the hon. Gentleman went on to the rating value of mansions and parks. There was no doubt that there was a great deal in what the hon. Member had said about the comparative rating of different properties which happened to be, as it were, set down side by side. No doubt there was an anomaly between the rating of Blenheim and other houses; but it would be more to the point to compare Blenheim with the cottages outside it than with town property. The anomaly was one which had an invidious appearance, and which, therefore, it was wise and desirable should be looked at fairly in the face and dealt with carefully, so as to remedy any grievance which might be found to exist. But how did that anomaly arise? It arose from the fact that the basis of assessment had been taken to be the letting value; and, that being so, it was not correct to say that it was the fault of country gentlemen sitting as assessment committees that county mansions were assessed as they now were. The gentlemen who sat on those committees had the law to guide them, and they followed its guidance honestly and to the best of their ability. That was the state of things at present; and, therefore, it seemed to him that it was desirable that the whole question of the incidence of taxation should be carefully considered. It might be found desirable to raise the assessment of these mansions or property, or it might be found desirable to rate property on its value, as in agriculture; but whatever course it was found desirable to pursue, they should take care to do what was fair and just. As to ground rents the question was before a Select Committee, and before coming to any decision upon that part of the question they had better wait for the Report of the Committee. It had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself that this was a question which must be dealt with; but he (Sir John Kennaway) contended that it must be dealt with as a whole, and for that reason he supported the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Somerset (Sir Richard Paget). The question was particularly urgent at the present time, because one of the greatest, or he should say the greatest and most important industry in the country, and employing more people than any other industry—namely, the great industry of agriculture, was suffering to an unprecedented and alarming extent at the present time; and it was suffering not only from the economical state of things from foreign competition and low prices, but because of the excessively heavy burdens which it had to bear, and from which other classes of the industrial community were exempt. There was no doubt that it was very important that a wider basis should be found for distributing the burden of local taxation; and he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that the question in what way personalty should contribute to these local charges was a question which should be approached carefully, and fully and fairly considered. It should be remembered, however, that the agricultural interest was practically subject to an Income Tax of 3*s*. or 4*s*. in the pound above other classes of the community. It was well known what a great deal of grumbling there was among ordinary Income Tax payers upon an increase of 2*d*. or 3*d*. in the pound; but nothing was thought about the increase in the rates, which practically ran up the burdens of agriculturists to the excessive amount he had indicated. Agriculturists were proverbially an easy-going and good-tempered sort of people who struggled on quietly under their burdens. He supposed they were born a patient and long-suffering lot; but times were now so critical that it was to the interest of the country to take the matter up, and to make an honest endeavour to lighten some of those burdens under which agriculture was being crushed. Sir James Caird had, many times of late years, written to show how the value of property was increasing in the country; but he spoke in a very different tone this week, for he said the income of the landlords of the country had been diminished by £20,000,000, and the income of the tenants by about the same amount, whilst the income of the agricultural labourer had been diminished by about £2,500,000; and what was the result of this serious state of things? Why, the result was such as might have been expected. A large amount of land had gone out of cultivation for corn. An area to the extent of the whole county of Devon had, within the last two years, been withdrawn from cultivation for corn, and turned into pasture; and anyone could form an idea of the extent to which such a change as that must diminish the amount of labour required upon the land, and the amount of food produced for the use of the country. But where was relief to be found? It was idle to suppose that Parliament would seriously consider any proposal for re-imposing a duty on corn. The return of this country to Protection was out of the question altogether. Protection had been once and for all abandoned, and wisely so, no doubt, for the great population of this country must be fed; but then the agriculturist might very well say that if he were not to raise produce for his own benefit, but for the benefit of the State, then it was but right that the State should relieve him from the burdens which were so heavily pressing upon him, and pressing upon him in a way which they did not presupon other classes of the community; and he might say also that while the productions of the foreigner were admitted for the benefit of the population at large, he, the agriculturist, who was ruined by the admission of such produce, should at least be relieved from the burdens of local taxation. There was no doubt that the burden of local taxation was also felt by owners of house property; but not in the same overwhelming degree. The occupiers of shops and warehouses undoubtedly suffered. They found themselves assessed very heavily while in these times their profits were light; while, at the same time, capitalists who counted their income by thousands or tens of thousands might only be rated to a very small amount for the offices which they might occupy. These occupiers of shops and warehouses were also pressing for relief in respect of local taxation. But it was not a selfish cry on the part of the agriculturists or owners and occupiers of house property. It was merely a demand for fair and just treatment. The Commission which was appointed to inquire into the housing of the poor said in their Report that the present incidence of local taxation stood in the way of progress and improvement in the dwellings of the poor. Those were weighty words, and the House would do well to bear them in mind, for they spoke more powerfully than he (Sir John Kennaway) could do in favour of the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Somerset. The hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers) spoke of the large increase of indebtedness of Local Bodies in recent years; and there was no doubt that if Local Authorities were created as proposed by the Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings), with powers similar to those enjoyed by Municipalities, there would be a marked increase in the burdens of rural districts for the carrying out of schemes, some of which might be for the advance of the community, or they might not; but, at all events, they were schemes which would involve a large addition of expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) had spoken about providing comforts for the people, which was all very well, but expensive; and the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jesse Collings) had proposed that the Local Authorities should have power to buy land and distribute in lots of holdings to the people; but it had been shown that the buying up of one yeoman holding in every parish in the country would inflict a charge of £50,000,000 upon the rates. In conclusion, he would again express his concurrence with the principle of the first part of the Motion of the hon. Member for Bermondsey—that was, of the part which was in favour of dividing the taxes between owner and occupier; but as he thought the matter ought to be dealt with fully and comprehensively he hoped the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Somerset would be carried.

Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said, he had listened with great pleasure to the very interesting, and, upon the whole, satisfactory discussion which had been engaging the attention of the House. For his own part, he might at once say that he could accept both the Motion and the Amendment, which did not seem to him at all antagonistic to each other. The Motion raised three points which, in his (Mr. Everett's) opinion, the Mover most ably argued and established. The Amendment simply said that the Motion did not cover the whole ground—that there were other phases of this great question which the Motion did not contemplate, and in that view he completely agreed. The division of the rates between the owner and the occupier was a measure which had long been called for by influential classes of the community, and was one which should undoubtedly be carried out. Whatever might be the ultimate incidence of the rates in a purely economical point of view, there could be no doubt the division of the rates between owner and occupier would remove a sense of injustice which often arose in the minds of tenants when new rates were imposed or old ones were greatly augmented. Therefore, it was to him a source of great satisfaction to find that no argument had been brought forward in any part of the House against a division of rates between the owner and the occupier. Of course, he need hardly say that in carrying out this division, whenever it was made, existing arrangements and engagements should be respected. That, it was evident, would be only right and just. Then there was a point upon which he laid great stress—namely, that the division of the rates between owners and occupiers would unquestionably have the great advantage of bringing in a new class of ratepayers to check expenditure. No doubt, in recent times, when the value of land was going up by leaps and bounds, and everyone thought that this state of things would continue, the landlords were somewhat careless about the imposition of new rates, the burden of which did not fall upon them; but that was no longer the case. The landowners were no longer indifferent to the imposition of new burdens upon the land; and that being the case, it was, he thought, very desirable that we should be able to enlist the opposition of every possible class of ratepayers against the increase of old rates or the imposition of new rates. It would, therefore, be both just and politic to invite the aid of the owners in this matter. Then there were other points, on a few of which he would touch, which required attention. It had been clearly shown in the course of the debate that mansions were now rated infinitely below the rate of taxation which they ought to bear, and that there was a large measure of wealth of this kind which thus escaped the fair contribution which it ought to make towards the burdens of the country. Then there was another portion of wealth which also escaped, and that was chattel wealth—wealth in the shape of pictures, ships, plate, carriages, and other similar things. He did not, for his own part, understand why, if a gentleman chose to lavish his thousands on these luxuries, he should escape paying his fair share of taxation, whereas he would be liable to pay it if he invested the same amount of money in land, or in the building of houses. On the contrary, it seemed to him that the man who invested £10,000 in building houses for the poor was a greater benefactor than a man who paid £10,000 for a picture. He did not think that this question of rating would ever be permanently settled unless we had a taxation of chattels. Then there was personalty income. The income under Schedule A was now little more than one-third of that comprised in the other Schedules under which the Income Tax was charged and levied, so that we had something like two-thirds of the income of the country going perfectly free in regard to local rates. Here was an anomaly which required redress; and he could not help thinking that a good deal of this wealth which now escaped rates was wealth that was best able to bear taxation, while we dealt hardly with respect to houses in which the people lived, and to the land which they cultivated, and out of the produce of which we got our food. In point of fact, under our present system, we left untaxed a great part of the wealth of the country which could and ought to bear taxation. Of course, Imperial taxation must be considered as well as local taxation; and no settlement could be arrived at without a careful consideration of the contribution which wealth of every sort ought to pay towards the burdens of the State. He had, since he had sat there, observed a great disposition in the House to think that all evils could be cured by laying heavy burdens on land, although land and houses now bore the whole of the local taxation of the country, which very much of the personal wealth of the country escaped. He trusted, however, that this debate would tend greatly to modify the bitter feeling which appeared to exist amongst some Members of the House towards those who had invested their capital in the soil of the country. He had, for his own part, often thought that the country gentlemen had made a great mistake in treating this matter of local taxation as if it were one between town and country people. It was nothing of the kind. It was one between two different classes of wealth, and not between the people who lived in town or country. He was glad that, except by the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken, the question had been lifted to a higher atmosphere, and that the discussion had been placed on its proper basis. He trusted that in future the question would always be dealt with, not as one between town and country, but as it regarded the ability of all classes in the country to contribute their fair share towards the burdens of the country, whatever might be the source of their income or the kind of property they possessed.

MR. H. R. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.) said, it was admitted that the agricultural interest was practically on its last legs, and rents were going down while rates were not. What the agricultural interest formerly demanded as a matter of justice it now demanded as a matter of imperious necessity. No relief could be obtained from Protection, it was said, and the local rates were the only source which could be looked to for relief. Those who occupied country mansions now were no longer their owners; they were let to men who had enormous fortunes and kept enormous establishments; and they ought to pay their fair share of the rates. They used the roads far more than any of the neighbours, and yet they got off with the payment of a tenth part of the rate paid by their neighbours in proportion to the relative amount of their wealth. The poor, the roads, and the system of elementary education ought to be supported by the wealth of the country, and yet such occupiers of large mansions escaped their fair share of this burden. The agricultural interest had a right to ask that not simply these mansions, but the wealth of those who lived in these mansions, should bear their fair proportion of the local rates. If rates were to be levied upon pictures, furniture, and other wealth of this kind, would that not rather conflict with the idea of dividing the rates between owners and occupiers? If that division was carried out, would not the owner, before letting a house or farm, be concerned to know what personal property the tenant would put into it to be subjected to the local rates? Then the Resolution would interfere with freedom of contract, and that existed now, for a farmer could judge pretty well what rates he would have to pay before he took a farm. He should, therefore, support the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Somerset, and oppose the Resolution; because, if the Resolution were carried, he feared they would be placing one more obstacle in the way of rating personal property.

MR. BRINTON (Kidderminster) said, he considered that all the inequalities which prevailed with regard to the taxation of property had not been covered by the Motion of the hon. Member for Bermondsey; but there were others which ought to be touched on and remedied by a comprehensive scheme of legislation which alone could deal with the case. The House had never liked abstract Resolutions, and they had the highest authority for condemning them; but the case was different when the Resolution pointed the way to practical legislation. The idea of just valuation of property was what it would let for to a responsible tenant paying the outgoings; but, in his opinion, it would not exactly do to adhere strictly to that definition. There were often extensions made of ornamental character—such, for instance, as a large range of greenhouses, which, though not adding to the letting value of the property, ought, in his opinion, to be taxed. There were also difficulties and anomalies with regard to the rating of woods and forests, scarcely any two parts of the country in this respect being rated on the same principles. It was urgently necessary that some definite principle should be laid down indicating the duty of the assessment committees in matters such as these. He also held a strong opinion as to the necessity of making personal as well as real property bear local burdens. It was a monstrous iniquity that whilst agriculturists and merchants were bearing the burdens of the poor rate, the school rate, and other local rates, the owners of personal property should escape scot free. There was a good deal of just complaint in respect of the non-rating of ground rents and the irregularities connected with the rating of country mansions; yet these could be dealt with in a short Act of Parliament. What was wanted was a measure dealing in a comprehensive manner with the far larger and far more important question of making personal as well as real property subject to local burdens. Holding that view, and inasmuch as the Amendment of the hon. Baronet appeared to touch this important branch of the subject most closely, he considered it his duty, as a practical man, to give it his support.

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) said, he was in partial harmony with the hon. Member who brought forward the Motion on the part of it dealing with the question of the division of the rates between owner and occupier. He believed that in regard to house property the rates did in many cases fall on the occupier, owing to the agreements having been made years ago, when the rates were much lower than now. But he thought that the rates in rural districts ultimately chiefly fell on the owners of farms, since it was a well-known fact that the rent of a farm upon which the landlord agreed to pay all the rates was much higher than it otherwise would be. He could give one or two instances which would help to prove his assertion. In the first place, they knew that when farmhouses were let free of rates and taxes, as they were in certain cases, the landlord was entitled to his equivalent by some advance in the rent he received; and, again, they knew that if an assessment committee was valuing property for the relief of the poor, one of the first duties of the overseers or valuers was to make inquiries and ascertain whether the land was let free of rates and taxes or tithes. If the occupier paid them, it was taken into consideration in the rateable value being more nearly assimilated to the gross annual rental. He mentioned these cases because he thought they were sufficient proof of themselves that the tenant or occupier had to give a very substantial *quid pro quo* for his advantages, either in the way of increased rental to his landlord, or else in being more highly assessed. He could quote a stronger argument than that. Professor Fawcett, in his work on political economy, dealt very largely with that question, and pointed out unmistakably that certainly, so far as the rating upon rents of farmhouses was concerned, the burden of rating did fall most heavily on the owner, and not on the occupier. Another authority, the present Secretary of the Local Taxation Committee, Major Craigie, in a Paper contributed to the Royal Agricultural Society's journal in 1878, pointed out that the proportion of rates between the occupier and the owner fell upon the owner and the occupier in the proportion of about 10¾ to 6½. He thought those figures showed that the burden upon the owner of farmhouses and land exceeded that which fell on the occupier, as far as local taxation was concerned, by about 35 per cent. Under these circumstances, he could not feel that the hon. Member had made out the first part of his proposal. But he was glad to agree with him in the second part of his proposal, and he did so solely on account of the fluctuations—or rather the deviations—of rates and taxes from time to time. He was quite aware that in suggesting the division of the rates he was not removing the burden of the taxation off the land—that was another question altogether. It was what he might call a provisional measure to suit the exigencies of the present time, because he believed, from his own knowledge and experience, that a great part of the reduction of rates which was now asked for did not only proceed from bad times and the generally depressed state of agriculture, but also because the farmers were unable to pay the heavy rates which were now placed on their shoulders. He was aware that that did not do away with the main question of removing the burdens off the land; but it would have the advantage of making the tenant feel that, if the rates went up, his landlord as well as he would have to bear the burden; and, further, that it would give the landlord increased interest in the economical administration of the poor rates. He had acquired some knowledge of the subject from his position as chairman of the assessment committee of a large union, and the committee believed that they had full power to deal satisfactorily with the assessment of mansions, and that if complaints were made the committee were to blame. The only fair way of dealing with large mansion-houses was to assess separately the house and the deer park or park adjacent, and to assess the house on its fair lettable value without special regard to the cost of its construction. The park land ought then to be rated as if it were land—other things being equal—in the neighbourhood used for agricultural purposes. Owners ought not to be allowed to escape their fair burdens by giving up a large portion of their land for purposes of pleasure and enjoyment. He felt sure he was right in his view that there was no especial harm done in the present system of rating mansions, inasmuch as the two great authorities on rating — namely, Penfold and Castle—laid no particular stress on the question of these mansion-houses of which so much had been made in the debate. He felt some perplexity as to how he should vote, as he recollected a little time ago three successive divisions on one question. He agreed with the hon. Member for Bermondsey on one portion of his Motion; he partially agreed with him on another; he was totally opposed to him on a third; and on the fourth division of his Motion he did not wish to vote at all. In these circumstances, what was an unfortunate new Member to do? He thought rates ought to be divided between owner and occupier, and he agreed with the last speaker that the chief thing wanted was a thorough and comprehensive reform of the whole system of local taxation.

MR. A. E. PEASE (York) said, he must deny that the hon. Member for Bermondsey had any desire in this matter to interfere with the freedom of contract as between the occupier and owner of land. The hon. Member for West Dorsetshire had said he looked to the rating of personal property for local purposes as affording some relief from the local burdens which now weighed heavily upon the agriculturists of the country. He (Mr. A. E. Pease) hoped that personal property would be made to contribute towards local taxation; but hon. Members must remember that if such property were rendered liable to local taxation, the farmer's personal property—a farmer's goods and chattels and stock and balance at the bank—might become subject to taxation, and that, heavy as the burdens endured by the occupiers of the country districts were, the injustice was far more glaring in the case of towns. In the first place, the rates in towns were, as a rule, very much heavier than those in the country districts; and, in the second place, the increase in the rates in country districts during the last 10 years had not been anything like so large as the increase in the rates of towns. From the Local Government Board Report for 1884-5, he found that the increase in rates during the last 10 years of which the Report took cognizance was £5,600,000. Of that increase only £200,000 was contributed by purely rural districts, and £1,100,000 by mixed urban and rural districts. Purely urban districts, therefore, contributed upwards of £4,250,000 out of the increase of £5,000,000. These were two very important reasons why he thought the unfairness in the incidence of local taxation was a question of more importance to those living in towns than to those living in the country places. But there was still another consideration which influenced him in supporting the Motion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Rogers); and that was that the occupier in the town, by the improvements for which he had to pay as a ratepayer, contributed largely to the value of the property of someone else. Supposing £100,000 was borrowed for 21 years by an urban authority for town improvements, and that a rate of 1*s*. in the pound was levied to pay interest and principal, at the expiration of the 21 years an owner might find his property improved without any expenditure whatever on his part. Furthermore, the rate would be remitted, and in that respect also his property was vastly improved; and, in the third place, an owner with the rates remitted, and his property improved, would have an opportunity of raising his rents to a very large extent. These considerations also induced him (Mr. A. E. Pease) to support the first part of the Motion. He acknowledged that the rating of country mansions was not satisfactory. It was well to remember, however, that the rating was fixed upon a definite principle—namely, the letting value of the property; and so long as that principle remained in force, taking into consideration the enormous number of mansions now to be let, care must be taken not to overtax the owners of country mansions. A tax levied on these properties on a different system to that on which it was levied on other property would, in his opinion, be grossly unfair. It would result in a tax upon the building trade, upon the employment which the residents in country mansions give to a large number of people on the estate, and upon the residents in the country, and it would also result in a premium on absenteeism. He was persuaded his hon. Friend would not countenance any unfair assessment of country mansions. He would, however, like to see the whole question put on a different footing, for all must acknowledge that country mansions did not at present contribute their fair share towards the rates. He intended to support the Motion in preference to the Amendment for another reason, and that was that he considered the circumstances required immediate action.

MR. DUNCOMBE (York, E.R., Howdenshire) said, it was a strange thing to a new Member to think that year after year this question came before the House, and yet was no nearer a settlement. They all saw the necessity for some change; but it was only on those occasions which, unfortunately, were only too rare, when a Conservative Government was in power, that anything like a practical step was taken. Even those who were only indirectly connected with land must admit that the grievances of the landed and agricultural interest had a considerable degree of reality about them. The necessity of taking some steps for remedying the unfairness of the incidence of local burdens might be inferred from the fact that in many places land was going out of cultivation altogether. In other places land which a few years ago let for 35*s.* an acre now only let for 15*s.* an acre; and it now happened every day that land put up to auction was withdrawn without a bid being made for it; whereas a few years ago it would have been sold for 30 years' purchase. It seemed to him astonishing that, with that state of things before them, it should have been thought by the hon. Gentleman who moved the Resolution that any re-adjustment of local burdens could meet the difficulties of the case. It was impossible to conceive that the mere shifting of burdens from the tenant to the landlord could possibly be an adequate way of grappling with the difficulty. He had no hesitation in saying that if there was such a complete revision of local taxation as to leave to the landlord payment of the whole of the rates the difficulty would not be materially touched. Under the circumstances he thought they had a right to come to the great Council of the Nation and ask that something should be done for a great industry. Without exaggeration, he might say we were standing by the deathbed of one of our greatest English industries. Surely it was not too much to ask Parliament, which was supposed to represent the sound common sense of the nation, to do something to avert a great and impending calamity. Unless something was done very speedily, the whole country would suffer to an extent it would take great detail to describe. One of the results of the existing state of things was that the agricultural labourers were being driven from the country into the towns, thereby adding to the number of the unemployed, and increasing the depression from which the towns were suffering. Another result was that we were becoming more and more dependent upon foreign countries for our food supplies; and if this was to be recognized as a permanent state of things, if we were to be almost exclusively dependent on foreign supplies for our sustenance, then he thought the House was bound to listen to the arguments of the gallant Representative of the Naval Service (Lord Charles Beresford), and give us a Navy that would protect us from blockade; that would preserve to us our food supplies, and save our countrymen from possible death by starvation. He was quite aware he would be met by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the usual argument that the Reserve Funds at his disposal were not sufficient to meet all the demands made upon them; and possibly some other Member of the Government would rise, and in an outburst of petulance tell those who were taking this view of the case they were advocating unsound finance. But money was sometimes forthcoming for objects not so worthy of consideration as that for which he pleaded. It was just possible that hon. Members who would upbraid him for asking for a comparatively small sum for a necessary object would come afterwards and ask for an enormous sum, amounting, perhaps, to £100,000,000, for purposes the necessity for which was not altogether apparent. After all, there was nothing unreasonable in the request the agricultural interest made. They only asked that towards burdens which were called local, but which were, to a great extent, connected with national objects, more contribution should be made from the National Exchequer. They asked that the owners of funded property who resided in the country, and who received the advantages of local rates, should contribute something towards those rates, which at the present moment fell exclusively upon owners and occupiers—and they asked that the Railway Companies should no longer harass and oppress an important British industry by giving the foreign producer a preferential advantage in railway rates. Surely these were not unreasonable demands; and he trusted that this new House of Commons would show an active and practical sympathy with an interest which, whether depressed or prosperous, must vitally affect every other industry of the country.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, he had listened with a great deal of attention to his hon. Friend (Mr. Thorold Rogers) who introduced the Motion, and his argument had brought him to quite a contrary conclusion to the hon. Gentleman opposite. He hoped the new House, in close touch with the people as it was, would do what it could to redress the wrong inflicted in the past by putting the weight of the burden on trade and commerce rather than on the landed interest represented on the other side of the House. One main reason why he supported the principle involved in the incidence of taxation recommended by his hon. Friend was that if that principle were applied, if landlords were made to bear their fair share of local taxation, he felt confident it would lead to an increased economy in local expenditure. A large amount of spending power was in the hands of *ex officio* Guardians; and he did not see why those who had to do with the expenditure should not bear their share of the burden. It would add greatly to economy to have that burden fairly distributed. It was perfectly monstrous the way in which mansions were taxed. If they were fairly taxed they would pay on what they cost, not on what they let for. Did hon. Members happen to know that trade was taxed on what was expended on it? Nothing stood out more clearly as an injustice in the country districts than to see ordinary houses of the middle and poorer classes rated at their full value, while mansions were rated very much below. This was an injustice that the sense of the House would sooner or later remove.

MR. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) said, he did not see why it should be unjust for the first incidence of taxation to fall upon the occupiers, seeing that they agreed when they took premises to pay the rates. It was not pretended that the occupiers were a class incapable of making their own bargains. An occupier knew perfectly well when he took premises that he had to pay rates. He should like to know upon what principle it was unjust for a man to perform his own contract—that was to say, for an occupier to carry out an agreement made between himself and the landlord. The only man who could properly pay the taxes and take the responsibility was the man who resided on the spot, and was in a position to deal with the expenditure connected with the neighbourhood in which he lived. There could be no injustice in an occupier, who was the owner for the time being, paying the tax which he had agreed to pay, and which formed part of the conditions of his tenancy. Although the present system of taxation had been condemned, he had not heard the slightest suggestion as to how, or in what way, it was proposed to collect the Revenue if the existing system should be abolished. The present system was nearly as simple as it could be. The full value was taken in the assessment made—and he never heard of any unfairness or partiality in the assessment of property—the occupier paid, having made his bargain with his immediate landlord, and the landlord with his mortgagee, and so on. They had not heard from Gentlemen who condemned the system the faintest shadow of a suggestion how the injustice they alleged was to be remedied, or how we were to have a system which would be equitable. And now a word with respect to the owners of mansions. It had been said that everything was to be taxed according to cost. He denied altogether that the cost of a thing ought to be the sole criterion of its actual value. A man might spend much more on a house than the house was worth. A friend of his had built a house, and as he wanted to go elsewhere for the benefit of his health he tried to dispose of it; but everyone who came to see about it always made the inquiry how many gardeners would be required, and so on. A thing should be taken with its encumbrances. As to that part of the Resolution which stated that the owners of ground rents in towns were liable to no part of those charges, the outlay of which was essential in order that the property might possess any marketable value whatever, he might observe that in all cases within his knowledge where there were ground rents, the owners of those ground rents were the people who laid out the land for building, and the streets, who made the sewers, laid down the water-pipes, and made all the arrangements necessary for habitation, and having done that they let out the land at ground rents with a view to compensate themselves for the outlay. It was the money thus laid out which made the houses habitable. It should be borne in mind, too, that ground rents already paid their proportion of Property and Income Tax, and that remark held good of all the owners, legatees, annuitants, and so forth. It should be also remembered that in every case the ground landlord let the land for a term of years, say 60 or 80, and during all that period the increased value would belong to the tenant. Why, therefore, should the ground landlord, who had let his property on the condition that the tenant should pay the charges, be called upon to do what the tenant by the terms of his contract had undertaken to perform? He opposed this Resolution, because he conceived it to be calculated to do exceedingly great mischief. When the country was distressed, and the attention of the House ought to be given to matters which affected our commercial interests and the development of our trade, was it right or wise that they should occupy their time with questions, directly in the nature of class questions, which could only tend to disturb the relations between landlord and tenant, and render those relations, which were now amicable, disagreeable to both? Was our legislation with regard to Ireland so successful as to encourage us to enter upon a similar course for this country? In his view of the case, and after an experience of some hundreds of years—[*Laughter.*] He congratulated hon. Members upon their disposition to be merry; but he could not congratulate them on their intelligent understanding of what he was saying. What he was about to say was that this system of collecting from the occupier had been approved by the experience of hundreds of years. Having regard to that experience, and to the fact that those who proposed this Resolution had not suggested any substitute for the present system, he would oppose the Motion as impracticable in itself and calculated to disturb the relations between landlord and tenant.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.) said, that he did not propose to follow the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down—he really did not feel competent to follow an hon. and learned Gentleman who, although a new Member, had had an experience of hundreds of years. [Mr. AMBROSE: I did not say so.] He was quite content to leave the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman to be answered by hon. Members sitting on the same side of the House. Until the hon. and learned Member got up to speak, there appeared to be really a general agreement on both sides of the House as to the main principle which they had to consider in this debate. The hon. and learned Gentleman occupied rather an exceptional position, and he was sure he would excuse him if he passed over his argument and considered those which had been offered by his Predecessors in the debate. The hon. Baronet who moved the Amendment spoke of this as being a very dull subject. He supposed the hon. Baronet was right; but he thought that the House would agree that they had had an interesting and an instructive debate. He could not conceive any subject introduced more favourably to the House than this had been by the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers), who certainly had shown skill and power to invest a dull subject with interest not very common in debate in the House of Commons. In dealing with this subject he felt a certain difficulty—he found his hands tied behind his back—because it would not be right to anticipate any statement that might be made hereafter when a Bill was introduced on behalf of the Government for dealing with the whole of this question. All he could do was to refer to general principles, without making any disclosures of the actual intentions of the Government. It appeared to him, however, that almost for the first time in the history of this subject there was really something like general agreement upon principles. This was the first occasion on which local taxation had been debated in the present House of Commons; but in the last House of Commons the subject was one of continual controversy between the two sides of the House. That would not be so that evening, as far as he was concerned, as he was in the exceptional position of being able to agree with everybody. He agreed with the introducer of the Motion, and he agreed with the Mover of the Amendment. It really appeared that the House of Commons was for once a sort of happy family. Might it long continue. Although he agreed with the conclusions of his hon. Friend and of the hon. Baronet, he would not pledge himself to agree with all the arguments and statements which they had made in the course of the debate. The hon. Member for Bermondsey had proposed that there should be a division of rates as between owner and occupier, and the hon. Baronet included that in his Amendment. The hon. Baronet, from the terms of his Amendment and from his speech, was of opinion that a more complete re-adjustment of rates was necessary. He thought that there would be very little difference of opinion in the House as to the desirability of that re-adjustment. He did not himself anticipate any very great practical result from such a re-adjustment; but he thought it would give satisfaction to interests which at present considered themselves to be the subjects of injustice. He did not doubt for a moment that when rents were settled the question of taxation was taken into account, and to some extent affected the amount of the rent, and that the injustice, where it was injustice, applied to the case where there had unquestionably been increased taxation since the terms of the lease had been settled. If that were so, was there any objection to the change, although, perhaps, it should make them cautious of expecting any advantage from it? There was, however, one point of great importance, if this change were to be made, to which his hon. Friend had not referred, and as to which he had not given any definite opinion himself. If a portion of the rates were to be charged against the owner, it was said that it would be interfering with existing contracts. The whole of the matter had been discussed very fully at the time of the celebrated Report upon Local Taxation by his right hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen). His right hon. Friend proposed in his draft Report—and the Committee subsequently accepted it—the recommendation that this re-apportionment of taxation between owner and occupier should only come into effect after a few years' interval, and that then the owners should be entitled to charge the average amount of the rates for the previous 10 years, in addition to the rent in his lease; so that as far as existing leases went there would be no increased charge upon the owner, and the recommendation only took effect with regard to new leases. That was a recommendation made a long time ago, and would not be now adequate to meet the public sentiment which at present existed upon this question. He should be very sorry to pledge himself or the Government on this question; but he was bound to point out that it would be very desirable, in the interests of owners and occupiers, that satisfaction should be given within a limited period whenever the present system was interfered with. He believed that satisfaction would only be given if the effect of any change was immediate and applied to all leases, past as well as future. It had been objected that this was an interference with contracts, and was, therefore, altogether unjustifiable, and that it was relieving one class of taxpayers at the expense of another. He wished to point out that that was the result of every new tax. To his mind, at all events, it was not a complete nor a conclusive answer to a proposal of this kind that it altered the incidence of taxation between owner and occupier, and because it seemed at first sight to be an alteration of existing contracts. They had not to consider the question of contract between owner and occupier; they had only to consider whether, as a matter of fact, the owner paid too little and the occupier paid too much, and in what way they might alter it by the imposition of new taxation. Then the hon. Member proposed another important change, that the law of rating, as regarded the taxation of parks and mansions, should be altered; and he thought that the hon. Member had made out a very strong case in favour of that change, which had probably struck every Member of that House. The hon. Member behind him, who sat for one of the divisions of Durham, said that this matter had never been brought before the Courts, and that the assessment committees throughout the country were acting upon an interpretation of the law which had no legal authority; but he had before him the particulars of a case in the Queen's Bench Division, where a decision was given to the effect that in considering the rating of parks and mansions the rate must be made on the basis of what the tenant would pay if he were not likely to be disturbed in his tenancy. Take the case of Blenheim, which he had never seen, but which he believed was a white elephant, a tremendous palace presented by the nation to the Duke of Marlborough, the mere expense of keeping up of which would require a very large income. If the present owner desired to give it up it would be almost impossible to find a tenant for it upon any terms whatever; therefore, the local assessment of Blenheim was ridiculously small, probably smaller than that of some moderate houses in the same or other parts of the country. It had also been suggested that instead of assessing the parks and mansions according to their rent they should be assessed according to their original cost. What would be the effect of that? The proposal sounded *primâ facie* a fair one enough; but, in his opinion, the House would not be wise in accepting it. The result in such a case as Blenheim would be that with any percentage upon the original cost of the mansion the rate would be so high that an ordinary tenant would be unable to continue his occupancy; and the owner, unless he happened to be a person of exceptional wealth, would be obliged to give up his occupancy also and to pull down the house. And, therefore, if the idea of cost were taken as the basis of rating in every case, it would lead to the destruction of many of the most splendid historical places in the country, and of many very old and interesting country houses which, as now maintained, were part of the tradition and the glory of the country, but which could only be maintained if a reasonable valuation were placed upon them. But although he found himself quite unable to agree that cost should be taken as the basis of valuation, on the other hand he did not think that the present system of valuation was satisfactory. He would be inclined to take the view of the Committee on Local Taxation, who proposed that in the first instance there should be taken the selling value of the property, and that the ratal value should be something like 4 per cent on that selling valuation. This would not be oppressive, and would, at the same time, be considerably more than the present assessment. The hon. Baronet opposite, by his Amendment, raised a question which had been frequently discussed in that House, and had instituted a comparison between the incidence of taxation on real and on personal property. The hon. Baronet had asserted that his figures were indisputable; but, for his own part, he did not know of any figures which were not disputable. But he could assure the hon. Baronet that his figures were particularly so, and that they had been constantly the subject of dispute since this question was raised in the House of Commons. The difference between him and the hon. Baronet consisted very much in the way in which he used his figures. The hon. Baronet always spoke of real property as including houses and land; but, after all, his interest was entirely confined to land. ["No!"] But it was so.

Sir RICHARD PAGET said, his Amendment was directed to local taxation and its incidence on real property, including houses.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN said, he could not help retaining his own opinion that it was the land which chiefly interested the hon. Baronet. At any rate, he felt certain that hon. Gentlemen opposite would consider as ridiculously inadequate any alteration of the law which dealt only with houses. It was the land occupied by the farmers and owned by the landlords which they were anxious to relieve from what they said was an excessive burden of taxation; but when they came to prove that it was subject to excessive taxation they always included houses, which, after all, was a kind of property which it was very difficult indeed to distinguish from personal property. But in the larger sense in which the hon. Baronet was willing that his Amendment should be interpreted he was willing to agree to it, as he was desirous that all classes of property should contribute fairly to local as well as to Imperial taxation. He had publicly stated on many occasions his opinion that personal property did not at present contribute fairly to taxation. But the hon. Baronet had ridiculed the argument often put forward that when they came to consider the burdens on land they had to separate what had been called hereditary burdens and the burdens of additional or new taxation. He made merry with the term hereditary burdens, and said the police and education rates were not hereditary burdens. But that was not the question. In reality, it did not matter under what name the taxation on land was levied. The first question to ask was whether the present taxation on land was, as a whole, greater than it was many years ago. How would the hon. Baronet like to go back to the hereditary burden upon land? Was he prepared for the 4*s*. land tax? That was a larger question than any raised by his Motion; but when the hon. Baronet talked of hereditary burdens he would answer him by saying that, as a matter of fact, he did not believe that at the present time the burdens on land had been materially increased during the last 100 years; and in these circumstances they had the right to consider that a large proportion were hereditary burdens, in this sense that they were the State rent on the land—not a tax on current expenditure—under which all land transactions had taken place for a great number of years.

SIR RICHARD PAGET said, that what he meant was that the land tax should be levied, as it was originally levied, on all property.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN said, that here the hon. Baronet invited him into a historical disquisition on the land tax, for which he did not think the House was at present prepared; but whenever that matter arose properly in the course of debate he would be perfectly prepared to state his opinion, which was that the hon. Baronet was entirely mistaken, and that the 4*s.* land tax, which the hon. Baronet imagined was levied on all kinds of property, was, in fact, collected only from land, and was in no sense a tax on personal property. But, after all, the hon. Baronet spoke chiefly from a large experience of land, and the occupation of land in the rural districts. He could speak from a large experience of the effect of local taxation in towns and urban districts; and he was bound to say that the grievance was much greater to the shopkeeping population than it was in the case of the farmers and the landowners. A shopkeeper in a town was charged for all local improvements in proportion to the premises which he occupied. So was the manufacturer, or a banker; but it might happen that a banker was making an enormous profit out of premises which had a comparatively low rating. He might be rated at £1,000, for instance, and might make an annual profit of £20,000; but £1,000 would not be a heavy rating for a large shop, the profits from which could hardly be expected to exceed £3,000 or £4,000 a-year. Therefore, the shopkeeper would pay five times as much as the banker in proportion to his profits; and in the same way he might establish another series of illustrations equally exhibiting anomalies and injustice. He knew of a very curious case—the case of a man who died leaving an enormous fortune—something like £1,000,000, and who had lived in a house the value of which did not exceed £30 a-year. Could there be a greater anomaly than that of a man whose income was probably £60,000 a-year rated to the local taxation of the town in which he lived on not more than £30 a-year? He was bringing forward these arguments in aid of the hon. Baronet, for he was going to accept the Amendment; but hon. Members opposite seemed to think he was arguing against it. Quite the reverse. As far as the Amendment went in establishing a principle he entirely agreed with it. He thought that such anomalies as those to which he had pointed ought to be redressed, and the redress would be much more important in the case of the urban population than in the case of the rural population. But how was this rearrangement to be brought about? The hon. Member for Bermondsey had suggested that personal property in a house should be rated as well as the house; that they should rate the pictures, plate, books, and furniture in the house as well as the house itself. This system had been tried in America; but the best information he could get showed that it had practically broken down. Property of that kind was most difficult to identify or to value. They could not put a fair value on it. The State, which was the collecting authority, had always the worst of it in valuing property of that kind. The Treasury officials said that they had no difficulty in valuing or getting a fair value on a large portion of the personal property disposed of by will; but, on the other hand, it was found impossible to assess value on furniture, plate, and pictures. A system of this kind would be unpopular, because it would be inquisitorial, while it would not add much to the Revenue. In the next place, there was a proposal which had hitherto found favour with hon. Gentlemen opposite. Time after time they came to the House with the same story, averring that the taxation on real property was always greater than it ought to be. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes, he knew it; and whatever concessions were made to them their grievance still remained the same, and so it would remain to the end of the chapter, so long as they dealt with it by the process that commended itself to hon. Members opposite. They came forward with these propositions, and ended by demanding an additional subvention or grant from the Consolidated Fund towards local taxation; and though, like the daughters of the horseleech, they cried, "Give, give," it was always in this direction that the change was expected. Already their demands had been yielded to to an enormous extent. The amount of the grants from the Exchequer now made in aid of local taxation was very large indeed. His hon. Friend the Member for Bermondsey said he could not understand the Return in the Estimates. That Return might be open to criticism, but it was perfectly intelligible. It showed that the grants in aid of local taxation and the charges transferred from local to Imperial funds for the year 1886-7 were—for England and Wales, £3,500,000; for Scotland, £540,000; and for Ireland, £2,078,000; making a total of £6,118,000. For the sake of clearness, he would deal only with the charges in England and Wales. In the first place, there was a sum of £177,000 for the rates on Government property; but this was merely an arrangement. It was found inconvenient to subject Government property to local assessment, and accordingly a fixed sum was paid in lieu of rates by arrangement to the Local Authorities. He agreed that the hon. Baronet was entitled to deduct the amount from the rest of the subvention. Then there were sums of £242,000 towards disturnpiking main roads; £300,000 connected with Poor Law Unions; £495,000 for pauper lunatics; £150,000 in aid of criminal prosecutions; £1,400,000 for police; and £637,000 for prisons and reformatories. Then it must be remembered that there was an enormous grant from Imperial funds in aid of the education rate, which did not come under that list of subventions. Let them consider these subventions in the form in which they were at present managed. He would say nothing about the prisons, although the result of removing the prisons from the control of the Local Authorities had been to stereotype administration, and he was very sceptical as to the economy of the change. He knew that there had been a nominal economy, but believed that better results could have been achieved by an arrangement in accordance with which some of the gaols would have been given up and the prisoners transferred from one county to another. But when he came to the case of the police he asserted that, instead of subvention having resulted in saving to the ratepayer, it had resulted in an increase of expenditure. For every penny that the Local Authority spent on the police the Government contributed an extra penny. Now, what happened in many instances? The Government had established in connection with this subvention a supervision by officials. The officials went down and inspected the county or the borough police; they complimented the chief of the police on the character of his force; and then they went on to express surprise that he could get on with a force so much smaller in proportion to the population than the force of another county or borough. The chief of police was always anxious naturally to increase the efficiency of the force under his control, and he went to the Local Authority and said they must give him an increase of his force; and if any question was raised as to cost he pointed out to them, and they pointed out to their constituents, that for every penny they contributed they would get another penny from the Government, so that they would have twopence of advantage for each penny of charge. That was an irresistible argument. The result was that since these subventions had been made, and especially since they had been largely increased, the cost of the police force, in many boroughs and in some counties, had been very largely increased. He said, then, that, in his humble judgment, this attempt to secure a larger contribution from personal property by means of subventions of this kind was a mistake. That it was a great disadvantage to the Imperial taxpayer was perfectly clear, and that it was no advantage to the local taxpayer was, he thought, capable of easy proof. There were other ways in which the matter might be dealt with. It was not for him to anticipate any statement which might hereafter be made on behalf of the Government. All he would do now was to lay down the principle, in the first place, that it was desirable that personal property should be brought in to contribute to local expenditure. He had himself, in various public speeches, referred to this question, and suggested on several occasions that an appeal might be had to the Income Tax, and the idea he had had in his mind was that the Local Authorities might have in some way placed at their disposal a local Income Tax. He was bound to make the frank confession, and to say now that, having gone into the matter more carefully and with the advantage of official information, he believed the difficulties in the way were insuperable. He believed it was almost impossible to localize the Income Tax, and he also believed that was the conclusion which had been arrived at by others who had pursued a like inquiry. There were cases of persons who had residences or places of business in many districts, and it would be difficult to divide their payment between those districts. That was an objection, though not an insuperable one. Another objection was that a vast amount of the Income Tax of the country was assessable in London and other large towns. Of £216,000,000 returned under Schedule D, £100,000,000 was assessable in the London district, and of the remaining £116,000,000 by far the larger part was assessable in towns of more than 20,000 inhabitants. The contribution of the country districts would, therefore, be a mere nothing. He was, therefore, obliged, with great reluctance, to dismiss from his mind the possibility of having anything in the nature of a local Income Tax; but it did not follow that the Income Tax or some other tax which distinctly brought personal property under contribution might not be called in aid of local expenditure, only he held it to be a principle in that case that the contribution should be a fixed contribution, and that they should leave to the Local Authorities the advantage of all the influences which now made for economy, and not make the contribution conditional on increased expenditure. He thought he had said all that was necessary on the Motion and the Amendment before the House. He should be very glad if his hon. Friend and the hon. Baronet, after the statement he had made, saw fit to withdraw both the Motion and the Amendment. He thought that, on the whole, would be a convenient course, because it was not generally desirable that the House should be pledging itself to abstract Resolutions. If, however, a division were insisted upon, all he could say was that he could take no objection to it which would lead him to vote against either the original Motion or the Amendment, which latter, indeed, seemed to him to include and cover the Motion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): I have nothing whatever to complain of in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I think that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman has been marked throughout by a considerable appreciation of the arguments of those with whom the right hon. Gentleman differs, and by great sympathy with the hon. Baronet behind me (Sir Richard Paget) who moved an Amendment to the Resolution of the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers). The right hon. Gentleman, however, did make one or two observations which I think are open to a few words of comment and criticism. The right hon. Gentleman entirely accepts the view that personal property should, if possible, and in so far as possible, be brought in to contribute to the local rates; but he severely, and I think rather unfairly, criticized the system of subvention by which that end is now imperfectly and partially obtained. The right hon. Gentleman told us that subventions invariably increase expenditure, and conduce to extravagance on the part of the Local Authority. I think that in that assertion the right hon. Gentleman has confounded increased extravagance with increased efficiency. It is undoubtedly true that the Central Authority has, in those cases in which subventions have been given, obtained a right to criticize the expenditure, and it is also true that there have been increased charges. For instance, there are the police charges. The increased cost of the police is not the result of increased extravagance; but the direct result of the demand made upon the Local Authority by the Central Authority that increased efficiency should precede the grant of a subvention. Therefore, it is an incorrect and misleading statement to say that in all cases where there has been increased expenditure it has been the result of extravagance. In the second place, all admit, on this side of the House, that the system of subvention is only a mere stopgap. It is a crude and clumsy method of obtaining some of that justice which is wanted both for the owners and occupiers of property in matters of taxation. That being the case, we look forward to the time when the right hon.

Gentleman or some other statesman will bring in a Local Government Bill to redress the anomalies of the present system. In reference to that matter, I would express again the regret which I have expressed more than once in this House during the last few months, that while Her Majesty's Government had occasion to consider the question of local government in several instances in connection with various Bills which have been laid before the House, they have not yet held out the slightest hope that they intend in the near future to give us that measure of local government of which they talked so much and so loudly when they were before the constituencies of the country a few months ago. I will now go to another point which was touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman, in attacking my hon. Friend behind me (Sir Richard Paget), put forward the strange theory that because the land has borne particular burdens for a great many years, that therefore those burdens have ceased to be burdens, and must be ignored in all future imposition of taxation. That theory is perfectly absurd. If by exceptional taxation you reduce the value of the funds, surely the permanent value of the funds will suffer. But why should you say that because you have taxed the funds for 20, 30, or 40 years, and the tax has become a kind of hereditary tax upon that species of property, that therefore it is to be ignored in the imposition of new taxation; and that you may go on increasing the taxation upon the funds without paying the slightest regard to the existing burdens? There is one other point which I ought to criticize in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman made a very remarkable statement with reference to the relations of owners and occupiers, in so far as taxation is concerned, in cases where those relations are determined by existing covenants. The right hon. Gentleman said, I think, that the Committee known as Mr. Goschen's Committee had reported in favour of dividing the rates between owner and occupier; but had coupled that with a further recommendation that the division of rates should be carried out only through a gradual process by which existing leases and contracts should be saved. Then, said the right hon. hon. Gentleman, a good deal of time has elapsed since that Report was made. Is the House to understand, then, that the right hon. Gentleman thinks that in 1886 public opinion has so changed both in this House and in the country with regard to the sanctity of covenants, that a different rule should now be applied to that which was proposed to be applied under Mr. Goschen's direction in 1870? If that is the right hon. Gentleman's opinion, I confess that I think it gives a gloomy augury of the future legislation of this House. What does the right hon. Gentleman himself propose? Let me take a concrete case. Let me suppose the case of a landlord and tenant with a lease that has run 10 years, and has 10 years more to run. That lease was framed on the understanding that the tenant was to pay certain rates, and during the first 10 years of the lease he did pay those rates. If the right hon. Gentleman gets his way, that person, in the next 10 years, would cease to pay half of the rates, which would be thrown on the landlord. Now, what would happen at the end of the term? It would be necessary to make a new lease, and the landlord would be able to get back in the shape of rent the whole of that which he had been obliged by law to give up for 10 years in the shape of rates by the mere natural operation of the market. It has been demonstrated, as the right hon. Gentleman might have seen, that, in effect, through the remainder of the currency of the lease, you would simply be depriving the landlord by an arbitrary act of this House of that which belongs to him, and handing it over to the tenant. I now leave the rather ungrateful task of criticizing the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and I come to that part to which I can give him the fullest and most hearty concurrence. I never heard anything better put than the right hon. Gentleman's criticism upon the strange proposal of the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers) for imposing exceptional taxation upon those unfortunate individuals who happen to be the owners of large country houses. The hon. Member talked as if he envied the people whom he described as blessed with a possession of these mansions. If the hon. Member knew a little more of big country houses, he would find that there is very little of a blessing, and not much to envy in the possession of them. The truth is, that the whole of this strange proposal of the hon. Member is a manifestation of disease.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS (Southwark, Bermondsey): I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I said nothing of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman is a little mixed. I only said that the rates as levied now are too low, although I thought the country gentlemen in assessing those rates acted entirely within the four corners of the law. That is all I said; and I do not understand the comments of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That may have been, and I do not doubt was, the substance of the argument of the hon. Member; but I appeal to everyone who heard it whether a speech which took 20 minutes in delivery can be adequately compressed into those few words?

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: The right hon. Gentleman is again wrong. ["Order!"] I must explain. These are gross misrepresentations. My speech took an hour and five minutes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My statement, then, if it erred at all, erred, as most of my statements do, in being too favourable to the hon. Member. I said he had spoken 20 minutes, whereas it appears he spoke an hour and 10 minutes.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS: An hour and five minutes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: One hour and 20 minutes. Then the speech of the hon. Gentleman was exactly one hour worse than I thought it was. That speech, however, and those of several other hon. Members who spoke from that side of the House on this particular part of the question, appear to me to afford a very curious example of a disease which is now extremely common in this Parliament. I mean "Landlordphobia." Whatever crimes a landlord may have committed, those crimes have been amply atoned by the possession of the big country house, which the hon. Gentleman envies him. When the House comes to the question of taxing those big country houses, I observe the most extraordinary divergence of opinion in the means proposed to be adopted. Nobody denies that the present system is legal. Nobody denies that it is in exact accordance with the method adopted in regard to other kinds of property—that is to say, that the owner of a big country house pays the taxes in exactly the same manner as if it were a cottage. ["No!"] I say yes. The only question is whether the possession of a large country house is of so exceptional a kind that an exceptional method of taxation ought to be adopted in regard to it. Nobody will deny that that is a fair statement of the case. There are two entirely different methods in which hon. Gentlemen opposite appear to think that a readjustment of taxation ought to be obtained. There is the comparatively reasonable proposal of the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers) to take the annual value, or, in other words, the price at which it would sell, and rate it on that. That proposal, whether it is good or bad is, at all events, I admit, not based on an irrational or unjust system. As to the system itself, it would do very little injury to the owners of houses; but I do not think it would in the slightest degree benefit the Exchequer. Why, Sir, what is the selling value of a big country house, separate from the estate of which it forms part? Is there a man so abandoned, so idiotic, so utterly lost to the first glimmerings of self-interest that he would deliberately be saddled with one of these gigantic structures without the estate of which it forms part? That is the selling value of the house, and I do not think the owner of the house would have much to complain of if you only taxed the selling value. But other hon. Members sitting on the opposite side of the House—among others, the hon. and learned Member for Durham—have made another proposal. And what is it they propose? Not that the selling or letting value should be the measure of the taxable value, but that the amount the structure originally cost should be the measure of that value. A more grossly unjust system it is hardly possible to conceive. Is that proposal to be adopted with regard to other property? Take a great mill in the locality where the industry which once flourished has deserted it. Such a building is now worth scarcely anything to the owner. Are you going to tax that building on the original cost? Are you going to tax it in accordance with the system you propose to adopt in regard to big country houses? Then, again, take the case of a considerable increase of artificial water in a park—the mania of some wealthy predecessor of the owner, who may have spent many thousands of pounds in producing this wretched sheet of water. Is this a case of accumulated wealth—as hon. Gentlemen put it—and are you going to tax it upon the original cost to the man who put it there? I feel that it is only necessary to state a proposition of that kind to show its gross absurdity. The truth is that hon. Gentlemen opposite desire—and I do not blame them—to impose taxes on luxuries; but the essence of a tax on luxuries is that if a man who enjoys a luxury desires to leave it off he escapes the tax. How is the owner of a country house to leave off that luxury? [An hon. MEMBER: By selling it.] No doubt, he might sell it; but it is wished to take the letting value as the value of the house. How else is the unhappy man, who is the victim of a mania of his ancestors in bricks and mortar, to escape the tax on his luxury which it is desired to impose? This is, in truth, not a tax on luxury, but simply a tax on sentiment. The man whom you tax can only avoid the tax by throwing up his country house. Nothing else will save him from the tax-gatherer; and if he does not do that, the only thing which prevents him is the fact that it is his home in which he was brought up. Round that home many sentiments have crystallized. It is the home in which he and his family have lived, perhaps, for generations; it is those sentiments—and those sentiments alone—which induce him to retain that home; and if the House taxes that man in the method some hon. Gentlemen propose, it will tax not his luxuries, but his sentiment. I do not think I have much more to say. The hon. Member for Bermondsey appears to be labouring under an obscure idea, with which I, on my part, heartily sympathize. The hon. Member, in the second part of his Resolution, deals with the question of country houses; and he seems to be animated by the view that there are certain wealthy persons who escape their fair share of contribution to local burdens. I agree absolutely with the hon. Member; and I will go much further than he does. These wealthy persons who live in these big country houses are not the sole persons who excite the hon. Member's envy. I agree with him that there are many persons who now escape their fair contribution to the rates of the district in which they live, and from the rates of which they derive all that makes life tolerable and bearable; and I earnestly trust that the evil will be remedied. If it is remedied it will be by the adoption, not of the hon. Gentleman's Resolution, but by the Amendment put by my hon. Friend the Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget). This House largely consists of new Members, who may not be acquainted—or but imperfectly acquainted—with the long series of Resolutions which have been carried in former Parliaments on the subject of local taxation. Over and over again, in the teeth of the Government of the day, has this House carried the principle laid down by my hon. Friend the Member for Somersetshire. This House, when it suits it, can express its concurrence with an act of its Predecessors; and the act of its Predecessors, to which I now call attention, is not an isolated performance on its part. Over and over again have Government after Government, and Parliament after Parliament, assented to the justice of the principle which my hon. Friend has laid down, and which he asks the House to adopt. I shall, therefore, vote for it. It is in accordance with precedent, and in accordance with justice. It is not put forward by my hon. Friend, and ought not to be accepted by the House, as a boon to the large landowners of the country. It is a boon—and a large boon—not to the large landowners, but to the small landowners, to the occupiers, to the farmers, and, above all, to that vast mass of occupiers in the towns, who, at this moment, are struggling against unnumbered difficulties to pay those rates, of which an undue share falls upon them. It is in their behalf, and not in behalf of the large landowners, of whom so much has been said in the course of this debate, that I ask the House to accept the Amendment of my hon. Friend, and it is for their sake that I shall go into the Lobby with him.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 205; Noes 186: Majority 19.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Asher, A.
Ashton, T. G.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Beamont, H. F.
Beith, G.
Bennett, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Blake, T.
Bolton, T. H.
Brand, hon. H. R.
Broadhurst, H.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Buckley, A.
Burt, T.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carbutt, E. H.
Carew, J. L.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chamberlain, R.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Cobbold, F. T.
Cohen, A.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Compton, Lord W. G.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cook, W.
Coote, T.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowen, J.
Cox, J. R.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crompton, C.
Crossley, E.
Deasy, J.
Dilke, rt. hn. Sir C. W.
Dillon, J.
Dixon G.
Egerton, Admiral hon. F.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Esmonde, Sir T.
Esslemont, P.
Everett, R. L.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Finlay, R. B.
Finlayson, J.
Finucane, J.
Fletcher, B.
Flower, C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Foster, Dr. B.
Fowler, H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, L.
Gardner, H.
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, H. J.
Glyn, hon. P. C.
Gower, G. G. L.
Green, H.
Grenfell, W. H.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hooper, J.
Howard, E. S.
Howard, H. C.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Ingram, W. J.
Jacks, W.
Jenkins, Sir J. J.
Jenkins, D. J.
Johns, J. W.
Johnson-Ferguson, J. E.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, Sir U.
Kelly, B.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenrick, W.
Kilcoursie, right hon. Viscount
Lane, W. J.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Leicester, J.
Lockwood, F.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lyell, L.
MacInnes, M.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Culloch, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
Magniac, C.
Maitland, W. F.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Mason, S.
Mather, W.
Mayne, T.
Mellor, rt. hon. J. W.
Mildmay, F. B.
Molloy, B. C.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Morley, A.
Moulton, J. F.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Kelly, J.
Otter, F.
Peacock, R.
Pease, A. E.
Pease, H. F.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Pilkington, G.
Pitt-Lewis, G.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Powell, W. R. H.
Power, P. J.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Pulley, J.
Pyne, J. D.
Reid, H. G.
Richard, H.
Richardson, T.
Rigby, J.
Robson, W. S.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, E. R.
Ruston, J.
Salis-Schwabe, Col. G.
Saunders, W.
Seely, C.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheehy, D.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Spensley, H.
Spicer, H.
Stack, J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Strong, R.
Stuart, J.
Sturgis, H. P.
Sullivan, D.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Tuite, J.
Vanderbyl, P.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. C.
Williams, P.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Wilson, J. (Durham)
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.
Yeo, F. A.

TELLERS.

Picton, J. A.
Rogers, J. E. T.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Allsopp, hon. C.
Allsopp, hon. G.
Ambrose, W.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Baily, L. R.
Baird, J.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Balfour, G. W.
Bartley, G. C. T.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, right hon. Sir M. E. Hicks-
Beach, W. W. B.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bethell, Commander
Bickersteth, R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blaine, R. S.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Brinton, J.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Cohen, L. L.
Colman, J. J.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cross, H. S.
Crossley, Sir S. B.
Crossman, General Sir W.
Currie, Sir D.
Curzon, Viscount
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
Denison, E. W.
Denison, W. B.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.

Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Egerton, hn. A. J. F.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Evelyn, W. J.
Farquharson, H. R.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fitz-Wygram, Sir F.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Green, Sir E.
Gregory, G. B.
Grimston, Viscount
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Lord F. S.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, F.
Hastings, G. W.
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Hope, rt. h. A. J. B. B.
Howard, J.
Hughes - Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunter, Sir G.
Hutton, J. F.
Jackson, W. L.
James, C. H.
Johnston, W.
Jones, P.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lewisham, Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Lloyd, W.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Maclean, J. M.
M'Lagan, P.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
March, Earl of
Marton, Maj. G. B. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Mount, W. G.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Pearce, W.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Peel, right hon. Sir R.
Pelly, Sir L.
Percy, Lord A. M.
Pomfret, W. P.
Price, Captain G. E.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Ramsden Sir J.
Rathbone, W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Ross, A. H.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Round, J.
Russell, Sir G.
Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Maj. E. J.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Selwin - Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sitwell, Sir G. R.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smith, D.
Stanley, rt. hn. Col. Sir F.
Stewart, M.
Sturrock, P.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Temple, Sir R.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Valentine, C. J.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir. R. E.
Westlake, J.
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Wiggin, H.
Winn, hon. R.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Yorke, J. R.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
More, R. J.
Paget, Sir R. H.

Main Question again proposed.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): Sir, I think we are becoming accustomed to very erratic courses on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chamberlain) commenced his speech by informing the House that he was happy to be in agreement with everybody. I am bound to say that on this subject I was very glad that he was able to make that statement; but he went on to add, as I think, with great distinctness—I speak within the recollection of the House—that it was his intention to support the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget). And, naturally, after what we have been accustomed to when a division is called, we saw the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues proceeding into the opposite Lobby, I would venture, therefore, to ask the consideration of the Government, and also of the House, to the present position of this question. I think the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board was quite right in saying that there had been, generally speaking, an agreement in principle during the course of this long debate. The hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had placed before the House certain subjects on which, in his opinion, the present incidence of local taxation was unfair; he desires that the owner should be taxed as well as the occupier; he desires that the pet objects of his indignation—the occupiers of country mansions—should be made to contribute to a greater extent; and he also had something to say as to the owners of ground rents—a matter with which this House has already dealt by referring it to a Select Committee. But the hon. Gentleman himself, in arguing his case as he did, of course, with all the knowledge and learning that he possesses, admitted that the question could not be solved if the particular points that he brought before the House were dealt with. He admitted—and it has been universally admitted in the course of this debate by speakers in all quarters of the House, and notably by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Chamberlain—that the great grievance is the exemption of personal property from local taxation, and that merely to deal with certain specified cases of this kind would be but to touch the fringe of the subject—that great subject, with which many a Government, and many a House of Commons, has attempted, hitherto unsuccessfully, to deal. But now we have, by this remarkable action, or perhaps by the ordinary course of action on the part of Her Majesty's Government, seen the general Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget), which really was a Motion dealing with the whole question, and dealing with it in a spirit which I do not think was objected to even by the hon. Member for Bermondsey, rejected through the opposition of Her Majesty's Government; and, therefore, the House is now called upon to decide upon this great and important matter of local taxation on a Motion of a purely partial character, dealing with cases of hardly more than an individual character, and cases which, if dealt with as the hon. Member for Bermondsey would desire them to be dealt with, would even, in his opinion, by no means settle the question of local taxation. Why, it would but increase the injustice if these cases were singled out for the burden of fresh taxation, while such instances as those which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board referred to—of persons having £60,000 a-year, and living in houses of only £30 rating — were not charged with any greater amount of local taxation than that to which they are at present liable. Therefore, I hope that, having secured the rejection of the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Somersetshire, Her Majesty's Government will appeal to the hon. Gentleman below the Gangway (Mr. Thorold Rogers) not to prejudice this question by the adoption of a vague and really insufficiently-worded Resolution on a matter part of which has already been referred to a Select Committee, and part of which would be an absolutely inadequate treatment of the great question of local taxation. For my own part, I must say that if Her Majesty's Government should feel themselves disposed to accept such a Motion as this, I trust that we, at all events, on this side will record our protest against it, as an utterly unfair dealing with one of the greatest and most difficult questions which can occupy the attention of Parliament.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: I confess that I have listened with some surprise to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I have always been accustomed to regard the right hon. Baronet as a Gentleman of the greatest possible acumen; and I cannot understand how he should have so entirely misconceived the observations that I recently addressed to the House. I said to the House I hoped we were tolerably agreed on the principle which is involved in both the Resolution of my hon. Friend and the Amendment of the hon. Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget). I felt myself somewhat in the position of Captain Macheath—"How happy could I be with either?" The difficulty I had was to find the means of voting for both proposals. Under the circumstances, I confess that I ventured to recommend that both the original Resolution and the Amendment should be withdrawn; and I thought, from the signs of assent in various parts of the House, that that course would probably have been accepted. But when a division was called —I do not know why—but, at any rate, some exception was taken by the minority of the House, and it was necessary for me to take a decision If I could have voted for the Amendment of the hon. Baronet opposite, I should have done so with great pleasure, provided that, in doing so, I should not have had to vote against the Resolution of my hon. Friend the Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers). I was in favour of both; but I was obliged to take them in turn. The first Motion that was put was that of my hon. Friend —namely, that his words should stand part of the Question. On that I was obliged to vote in the affirmative. If the Resolution had been defeated it would not have been a matter to me of serious regret, because then I should have the pleasure of voting for the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget). I really regret that the Forms of the House have not permitted me to give two votes on the question; but, as it is, I stick to the vote that I have already given, and if another division is called I shall vote for the Resolution of my hon. Friend.

Mr. GATHORNE-HARDY (Kent, Medway): I am afraid that hon. Members on this side of the House have been placed at a disadvantage. I came into the House after dinner, and in walking up the Lobby I met a Friend, who told me that the President of the Local Government Board had made a most excellent Conservative speech. I was exceedingly glad to hear it, and could not help thinking that, under the difficult circumstances of the case, the right hon. Gentleman was, perhaps, endeavouring to make himself friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness. However that may be, when I came into the House I met four or five hon. Friends, who certainly would not have voted with the Government, leaving the House after hearing the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, under the impression that the Government were on their side, and that it was quite clear there would be no division. The result was that not only were hon. Members led to believe that they would be supported by the Government in these circumstances, but Conservative Members who wished to support their principles left the House, believing that the Government had taken one course, when, in reality, it turned out that they took another. That seems to me to be a very unsatisfactory state of things. It gives no pledge to the country that a proper number of votes would be recorded on this side. I trust that when the Members of the Government make speeches in future they will clearly lay down the course they intend to adopt.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I rise to a point of Order, Sir. I wish to know whether it is in Order to amend the Motion now before the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Baronet can only move an addition.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE: Then I move that the following words be added:—

"That this House is of opinion that the financial injustice complained of can only be removed by a comprehensive measure of reform, and the equitable readjustment of taxation between real and personal property."

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I rise to Order. I want to know whether the words now proposed to be added by the hon. Baronet are not really part of the Question which has already been decided by the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: These words have been already negatived.

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): On the point of Order, I wish, Sir, to ask your ruling. I imagine that the decision to which the House came was, that between the words of the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers) and those of the hon. Baronet the Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget), they preferred the words of the hon. Member for Bermondsey. But I do not understand that such a decision of the House precludes a Motion being made by any other hon. Member to add to the Motion of the hon. Member for Bermondsey certain words which undoubtedly very closely resembled the words of the hon. Baronet, and which the House has declined to prefer to the words of the hon. Member for Bermondsey. That is the point which I wish to put before the House—namely, that the House is not necessarily precluded from adding the words of the hon. Member for Somersetshire.

Mr. SPEAKER: There were two alternatives before the House—the proposition of the hon. Member for the Bermondsey Division of Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers), and the proposition of the hon. Baronet the Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget). The proposition of the hon. Baronet the Member for Somersetshire has been negatived by the House by the decision that the words proposed to be left out should stand part of the Question. The words now proposed by the hon. Member for Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) are precisely the same as those which have already been negatived.

Mr. RAIKES (Cambridge University): I also rise to a point of Order. I wish to ask whether the words proposed by the hon. Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget) have ever been put to the House as a Question? As I understand the way in which the Question was put, the words proposed to be left out were affirmed to stand part of the Question. Those were the words of the hon. Member for Bermondsey (Mr. Thorold Rogers). We have not yet had an opportunity of affirming our opinion with regard to the words proposed to be inserted by the hon. Member for Somersetshire. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether, that being the case, you lay down as a Rule of this House that words cannot be added at the end of the Question upon which no substantial Question has hitherto been put?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): I would ask, Sir, whether. upon the Amendment which stands on the Paper, the Motion of the hon. Baronet the Member for Somersetshire (Sir Richard Paget) was not to leave out all the words after "That," in order to insert certain other words? I wish to ask if the division was not taken on the Question whether those words should be inserted? ["No!"] I am not asking hon. Members opposite, but I am asking the Speaker for his ruling upon the question; and I ask you, Sir, whether the consequence of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman opposite would not be that you, Sir, might go on dividing all night on the same Amendment, by proposing after a division over and over again to add the same words to the Resolution, and whether the effect of this would not be that we should be taking another division on the same Amendment?

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have again expressly to say that words cannot be added to the original proposition which has been by Parliamentary construction directly negatived.

Main Question put.

The House *divided:* — Ayes 216; Noes 176: Majority 40. — (Div. List, No. 42.)

Resolved, That the present system under which, in England and Wales, the first Incidence of Local Taxation (with some slight exceptions) falls on the occupier and not on the owner of lands and tenements, is unjust; that such owners ought in equity to bear at least a moiety of those charges; that the system under which country mansions are rated is unfair; and that the owners of ground rents in towns are liable to no part of those charges, the outlay of which is essential in order that the property may possess any marketable value whatever.

ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT.

RESOLUTION.

MR. CARBUTT (Monmouth, &c.), in rising to call attention to the administration of the Ordnance Department; and to move—

"That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the whole question of guns, and the working of the Factories at Woolwich, Enfield, and Birmingham,"

said: I do not propose to detain the House for any length of time, nor do I imagine that the question to which I propose to call the attention of the House will occupy the time of hon. Members for anything like the length to which the debate on the incidence of taxation has run. But the subject is a very important one. Attention has repeatedly been called to the want of guns, and I have on more than one occasion stated that I should move for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the whole subject. I made that statement last Session; but it was a moribund Parliament, and I did not think that any useful purpose would be served by appointing a Committee. I therefore gave Notice that if I was a Member on the reassembling of the new Parliament I would move for a Committee of Inquiry into the subject. The House will be aware that it is very difficult for a private Member to arrive at all the facts of this Gun Question. Hitherto we have never had a statement, except in regard to the question of expense; and even last night, although the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) entered fully into matters of detail in connection with the Army Estimates, he refrained from making anything like a full statement upon this question. Therefore, many of the facts to which I desire to call the attention of the House I have obtained, not on the authority of the Government, but from other sources. It is stated that, at the present moment, we have no single large breech-loading gun, and, so far as I am aware, no denial of this statement has been made by the Government; on the contrary, it is admitted that some of the ships are waiting for guns. The Ordnance Department propose to spend £1,500,000, and, on the average, £1,000,000 has been spent every year. Since rifle guns were adopted—at any rate, during the last five years—£1,000,000 per annum has been expended, and we have nothing to show for it. Nearly all the money has been wasted, and the guns we have are very little more than obsolete; it is, therefore, only right that we should appoint a Committee to inquire into the whole subject. The French were in as bad, or in a worse position, when the Franco-German War taught them a severe lesson. God forbid that such a trial should fall on our country; but I firmly believe that had we gone to war a year or two ago it would have taken all our native pluck to have prevented such a catastrophe. Rifle cannon were adopted to obtain better precision—that is, the old round cannon-ball; but it was superseded by an elongated shot, which was made to rotate, with a view of obtaining an accurate run of flight—on the same principle as the spinning of a top keeps it upright. I shall not enter into the question of priority of invention, or of the credit due to Sir William Armstrong or Sir Joseph Whitworth, or many others who have laboured in this field; but I may mention that in 1854 Lord Hardinge applied to Sir Joseph Whitworth to make a series of experiments. He built a shooting gallery, and made exhaustive experiments, which showed conclusively what was the best system of rifling, what was the best method or form of rifling, what was the best length of projectile, what shape of projectile afforded the greatest power of penetration, and a variety of similar matters. All these things were removed from the region of speculation, and were determined as much as the laws which regulate gravitation have been determined; so that, although the facts may be ignored, they cannot be altered. The experiments proved, moreover, that what was true of small arms was equally true, *mutatis mutandis*, of cannon. Had this *data* been utilized, all our blunders for years would have been avoided. Mechanically shaped shot and steel shot have cost the country millions of money. It was necessary to ascertain the requisite length of shot—too short shot turn over; too long shot strain the gun. After years of blunders we have come to the right length of shot, and the right length of gun also. Other questions have still to be settled. The nation has spent millions since we began to make rifle cannon, all of which, I think, has been wasted; and I consider that the House of Commons has a right to ask—first, have we the best gun in the world; second, have we a proper supply of guns, or are we likely to get it; third, what is our system of control over the supply of guns; fourth, who is responsible for the design, the supply, and length, and who is responsible for the deplorable waste of money which has occurred; and, lastly, what ought we to do at Woolwich? In regard to the first point, have we the best gun? I believe not; or, at any rate, no thorough trial has been made to prove it. If the mechanical *data* had once been definitely fixed, the trial of one gun, even to destruction, would settle all sizes; but we go on making all sizes, without finally settling the design. We go entirely on calculated results. No actual results can be given. I want to see more exhaustive experiments with regard to these guns with a view to testing their capabilities. Then, there are many other descriptions of guns which might be tried. There is the Longridge wire gun, which can be made for one-third of the cost and in one-quarter of the time. I know that we shall be told that at Woolwich we are now manufacturing two of these wire guns; but I am given to understand that it is being done without consulting the original inventor, either upon the question of design or process of manufacture. Again, there remain two questions to be settled with reference to the Woolwich gun, which only a definite trial can determine. I fancy if we were to spend a little more money in exhaustive experiment that we should find ourselves in a better position than we are at the present time; and to show the House that there is need of this I will read from *The Times* of the 23rd January, 1885—

> "When we come to cannon, the Woolwich guns are nearly as dangerous all round to those who fire them as they ever would become to those who were fired at."

Now, that, of course, is a strong statement for the leading journal to make; and I think the Government would act wisely in doing what is necessary to satisfy the country that the manufacture of guns at Woolwich will be placed on a better footing than it was at that time. But let me refer to some failures which have taken place within the last few years. We know there was the case of the *Thunderer*, which was inquired into and a Report made, although we may not all agree with the decision arrived at. We know that H.M.S. *Daring* received orders that her guns should not be fired except with reduced charges; and I should like to know how many guns we have issued to our ships that are perfectly reliable, and how many doubtful and unserviceable. Of the guns of H.M.S. *Dryad* eight out of nine are unserviceable. Then we find that an 80-ton gun at Gibraltar in 1884 was sent home to be repaired. Again, there was a 9-inch 18-ton gun which burst at Woolwich. It had a calibre of 9·2 inch, and the gun was being used for proving gunpowder, and not testing the gun itself. Lastly, I should like to refer to a gun on board H.M.S. *Active*, a 6-inch breech-loading gun, which burst in 1884, five feet of it being blown away. An inquiry took place upon the subject; but I have never been able to see the Report, and I make the following statement with regard to it. I believe it was one of the guns originally passed by the Ordnance Committee in 1881; it was arranged that it should be fired with 35 lbs. of powder and a projectile of 80 lbs., and was said to give under those circumstances a muzzle velocity of 1,930 feet per second; this gun was called Mark I. In September, 1881, the new Ordnance Committee, who had been experimenting with the Elswick gun Mark I., were instructed to demand a drawing of the gun-factory design, to be sealed as Mark II.; and although they did so, and sealed the drawing, they stated that as yet they had had no opportunity of considering the design. Here we find out how it is that our guns are so unfortunate in design. We depend entirely on the Ordnance Committee; and yet they say they have had no opportunity of considering the design. Well, Sir, they went on making these guns. There were 25 made at Elswick, and at the Royal Gun Factory 53, and there were in progress at the Royal Gun Factory 57, giving a total of 135, at a cost of over £100,000. It was found out before long that this was a defective type, because in June, 1882, several of these guns which were made at Elswick arrived here, and five of them, besides two of those made at the Royal Gun Factory, burst, after we had expended the £100,000 I have mentioned. But the strangest part of the story of these guns is this—they were designed originally to fire a charge of 50 lbs. of powder, and with a projectile of 100 lbs. were to give a muzzle velocity of 2,090 feet per second, the charge afterwards reduced to 42 lbs.; but after the failure I have referred to it was recommended that the charge of powder should be further reduced to 38 lbs., the muzzle velocity being lessened to 1,811 feet per second. Well, Sir, I think it an extraordinary thing that the Ordnance Committee should have spent the £100,000 without making an efficient experiment. The next thing I wish to refer to are the guns of H.M.S. *Collingwood*. These were two breech-loading steel guns, 27 feet 4 inches in length; 12-inch bore; shot 3 feet 1 inch in length; and were constructed with a 16-inch powder chamber 6 feet 3 inches in length. The objection to them is that they were designed originally to fire 400 lbs of powder, and that having been put on board the *Collingwood*, it was ordered that the charge of powder should be reduced to 295 lbs. Well, Sir, is it not an extraordinary thing that having designed a gun to fire 400 lbs. of powder you should tell those who have to use it that the maximum charge is to be 105 lbs. less? But the most extraordinary part of this story is that when the gun came to be tried the shot stuck on the 17th, 18th, and last round, so that even this, the reduced charge, could not be fired. This is another instance of a large expenditure having been incurred before experiment had conclusively shown that we were right in making them. Then I come to instances of failure. At the bombardment of Alexandria several guns burst. One 11-inch gun showed a crack in the muzzle; and it is currently believed that there was so small a supply of ammunition that the bombardment could not have continued much longer. And then, Sir, there is the very remarkable circumstance that our troops during the war in Egypt had only 7-lbs. muzzle-loading guns. One objection to muzzle-loading guns is that the men have to stand in front for the purpose of ramming home the powder. In that way they are, of course, greatly exposed to the enemy in front, and have not the protection which is afforded by the breech-loading gun. We found there were no muzzle-loading gun in the Egyptian Army; they were Krupp's breech-loading guns. Well, I believe we have very few. And it seems to me very strange that we who ought to be the largest manufacturing nation in the world should not have come to the same conclusion on this point as all civilized people have done. Other nations have breech-loading guns. If we were to go to war with a country like Germany we should find that they did not use muzzle-loading guns. One of the chief objections to using these guns is that you cannot see through their bore, whereas you can see through the bore of a breech-loading gun after it has been fired. I contend that it was a great mistake on our part to supply the troops in Egypt with a weapon inferior to that which the Egyptians had. The next question I will ask is this—"Have we anything approaching to a proper supply of guns; or are we likely to have them?" I believe we have very few guns indeed. Continental nations adopted steel for guns 10 or 12 years before we did; and it is 17 years since France adopted breech-loading; whereas it was only adopted by us seven or eight years ago; and I may mention that at one time Sir Joseph Whitworth offered to lend the Government two breech-loading guns which he had made for the Brazilian Government, and that the offer was declined. Now with regard to the three 110-ton guns ordered at a cost of £19,500 each. The first of these was promised to be ready in October, 1885; the second in January, 1886; and the third in April, 1886. There is one of these guns, I am told, ready; but I should like to ask whether that one has been tried? Do we know exactly what that gun will do; what charge it will stand; and whether it is right that we should have a large number of them? Then with regard to the 43-ton steel guns. I ask if any of these are being tested to the full extent; and, if so, what thickness of plate did they pierce? On the 5th of March, 1886, the Earl of Northbrook, in "another place," said there was no doubt that there had been a most regrettable difficulty in supplying breech-loading guns for the Navy; that when Mr. Smith left the Admiralty in 1880 he expressed his regret on this point; that it was unnecessary to say whose fault it was, and that certainly we were behind other nations in this respect, but were then remedying the defect. I should like to ask what is our system of control—under what system are our guns supplied? We have the Surveyor General of Ordnance, who is responsible to this House for the supply of guns. No doubt, the House has great respect for the present Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Woodall); but he is a political and not a military agent, and he is not responsible for the design and manufacture of guns. Then we have the Director General of Ordnance, who is a military man. I believe he is technically responsible for the manufacture of the guns; but what I want to know is—whom would the Government or the nation have hanged, so to speak, if this country had gone to war three years ago when we were so lamentably deficient? The Director General of Ordnance, I understand, is a very clever man; but he is only appointed for a few years, and I believe that the last appointment was junior to all the other Manufactory Directors at the Ordnance Department. I do not want to find fault with any man, Sir; but I find fault with the system, and I ask how long the present system is to continue? Well, next comes the Superintendent of Factories. He is a military man, and knows nothing whatever of the manufacture of guns; his appointment is for five years in the Arsenal or Laboratory at Woolwich. At the end of five years, if he has managed his business well, he generally contrives to get reappointed. I believe it is the practice to appoint men who know absolutely nothing of a great Manufacturing Department, which makes them dependent upon any information they can get from others. There is another evil in appointing a military man to the office of Superintendent of Factories, and that is that after he is appointed he does not look to the Factory Authorities, but to the Horse Guards, for promotion. I think this divided responsibility is a great mistake. I know that we shall be reminded of the new Ordnance Select Committee. A new Ordnance Select Committee was appointed in 1881; but that, I believe, was not a very strong Committee. It consisted of two civil engineers and several military half-pay officers. There was no naval man upon it until last year, or the year before, so that the Admiralty never had a chance of stating what sort of guns the Navy wanted. Last year, during the war panic, there was great dissatisfaction, and another Committee was actually appointed to supersede the Select Committee on Ordnance. Upon that Committee there was a member of the Whitworth firm and two members of the Armstrong firm, as well as military men, who, I believe, were in this position—that they knew nothing whatever about the manufacture of guns. Sir, I think we were perfectly right in appointing the three gentlemen, who were members of the firms mentioned, to consider the question of the manufacture of our guns; but does it not seem a strange anomaly that those gentlemen should in this matter stand in the position both of buyers and sellers? I regret that it has fallen to me to trouble the House at this late hour with the statement I have made; but the earnest wish I have is to see a permanent Head placed over these Manufacturing Departments. I will not discuss whether he should be a military or a civil officer; but let him be the best man the country can produce, and let him be paid as highly or even higher than a Cabinet Minister, if need be, in view of the immense responsibility which would rest upon him. I believe the Surveyor General of Ordnance exercised a sound judgment last year, and that the Government were perfectly justified in not making steel forgings themselves. I beg to move the Resolution standing in my name.

MR. RUSTON (Lincoln): I will not occupy the time of the House at length; but I hope the House will allow me to make a few observations upon the Motion of my hon. Friend. I think that this question of the manufacture of guns is one of very great importance on account of its magnitude—with respect to the large sums of money involved, and the great national interests involved. Last year the sum of £1,452,232 was voted for wages and materials, of which £910,192 was on account of Woolwich, and £542,040 on account of Enfield.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. RUSTON: I will not detain the House at length. As soon as I have stated these figures, the Minister will probably reply, and the discussion be at an end. I therefore ask hon. Gentlemen kindly to be patient. I was saying that last year the House granted £1,452,232 for expenditure at these Factories. Well, Sir, we have for 1886, on account of Woolwich, a Vote for £1,127,150, for Wages and Materials, which comprises £230,600 for the Carriage Department, £256,050 for the Gun Factory, and £640,500 for the Royal Laboratory. We have also for wages and materials at Enfield, £198,000, and for the Gunpowder Manufactory at Birmingham, £40,450. Sir, I think we have a claim to ask what are the results obtained from the expenditure of so large a sum of money. I wish it to be perfectly understood that I do not wish to enter for a moment into the question of what kind of guns should be manufactured at these Factories—whether they should be 40 or 80-ton guns, breech-loading or muzzle-loading—I merely deal with the question as to whether they are practically economical. There is a Return made as to the working of the Government Factories—a large volume, containing an immense mass of figures, none of which, however, give the information which we desire. We want to know whether the money is spent in the best possible way for securing the end we have in view. There are many Members of this House who are familiar with the conduct of large manufacturing and mercantile establishments, and who, in dealing with questions of this kind, would have no more difficulty than they would have in dealing with their own regular business. The peculiarity of this Return lies in the manner in which it is made up. There is one column for cost of materials, one for material, and another for indirect expenditure; these three are added together and called Balance 1; then comes a column in which is given the amount which would have to be added for wear and tear, and those together are called Balance 2; and so careful are those who make up the figures, that to a sum of £56,000 they add the 19*s.* 9¾*d.* The country does not grudge the money expended on the Manufacturing Establishments; but it does want to know that it receives for it a fair economical return; it does want to know that the money which is provided by the taxpayers is spent in their interest. Sir, I beg to second the Resolution of the hon. Member for Monmouth.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the whole question of guns, and the working of the Factories at Woolwich, Enfield, and Birmingham."—(*Mr. Carbutt.*)

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I do not think we can go into the whole question of guns; but I think we may very well inquire into the working of the Manufacturing Establishments of the country. I do not say the Factories would not come out well; but I think the time has arrived when we ought to go into the question, and that a case has been made out for inquiry as to how the Manufactories are carried on. There are now many officers of both Services who are Members of this House; and I think we are now in a good position to enter upon an inquiry. I quite agree that there is a good deal of doubt about these balance sheets, and that they require looking into, and that they ought to be as clear in the case of Government Manufactories as in the case of private individuals, who, if they did not keep their books clear, would soon get their business into confusion. Take, for instance, the guns. The extras the trade cannot compete with, because there is continual change in regard to them. Instead of placing the extras on the articles with regard to which there is competition, the Gun Factories put them on various small articles with which private firms cannot compete. We want an inquiry into this question; but we should not go into the whole matter. That would involve our going down to Shoeburyness and making extensive experiments. I should be inclined to alter the Motion so as to make it apply merely to the supply of guns and small arms, and to the working of the Factories at Woolwich, Enfield, and Birmingham. I used to bring this question before the House at one time. It certainly deserves careful inquiry; and I think also we are deficient in knowledge as to Krupp's Manufactory. However, as the Front Benches are not anxious to go into these subjects, I will cut short my remarks.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): Perhaps the House will allow me to make one or two observations in answer to the remarks of my hon. Friend. Though I cannot agree in all points with what my hon. Friend said in bringing forward the Motion, or in what fell from my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Ruston) in seconding the Motion, I admit at once the importance of the subject, and that the object they have in view is well deserving the attention of the House. But my hon. Friend (Mr. Carbutt) proposed that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into the subject of guns and the designs for guns. I should deprecate such an inquiry in the strongest possible manner, because we have had delay enough owing to inquiries as to the construction of guns. Up to 1880, when the former Liberal Government entered into power, nothing had been done as to the armament of the Army and Navy; and the present Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) then appointed an Ordnance Select Committee of skilled officers of the Army and Navy, with the assistance of two of the best civil engineers in the country—Sir F. Bramwell and Mr. Barlow. This Committee sat since that time, and I am glad to say that now the designs for these guns are settled. To show the desire they had not to proceed in any hole-and-corner way, I hold in my hand a special Report presented to the House with regard to the construction of ordnance, and it seems that in making the investigation they associated with themselves a member from each of the two firms of Sir William Armstrong & Co., and Sir Joseph Whitworth & Co. That shows there was no desire to keep the matter in the hands of what was called the Woolwich "ring." That being the case, I should, as I say, deprecate any inquiry into the question of the construction of ordnance; but the question of administration is another matter; and though I do not commit myself to any promise, I believe that it would be a most advantageous thing to have an inquiry of this kind into Government Establishments. I cannot speak too highly of the Artillery officers who have been Superintendents of these Factories. I believe they have not only been men of great eminence in their Profession, but have developed extraordinary business habits and capabilities in the management of the men and the ordinary business-work of the Factories. Colonel Maitland, I may select as one—a man of the highest distinction and fully deserving the confidence of the country. It would not involve the slightest derogation from the position of these Superintendents, if an investigation were to be made by a Committee, who would be able to collect valuable information as to the administration of the Departments. But there, again, I differ from what I imagine to be the intention of my hon. Friend. I do not think a Committee of the House of Commons is a proper Body for that purpose. We all know how Select Committees are formed; and for a purpose of this sort I should rather prefer a small Committee, carefully chosen, consisting of skilled men and men of business taken from the outside world, so that we should have a fair, impartial, and careful inquiry. I can speak with some sort of good conscience in this respect, because when I was Secretary to the Admiralty I was the means of procuring a Committee of shipbuilders and shipowners to inquire into the management of the Dockyards. One or two Members of this House were on that Committee, and I must say that the greatest benefits have resulted from its appointment. If I may use a somewhat homely expression, it stirred things up, and was able to make suggestions that have been of the greatest use. Without committing myself at all, I think it is possible that the Surveyor General of the Ordnance and myself, after looking into these matters to which we are now practically new, may find that an inquiry of that sort may be advantageous to the public interest. If so, I can assure my hon. Friend that we shall not be slow to appoint such a Committee as I have described.

MR. CARBUTT: I beg leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SCHOOL FEES OF NON-PAUPERS BILL.

(*Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Hobhouse.*)

[BILL 114.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.): In asking the House to read this Bill a second time, I do not think it necessary to go into its provisions at any length. As to its object, it will speak for itself. I may say that it is not intended to supplant or in any way amend the Act of 1876, but to remove, if possible, a grievance not altogether a sentimental or an imaginary one, but one keenly felt by the class with which the measure deals. The grievance is, I may say, that those who are called upon to provide education for their children belonging to the class known as "non-paupers," who cannot afford to pay the fees, have to apply to be relieved of them either to the Boards of Guardians or to the officers of the Boards of Guardians. Such application is felt to be degrading, and I think the law should be altered in the manner I suggest in this short Bill. I should not have ventured to introduce this Bill were it not that I have had some considerable experience in this matter. Since the formation of School Attendance Committees I have had the honour to be Chairman of the Committee in my Union for the last 11 years, and I have had in my capacity there, and also as magistrate, several opportunities of seeing that the Act presses rather hardly upon a certain class. The custom as to granting relief from the payment of school fees is objectionable. As a rule, or with few exceptions, or, at any rate, a large proportion of the inquiry officers appointed under the Act, are also relieving officers, and it is that custom which causes the great objection to the Act. Those who are applicants for this form of relief have very often to apply to the inquiry officers at the same time that outdoor relief is being given to the poor, and in the majority of cases those who apply for this relief see no difference between their application and becoming outdoor paupers. The same officer stands at the same table, and although he does not use the same book —one book being yellow and the other red—those who get this freedom from the payment of school fees, from the manner in which it is obtained, go away with the idea that they are outdoor paupers. I should not have attempted to suggest to the House that an alteration should be made in this Act were it not that the occasion of the affirming of that measure affords an opportunity for so doing. The charge for payment of school fees is made not on the general fund of the Union, but on the parish in which the people live. I propose in this Bill that those in a parish who should be elected on a School Fees Committee should have the opportunity of granting this relief, and that, as the existing law already provides, the payment should be made through the ordinary precept by the parish alone. It may occur to some hon. Gentlemen who have studied the question and have been brought face to face with the difficulties of it, that an increase in the rates may be brought about through giving authority or power to irresponsible parties to grant relief out of a fund which they are not responsible for providing. But if that is the case—and I am inclined to believe it will not be—I maintain that the effect of dissociating this class which my Bill affects from the actual pauper class will in itself bring about a relief to the rates for the reason I have attempted to give. If the House passes the Bill, those who seek to obtain relief from the payment of school fees will no longer be brought into contact, as they are at present, with the Boards of Guardians themselves or the officers of the Boards of Guardians. The class chiefly affected by my Bill are those who, above all others, should receive attention at this moment. They are the class who are striving to keep themselves above the rank of paupers—the class who, at this moment, are suffering from want of employment; and it is for that reason that I am particularly anxious to press upon the House the desirability of granting this relief as soon as possible. The inquiry officer is, in many cases, one whose efficiency is shown by the amount of money he can save to the rates; and in order to bring these school-fee cases before the Guardians he has to make all sorts of inquiries, he has to drag up all the circumstances of people's lives, and it is possible for the information he gives the Guardians to be published in the newspapers. A point of importance is that I propose that the Guardians may be required to appoint a paid officer to assist the Committee in its inquiries in this matter of payment of school fees, and that he shall in no case be the relieving officer for the parish. I do not know that I need add anything to that, unless it is requested that I should do so. I ought, perhaps, to apologize for not having prefaced my remarks, in moving the second reading, with the stereotyped phrase about, as a new Member, asking the indulgence of the House; but if I have been at fault in that respect, I beg to correct it by thanking the House for the indulgence it has shown.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Llewellyn.*)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN) (Birmingham, W.): I am sorry that the hon. Member thought it necessary to move the second reading so late to-night, especially as I understand the Bill has only just been printed. I only got a copy of it this morning, and have not been able to give it the consideration it deserves. [Mr. LLEWELLYN: It was circulated yesterday morning.] I am told, after the slight investigation I have been able to make, that the Bill has been so drawn that it will require a great number of alterations to carry out the object of the promoters. We should have time to examine it; and, besides, I doubt if it is wise to deal in this piecemeal way with a matter affecting education at a time when, actually, a Committee has been appointed to consider the question of education. I should say it would be much better to put this matter before the Committee, in addition to the other matters they will have to consider, than to pass the Bill. I do not wish to prejudice the question, and, with the view of giving an opportunity for its careful consideration, I move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Joseph Chamberlain.*)

MR. H. SPICER (Islington, S.): Those of us who are members of the London School Board find ourselves in somewhat of a difficulty as to what course to adopt. For my own part, I would rather see the second reading carried on the understanding that full time will be given for the consideration of the measure before the Committee stage. So far as the London Guardians are concerned, they have refused to avail themselves of the option contained in the Act which enables them to pay school fees——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not in Order in discussing the general question on the Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells): After the remarks of the hon. Member opposite, I hope the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) will see his way to withdraw his Motion and allow the Bill to be read a second time. The right hon. Gentleman has given as a reason for the adjournment that the Bill was only circulated this morning; but, as a matter of fact, it was in the hands of Members one or two days earlier. The measure is one of a very simple character, and I cannot conceive it necessary that any length of time is required for the consideration of its principle. I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he sees nothing in the Bill that is objectionable. He sees some small difficulties of detail that require alteration; but his chief objection, and the reason of his moving the adjournment, is that there is a Select Committee at present engaged in investigating the Education Acts. However undesirable it may be to legislate in a piecemeal manner, I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman has not mentioned sufficient grounds for adjourning the debate. There are many points that require alteration in the Education Law, and this Bill proposes to deal with only one, and that in a manner that is unobjectionable. I hope, after the appeal that has been made to him, that the right hon. Gentleman will see fit to permit the Bill to pass the second reading, on the clear understanding that it will not be proceeded with on any future stage until he has had ample time to consider it.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND (Hampstead): I would venture to ask the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider his decision. This Bill, as my hon. Friend has just stated, has been before us for two days; and though I quite admit the force of the argument that there is a Royal Commission sitting on Education, yet the measure deals with a distinct grievance. It may be that the details will require alteration in Committee; but the Bill is a very simple one dealing with this grievance I speak of. I may add that I do not think the question is one that is likely to come before the Commission.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: If I may be allowed, by the permission of the House, to answer the hon. Baronet, I would say that I do not wish to express an opinion as to the Bill, and I see no objection to its being now read a second time, if the hon. Member in charge of it will agree not to put down the further stage for a fortnight.

MR. LLEWELLYN: I agree to that.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: Then I withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 6th April.

LUNACY (VACATING OF SEATS) BILL.

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Puleston, Mr. William Corbet.*)

[BILL 85.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): My hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Derry (Mr. Healy) has an Amendment on the Paper to Clause 1. However, since the matter was last before the House, I have ascertained that the hon. and learned Member is not eager at present to apply his reforming zeal to the measure. I also perceive the force of the statement that it is not desirable to extend the scope of the Bill, which applies only to lunacy. I do not propose to go on with the Amendment.

Bill *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

MARRIAGES (HOURS OF SOLEMNIZATION) BILL.—[BILL 62.]

(*Mr. Carvell Williams, Mr. Richard, Mr. Ince.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Hours for solemnization of marriages).

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, to leave out "four," and insert "three."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottingham, S.): I do not think the Amendment is necessary; but the point is too small for contention, and if the Government wish for the change, I have no objection to its being made.

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. **Broadhurst**, further Amendment made, in line 13, by substituting the word "three" for the word "four."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Friday.*

SUPPLY.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Resolutions [22nd March] *reported*, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 16th day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and then agreed to by the House, be now read; and the same was read, as followeth:—

> That 61,400 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services, for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, including 12,900 Royal Marines.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill, to provide, during twelve months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army, and that Mr. Secretary Campbell-Bannerman, the Judge Advocate General, and Mr. Hibbert do prepare and bring it in.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 150.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Resolution [22nd March] *reported*, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill, That they have power to make provision therein, pursuant to the said Resolution.

MOTIONS.

—o—

FORESTRY.

Select Committee *appointed*, "to consider whether, by the establishment of a Forest School, or otherwise, our Woodlands could be rendered more remunerative."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Ventilation of the House:—Dr. Farquharson, Sir Henry Roscoe, Mr. Lyell, Sir Guyer Hunter, Mr. Isaacs, and Mr. Richard Power, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Leveson Gower.*)

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 24*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—**Public Bills**—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Commons Provisional Order* [132]; Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Durham) [74]; Married Women (Maintenance in Case of Desertion) [111], *debate adjourned;* Drowned Persons (Discovery and Interment) [123].

Referred to Select Committee—Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment [61]; Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment [65]; Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Redemption [63], *referred to Select Committee on* Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment [61].

Considered as amended—Consolidated Fund (No. 2).*

Third Reading—Lunacy (Vacating of Seats)* [85], and *passed.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (EXTRAORDINARY) AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 61.]

(*Mr. Norton, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Pomfret.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. NORTON (Kent, Tunbridge), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that hon. Members would be aware that a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed in 1881 to consider the best means of dealing with this complicated and difficult question. That Committee, which was presided over by the former Member for Rye (Mr. Inderwick), reported in favour of the abolition of these charges, and the hon. and learned Member, for several years in succession, brought forward a Bill for that purpose, but was unable to get it passed. A great amount of interest had since gathered round the question; and all who were acquainted with the state of feeling in the counties of Kent and Sussex especially, would agree with him that the time had arrived when, in the interests of the public generally, as well as of all immediately concerned, it was absolutely necessary that the question should be settled; and, in saying that, he wished to disclaim emphatically any intention to make it a Party question in any form whatever.

The object of his Bill was, first, to abolish for the future the extraordinary tithe, and to commute the present payment by a fixed rent-charge; and, secondly, to make the charge payable by the owner of the land, and not by the tenant, as heretofore. This was essentially a landlord's question; for he believed it was undoubtedly the case that the owners of property bought that property subject to this charge upon it. He considered that the proposals in the Bill would furnish a practical way of dealing with the question, and would get rid of the friction which now largely existed between the tenant farmers and landlords. He thought that the parsons were, in existing circumstances, placed in a most unfortunate position. They were really as powerless as a flock of sheep, and they were not in a position to enforce their claims, for fear of losing that influence for good which he thought all would agree it was necessary that they should possess. The late Lord John Russell had, he believed, the intention to settle the question once for all; but, in consequence of the representations of hop growers themselves, when the Tithe Redemption Bill was before the House, Mr. Thomas Hodges, at that time a Member for Kent, obtained on behalf of the hop and fruit growers the exemption of hop, fruit, and vegetable grounds from its operations. It was now thought desirable that the clauses in that Act referring to hops should be repealed. The charge on hops was at present a very unequal one, varying from 2*s.* to 22*s.* an acre in Kent, and rising as high as 30*s.* an acre in the district of Farnham, in Surrey; and while there was a charge of 6*s.* an acre on fruit gardens in one parish, there was no charge at all of the kind in adjoining parishes. It was proposed in this Bill to go back to the principle on which Lord John Russell had intended to deal with this question in 1836, and to make the extraordinary tithe a higher permanent rent-charge upon property, and so to make it absolutely a landlord's question. It was proposed to put upon the Land Commissioners, who were the old Tithe Commissioners—the highest authorities on the subject — the responsibility of dealing with this important question, and to give them the fullest power of dealing with it. That was the sole point at issue between the hon. Member for South St. Pancras (Mr. Bolton), who had a Bill on the Paper dealing with the same question, and himself. He (Mr. Norton) proposed that the Land Commissioners should have power to take into consideration all the surrounding circumstances of farms, such as the possible continuance or discontinuance of the cultivation of hops. It was thought that, in a matter of this importance, it was absolutely necessary that the hands of the Commissioners should not be tied too closely, and therefore he had come to the conclusion that the only way to deal with the matter was to give the Commissioners the power he had referred to. Having ascertained what the capital value of the property was, it was proposed to apportion what should be paid over the whole farm rather than take any particular garden under hops, calculating the interest at 4 per cent upon the capital. It was thought that it would be fairer to apportion it over the whole farm than to fix it upon a particular hop or fruit garden, at that time under cultivation, for the reason that it would make great inequality in the letting value of different parts of the farm, and that it would introduce still greater difficulties if any part of the farm had to be sold. For the payment it was generally admitted that the landlords were primarily responsible. When the whole tithe of Ireland was commuted into a land tax, it was made absolutely a landlord's payment. It would get rid of many difficulties if the House would consent to refer that point to a Select Committee. As to the expense of carrying out the proposal, he believed the Land Commissioners would look upon it as part of their statutory duty to supervise the whole of the work, without making any extra charge as far as themselves were concerned; but where special difficulties surrounded a case, and they would have to call in persons to assist them, a special charge would be allowed, according to a scale of fees which it was proposed to lay down. He not only represented the Division of Kent, but he resided in the parish, in which the largest portion of hops was grown, and where extraordinary tithe came to a very large sum in addition to the ordinary. Therefore, he spoke with some knowledge of the subject. He could assure the House there was a very strong feeling on the part of everyone concerned—landlords, tenants, and clergy, to get this question settled once for all. He asked the House to give him, and the whole of the Members for Kent who supported the Bill, their assistance in carrying the second reading, and he believed Her Majesty's Government would support them by agreeing to refer that and other Bills relating to the same subject to a Select Committee. He thanked the House for the attention with which it had heard him, and he begged now to move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham), in seconding the Motion, said, that all who were interested in the question under notice had come to the conclusion that the time for a final settlement of the question had arrived, and that the only satisfactory way in which it could be effected was by the abolition of extraordinary tithe for the future. The only point, therefore, and the principal one, which remained for consideration was that of compensation to the existing owners; and he could not help thinking that the solution of the difficulty would be much better found in a Select Committee composed of Members thoroughly acquainted with the subject, than by the whole body of the House itself. There were other Bills before the House on the same subject—namely, the Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment Bill, and the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Redemption Bill; but he believed there were only slight differences between them all, and they could easily be dealt with by the same Select Committee. In the first place, it should always be borne in mind that this extraordinary tithe was not a new and vexatious demand made by the tithe-owners on the tithe-payers; but it was founded in 1836, upon a request made by the tithe-payers themselves, that their holdings should be exempted from the Tithe Redemption Act of that year. His second point was, that this extraordinary tithe did not originally impose such an impediment upon agriculture, or create such a grievance, as it was customary to represent; but the cultivation of hops was very different now to what it was then. He was a hop grower and a fruit grower, had lived in the midst of hop and fruit gardens all his days, and he had never met a single farmer who had been deterred from growing hops or planting fruit trees on account of this extraordinary tithe. He believed there was a large farmer who did grub up a considerable quantity of hops, but that was to spite the tithe-owner. But if it were not a grievance, why should its removal be advocated? There were three reasons why it should be done. The first was the reason given by the President of the Local Government Board last night, when dealing with the question of dividing the rates between landlord and tenant—namely, with a view to conciliation by repressing a grievance which the tenant fancied he laboured under. The second reason was because, of late, there had been most unfortunate occurrences attending the collection of this extraordinary tithe, of which advantage had been taken for making unfair attacks on the Church and the clergy, for only trying, as Englishmen, by legitimate means to recover what they considered to be their own. And now, when the ownership of all kinds of property was in a precarious condition — he was not sure that it might not soon, indeed, be considered a criminal offence—he thought in the case of any sort of property, where there was the least shadow of a grievance, it was their duty, if possible, to remove it. There was one more reason why the question should be dealt with. Formerly, if a farmer got one good year out of three, he was able not only to recoup himself, but to have a surplus with a considerable profit. That, however, he was afraid was not the case now. Whatever might be the crop of the future, he thought the days of high or remunerative prices had absolutely gone by. If the hop grower, in addition to being exposed to the ravages of insects, bad weather, and unfair competition with the foreigner, who was protected, was to be subjected to extraordinary tithe also, then he thought it was clear that he had a grievance, and that the time had come when, if possible, that grievance should be removed; and he hoped that the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee would result in a fair and equitable settlement.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Norton.*)

Mr. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, that the Seconder of the Motion had in reality made a speech against the Bill, because a great portion of his argument was directed to show that there was not that grievance which the growers of hops said there was. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that the grievance was felt to be a substantial one, not only by the hop growers of Kent and Sussex, but also by the inhabitants of towns upon whom the charge ultimately fell. His constituents in St. Pancras were interested in having a supply of good cheap fruit and vegerables, as well as having their beer manufactured of the best materials, and they were anxious that the question should be dealt with, not only in the interest of fruit and hop growers and market gardeners, but in their own interest as consumers. He begged to say that the extraordinary tithe was not imposed, as the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen) had alleged, at the instance of the payers; it was imposed upon the landowners and clergy in 1836, as a compromise, by Lord John Russell to enable him to get over a difficulty. On that occasion Mr. Hume contended that there should be no tithe whatever placed upon hops, fruits, or vegetables, as he could not look upon hop grounds, market gardens, and orchards otherwise than in the light of manufactories — small pieces of land, upon which much capital was spent to make them productive. Lord John Russell said the tithes upon valuable crops, such as hops, fruit, and vegetables, could not be allowed to enter into an average commutation. Mr. Hume divided the House; but as it then consisted largely of Representatives of the landed interest in alliance with the clergy, the compromise was enforced, the result of which was, that tithe on hops, fruit, and vegetables was separated from the ordinary tithe; but as part of the compromise there was this condition—that the tithe should attach to the crop, and that when the particular cultivation ceased the extraordinary tithe should cease to be payable. Therefore, this was a tax imposed upon the growers of hops, fruit, and vegetables in 1836, and the House was at liberty to relieve them upon such terms as Parliament might think just and reasonable under the circumstances. In the aggregate, the impost amounted to something like £100,000 a-year, and was a burden which rested upon those particular industries. The so-called compromise of 1836 had worked most unsatisfactorily, and it had been most injurious to the growers and to the public, as it was a tax upon industry. It handicapped the native growers in favour of the foreign producers, discouraged the cultivation of the soil, and prevented the employment of a large quantity of labour; and he would remind hon. Members that, in connection with the question, there was no kind of cultivation which employed a larger number of persons or required a greater amount of capital. The injustice of the tax was generally admitted. He contended that it was altogether unfair to compensate in respect of potential value. He would deal with each parcel of land under the special cultivation; and he would suggest that the hon. Member (Mr. Norton) should go further than his Bill suggested, and deal with land parcel by parcel. It should be borne in mind that the grower had a right to determine the cultivation; and, when he did so, the tax ceased, and this circumstance should be considered in the calculation of any compensation. The difference between the hon. Member and himself upon the question was this—that he, who was now addressing the House, proposed to take the tithe as it was, a terminable rent-charge, determinable at the will of the payer, and give the owner the fair market value for it. The hon. Gentleman, on the other hand, proposed to lay down by the Bill a larger scheme of compensation, which would give the tithe-owner much more substantial compensation than he could reasonably be entitled to expect. If the Bill of the hon. Gentleman were pressed to a second reading, with a view to legislation on those lines, it would be his duty to oppose it; but as the hon. Gentleman had intimated his willingness to entertain a suggestion which it was believed would come from the Treasury Bench, that this and the other Bills should go to a Select Committee, he (Mr. Bolton), on his part, was not disposed to oppose the second reading. The question was one of very great difficulty; but, unless it could be dealt with in some drastic way, dissatisfaction would still be felt and the agitation would continue. That agitation was one which was exciting the greatest possible friction in large parts of England, and riots had occurred, men had been sent to prison, and there was a general resistance throughout Kent and Sussex to the payment of what people considered to be an unfair burden. If there was further delay, the existing ill-feeling would be increased; and he was desirous, in the interests of the clergy as well as of the landowners, and more especially of the growers and the public at large, that the question should be settled in a reasonable way. All they wanted was fair dealing, and they were not opposed to any reasonable compensation which could be shown to be justly due for actual loss. He would assent to the proposal that all the Bills should be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. GATHORNE-HARDY (Kent, Medway) said, it could not, of course, be expected that the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Bolton) would agree with the Bill before the House in all its particulars; but, at all events, he had admitted that this was a matter of extreme difficulty which might properly be investigated by a Select Committee, and one which it would be really impossible for a body like the whole House of Commons to decide on a reasonable basis. There was little to complain of in the speech of the hon. Member, except, perhaps, his history with regard to the first imposition of extraordinary tithe, as to which he (Mr. Gathorne-Hardy) had heard a very different account, one from which he contended that that extraordinary tithe-charge was the result of the action of Mr. Thomas Hodges, as had been said by his hon. Friend (Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen), on behalf of the hop and fruit growers in 1836. But, however that might be, he was not disposed to deny that the hon. Member had done much to bring this question before the public. He could only say that he lived in a parish in Kent where the charge did not exist; but he did not know that agriculture there was more prosperous, because the farmers had not the tithe to pay. When a grievance was raised, which turned out to be a real one, he was quite ready to give his assistance, in order, if possible, to put a stop to such grievance, and he would support the present Bill, because it would put an end to the grievance in question, upon a fair basis to all the parties concerned. The Bill would give a substantial concession to the hop growers, and put an end to relations between the clergy and the people which, he believed, had done more to injure the spiritual influence of the clergy throughout the country than any other question likely to arise. Therefore, he had the greatest pleasure in supporting the Bill.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.) said, he had some doubt as to the character of the tax. The Bill had been discussed by hon. Gentlemen opposite as if it were simply a matter between the clergy and the cultivator of the soil. He (Mr. Illingworth) desired to obtain a hearing for another view, which he believed to be more sound—that the extraordinary tithe was a national tax, imposed for ecclesiastical purposes in this country, and that when they proposed to deal with it, that view must be persistently maintained in the House of Commons. Whether the tax were paid by the tenant directly to the clergyman, or to any capitalist who might have bought up the tithe, or whether it was paid through the landlord, he compensating himself by an increase of rent, they were left in entirely the same position. It must not, therefore, be forgotten that when it was proposed to relieve any class of the community from any tithe, extraordinary or ordinary, they were, in fact, abandoning a tax imposed by the State for ecclesiastical purposes. ["No, no!"] The House might look at the matter from many points of view. If it could be imagined that this was a case between the clergy, as private individuals, and the growers of market produce, the House would soon get rid of the whole thing. They would ask why the clergy of the Established Church should be allowed, any more than the ministers of any other Denomination, to levy tithes on articles of produce, whether extraordinary or ordinary? ["Oh, oh!"] The cries he heard from the other side of the House justified him in rising to take some part in this debate, in order to assert the sound principle with regard to this and all other questions of tithes, that they were nothing but a tax imposed by the State for national purposes. It might be true that the burden of the extraordinary tithe was unequally distributed; but essentially its incidence was *pro rata*—that was to say, that the tax bore a proportion to the productiveness of the soil. The same principle ruled the imposition of the Income Tax upon millowners and manufacturers. They could only deal with the extraordinary tithe as a burden in the same sense that all taxes were burdens. He was willing to admit that, nowadays, they did not look over closely into sound principles of economy; but it was essential, when hon. Gentlemen on one side seemed to be settling this matter so amicably within the four corners of a Private Bill, that they who regarded the question from a broader standpoint should warn the country that national property was here being dealt with. ["No, no!"] If ever there was a time when it was needful to guard the national interests, it was at a time of general depression like the present. It was all very well to protect the farmers' interest, and he had no desire that it should be neglected. But they must also look at the national interest. There were other classes to be considered whose interests in this matter were really as important. Let them suppose such a thing as the Disestablishment of the Church. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, he only put it as a bare possibility, and hon. Gentlemen opposite would be none the worse for contemplating it even at a distance, because it would be brought nearer to them day by day; and they would be the less taken by surprise if they got into the way of looking at it in a calm way. Let them take the case of the Irish Church. When Disestablishment occurred in Ireland, Parliament, in seeking to do justice to the clergy and to the owners of tithes in that country, gave ample compensation; but there was a large reserve of national ecclesiastical wealth which had proved immensely useful in getting over certain financial difficulties in connection with the land in Ireland. If the general depression which now existed continued to prevail in this country, an equal need might be experienced on this side of the water, and we might be glad to have command of such a reserve fund to meet difficulties which might arise. Therefore, he hoped that this question of extraordinary tithes would not be at present carried to a solution. He, for one, would like to look beforehand as to the way in which they were to deal with the question of tithe, ordinary or extraordinary. If, however, this Bill, and other Bills dealing with the same subject, were referred to a Select Committee, he had no doubt that the Government would have the Committee so appointed that the national point of view would be duly considered. From what he had himself been able to read and observe as to what was passing in the agricultural districts affected by this question, he was inclined to think that the dissatisfaction which prevailed related, not only to the levy of the tithe, but as to its appropriation. In some districts the clergymen had very light duties to discharge, while they were in the enjoyment of very large incomes. He believed that if it could be enacted that tithes should come back into the National Exchequer to be used for national purposes, a great deal, if not all, of the objection to the payment of tithes would cease. So long as the view that tithes were national property was not obscured, he welcomed the discussion of the subject; and he should look forward to the Report of the Committee on the subject with much interest.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD (London) said, the last speaker had complicated this subject by introducing two points which had no necessary connection with the Bills before the House. The hon. Member designated the tithe as a national tax. He (Mr. Hubbard) knew that that theory was invented by the late Mr. Miall about 40 years ago, when he instituted the Liberation Society; but no man who had read history on the subject would deny that the origin of tithes was lost in the obscurity of time, and he denied that they operated as a tax. He would admit that Parliament had exercised the right to deal with this question. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, everything in this country was subjected to the supremacy of Parliament, and, therefore, it had the power to appropriate them if it chose; but that supposed the case of a revolutionary Parliament, and there were considerations which might bind Parliament as well as individuals. There were considerations of right and wrong, and there were considerations of origin. He again denied that this tithe was a tax. A tax was an impost levied by the State on the people for national purposes; but in this case nothing was levied on the people at all. Originally, the proprietor gave a certain portion of the substance of his estate to the support of the Church in a particular parish. The proprietor detached a certain amount of his rental, to which he and his heirs were entitled in perpetuity, and how could that be a tax upon the people? The tithe fell upon the landlord, and if it were abolished to-morrow the land would be more free and would obtain a higher rent from an ordinary tenant. But all they had to deal with at present was the hop question, and while there were several Bills which proposed to deal with it, he could not say that the Bill now under consideration was the fairest measure on that subject. It proposed, first of all, that an estimate should be taken of what had been produced by the extraordinary tithe for a certain period. It fixed, arbitrarily, a certain capital value on that product, and then it capitalized it again on another arbitrary adjustment. For his own part, he objected to all arbitrary adjustments. With regard to hops, nobody was obliged to grow them. But a grower of hops knew beforehand what the charges would be, and he generally made a very good thing of his growth. The growth of hops had been immensely increased since 1836, and it would not have increased if had been oppressed with charges and rates that took away the profit of the grower. He hoped these Bills would go before a Select Committee which would carefully and impartially consider the whole question.

The SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) said, he hoped the House would not allow the debate to be converted into an academic discussion on the Divine or the human origin of tithes, and on questions more or less connected with that distant shadow of Disestablishment which appeared to hang over both sides of the House. If the House would allow him, he would say simply that there were two opinions on the subject. There was the opinion of those who looked on tithes as of a *quasi*-Divine character, or who thought that the tithes were granted to the clergy by pious proprietors 1,000 years ago, and could not be diverted; and there was the opinion of others who thought tithes were public property, utilized for the public through certain channels for the advancement of religion through the payment of the clergy. He begged the House not on this occasion to go into that question, but to adhere strictly to the question really before it, which was this Bill and the other two Bills, Nos. 3 and 5 on the Orders—the Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment Bill and the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Redemption Bill—and whether they should be referred to a Select Committee. On the question of the Bills themselves, there was a great deal of force in what fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Hubbard) just now, though he could not agree with him in one respect. The hop tax was repealed some time ago, and no doubt that had led to a greater amount of capital being employed in hops. In other respects, also, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, whose view would, he hoped, be supported by some Member of the Select Committee. As to the course the Government proposed to take, he might say that they entirely agreed with the proposal to refer all these Bills to a Select Committee, and they would recommend accordingly. There was also another Bill, that of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Stanley Leighton), which, although not before the House that day, was so germane to these in one respect, that he thought it also should go before the same Committee. That was the general Bill as to tithe, which proposed that the incidence of tithe should be altered, just as it was proposed in one of these Bills that the incidence of extraordinary tithe should be altered. The Government thought the subject was one of great importance, and that the public interests, apart from those of the landlords, tenants, and parsons, should be distinctly represented on the Committee. In selecting the Committee, therefore, care would be taken that that interest should be represented. He trusted the House would now allow these three Bills to be read a second time; and if no one else did so, he would thereafter be prepared to move that they be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) said, he must express his regret that the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) should always endeavour to prevent any measure being passed that had for its object the removal of grievances connected with the Church of England, or which tended to make the Church more popular. There was a growing feeling throughout the country in favour of settling the question of extraordinary tithes. He had heard the moderate language of the hon. Member for North St. Pancras (Mr. Bolton) on the subject with much pleasure, although it was scarcely in accordance with his former utterances. He protested against the assertion that the Representatives of the county of Kent had shown no anxiety for the settlement of this question during the last Parliament. It would be in the recollection of many hon. Members of the House that the Bill introduced in the last Parliament had been prepared by Mr. Inderwick, jointly with Sir Edmund Filmer, then Member for Mid Kent, whose name was on its back, and who had always taken a great interest in the setttlement of this question. In his opinion, the fairest mode of taking the valuation was to take farm by farm rather than parcel by parcel, and for that reason he approved of the Bill of his hon. Friend (Mr. Norton). A general feeling existed throughout the county of Kent in favour of some step being taken to settle the question, and all the Members for that county thoroughly approved of the proposal that the whole of the subject should be referred to a Select Committee, upon which he hoped there would be placed many hon. Members who were specially conversant with the subjects of extraordinary tithes and of hop plantations.

MR. RAIKES (Cambridge University) said, he also approved of the intention to refer the question to a Select Committee, who would take a comprehensive view of it. He expected valuable results would ensue from the adoption of that course of dealing with it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee."—(*Mr. Secretary Childers.*)

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, that, so far as the Opposition had any wish in the matter, they certainly desired that the Bill should be fully and minutely considered. There were one or two points which he recommended to the special notice of the Select Committee. Great care should be taken to see that the district of valuation should be a fair one, for if it were made upon very small areas, great injustice would be worked. He also trusted that it was fully understood that the question whether the tithes should be paid by the owners or by the occupiers, was an open one. The question of the capital value of extraordinary tithes was one of difficulty, looking at the very divergent and extreme schemes suggested, inasmuch as it was proposed, on the one hand, that the value should be capitalized at three years' purchase, and, on the other, at 30 years' purchase. That was a point, therefore, with regard to which the Select Committee would do well to be exceedingly careful. He was glad to notice the disposition to treat the question in a fair spirit; and as the subject was one which could not be best dealt with by the House, he approved of sending it to a Select Committee.

MR. T. H. BOLTON said, he objected to larger areas being taken for any valuation than those which were now adopted.

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) said, he must congratulate the Government and the House upon the moderate tone which this debate had taken as compared with that of former discussions. Had such a tone been preserved before, the question might have been amicably settled years ago. But he was bound to protest against the attacks—unjustifiable and cowardly he must call them—which had been made upon those who, after all, were defending their rights, and those not personal rights, but their rights as trustees—the rights of the offices they held. He would ask whether the Select Committee would have power to refer to the labours of a previous Committee on the subject of tithes, and whether it was intended to take evidence?

MR. CHILDERS said, he proposed that the Select Committee should have the advantage of both courses.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *committed* to a Select Committee.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 65.]

(*Colonel Brookfield, Mr. Farquharson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye), in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that when a matter of this kind was brought forward, the first question which people asked was—"What is the grievance?" Looking at the question of extraordinary tithe from a purely theoretical point of view, he confessed that there appeared to be no grievance at all. It was determined, at the time of the Commutation Act of 1836, that it would be unfair to burden for ever the land at the rate required by one exceptional crop, or even a few exceptional crops, such as fruit, hops, and market-garden produce. It was therefore decided that so long as these crops were grown, the land should pay increased tithe, much on the same principle as that which was observed with regard to turnpike roads—that those who used them should pay for their maintenance. He believed that the grievance of extraordinary tithe arose out of the abolition of the foreign hop duty. If that duty had been left, his opinion was that there would not have been so much complaint with respect to tithes as there now was. The bigoted Free Traders, in their enthusiasm to take off duties of all kinds, really went too far in this particular instance. The duty was one of 45*s.* per cwt. on foreign hops, and 18*s.* or 19*s.* on British produce. The Government of the day first equalized the two, and then removed the foreign duty altogether; and he challenged any Free Trader, whatever his fondness for absolute equality in that direction might be, to say that the British producer had not suffered severely from the abolition. He rejoiced to see from the tone of the speeches of hon. Gentlemen that there was a possibility of at length settling this question on something like equitable terms. He was informed by his Friends that if these Bills went to a Select Committee, there was every prospect of useful legislation being the outcome of their labours. In listening to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary expressing the intentions of the Government on this point, he could not help thinking how unfortunate it was that such matters as this should not be under the control of a Minister entirely charged with the interests of agriculture. He believed that those who were most interested in the question would have had their demands settled long ago if such a Minister had sat in the House, to whom appeals could be made for advice and assistance. His Bill had practically the same object in view as that which had been discussed. It dealt, however, with one matter which the other measure had not touched upon. He thought it best and most convenient to go to the root of the matter, by dealing with the ordinary as well as the extraordinary tithe, in the direction of abolishing the distinction between them, and by making the whole payable by the landlord rather than the tenant. He was convinced that anyone who had carefully studied the Commutation Act of 1836 would approve of that arrangement. He had also dealt with the subject of corn averages, a question of great importance, both to the clergy and the tenants at the present time. He had been actuated in the matter by a desire to get at the root of the difficulty, and by a desire not to leave the question to be dealt with in a piecemeal fashion by successive Parliaments. The Commutation Act of 1836 was supposed to be a final settlement of this matter, and, like similar settlements in other branches of legislation, it had, as a matter of course, proved to be nothing of the kind. He believed that a sufficient length of time had elapsed since 1836 to allow of a comprehensive measure being introduced to deal with the question of tithes. He would, therefore, ask the House to formally assent to the second reading of his measure, in the hope that he might afterwards be allowed to refer it to the same Select Committee which would be charged to deal with the previous measure.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Colonel Brookfield.*)

MR. GREGORY (Sussex, East Grinstead) said, he did not object to the second reading, or the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee; but he thought it should be understood that, in taking that step, they were not accepting the principle of a measure so wide in its scope. He would call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary to the scope of the measure as stated in its Preamble, and which extended to the payment of ordinary as well as extraordinary tithe. The Bill went a good deal beyond the question they had hitherto been discussing, its principle practically amounting to a prohibition of freedom of contract as between landlord and tenant. Unless strong grounds existed for taking such a step, he thought it was inadvisable to embark on such a policy, especially as there was not a clear understanding on the part of the House regarding the objects of the Bill as they were to be gathered from the recitals in the Preamble.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH (Hants, Basingstoke) said, that tithes were paid by the tenant out of the produce of the soil; and if the liability were to be transferred to the landlord, at which he believed they would all be glad, they should take care that the position of the tithe-owner was not made a better one than it was at present, or than that which the law gave him. If the Bill went before a Select Committee he thought that this point should be impressed upon them. On the general question, as a Member of the Select Committee, which sat some time ago, he was glad to find some steps being taken in the direction of their recommendations, and that we were at last within reach of a settlement of the whole matter.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.) said, that the question of extraordinary tithe was one that was ripe for settlement on all sides, and could be dealt with without reference to any question relating to tithes generally; and he hoped that an understanding would be come to, that the Committee should make an early Report upon the question of extraordinary tithe by itself. With regard to the Bill now under consideration, he contended that it simply converted extraordinary tithe into ordinary, taking no account of the special condition imposed upon extraordinary tithe when it had been sanctioned. Such a proceeding would be entirely one against common sense. The Bill fixed the extraordinary tithe upon the land, as the ordinary tithe was fixed. Sir James Caird, in his evidence before a Select Committee, had pointed out that the question of redemption was a very difficult one in the case of what might be a vanishing quantity, since the tithe-payer might discontinue the particular cultivation of the land. It was now proposed that this charge should be converted into a permanent one, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary would so guard the reference of this Bill to a Select Committee, as not to imply that the House sanctioned either the principles or the provisions of this Bill.

MR. GATHORNE-HARDY (Kent, Medway) said, he trusted the House would allow this Bill to go to the Select Committee, although he quite agreed with the necessity for a special and early Report on the subject of extraordinary tithe. That was a pressing matter, the settlement of which ought not to be delayed while the larger question was being dealt with. He therefore hoped that special instructions would be given to the Select Committee to make a special Report upon extraordinary tithe. The question of tithes in general was a very large one, and that of extraordinary tithe was one which ought to be settled as rapidly as possible. When the Committee had reported upon the latter, they could then open up the larger question of general tithe.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) said, that they had three Bills before them, dealing partly with ordinary, and partly with extraordinary tithes; and, in his opinion, it would not be fair to exclude any one of these three Bills from the consideration of the Select Committee. He thought, however, that it was very desirable that it should be clearly understood that the Committee was not bound by either of the recitals or the proposals contained in these Bills. There was no doubt that the tithe rent-charge was a charge upon the land; whereas extraordinary tithe had originally been taken in kind, and was paid by the occupier of the land. It had been said to be for the benefit of the occupiers; but he would not now enter into that controversy. As he had before observed, he thought that in taking up these three Bills, the Committee was not to be bound by the individual recitals of the Bills. It would be anomalous to say that the Committee should deal with the question of extraordinary tithe, and not with the general question. Upon the question as to the Report of the Committee, he thought that it was reasonable that the Committee should first report upon extraordinary tithes. It was of great importance that they should have an authoritative decision upon this question; and he should therefore agree to the Motion to refer this Bill to the

Select Committee, on the understanding stated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Sclater-Booth). He would, however, call attention to one point which would require great care—namely, the alteration in the system of corn averages. There was a good deal to be said for a longer term of years, though he thought that the Preamble of this Bill hardly expressed the matter sufficiently clearly. All this, however, would be considered by a Select Committee.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER (Isle of Wight) said, he thought that it would not be fair to exclude this Bill from the consideration of the Select Committee, where all the open questions could be discussed, and where, of course, they would not be bound by the details of the Bills. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had also pointed out that it would not be possible to exclude from the consideration of the Committee the very important question whether, or not, the charge was payable by the owner of the land. Extraordinary tithe did not differ in the matter of payment from ordinary tithe; it was only different in its origin. It was most important that it should be understood by the Select Committee that the House, in referring this Bill, did not recognize the view laid down in its Preamble, as the correct interpretation of the law with regard to the liability of paying tithes. With regard to the subject of corn averages, he hoped that here again the hands of the Committee would be left completely untied. A mere extension of the term of years might in some cases work great injustice. The Committee would have to consider the question what alteration, if any, was to be made with regard to the important subject of corn averages, how it was to be applied, and when it was to come into force.

Mr. J. G. HUBBARD (London) said, he thought that there would not be any advantage in making this tithe a variable amount, payable by the landlord rather than by the tenant; it would only lead to inconvenience, that the landlord himself should have to discharge the tithe on a property which was let to another person. In the first instance, it had been a charge upon certain produce of the land, and the producer had to pay in kind. For the sake of convenience, that payment had been converted into money; but its nature had not been changed by that fact. With regard to the question of the corn average, he doubted very much whether it would again rise to par, as they now had every kind of produce coming in from all parts of the world ridiculously cheap. The Bill, however, in his opinion, contained much that was good, and he thought that it was highly desirable that it should go to a Select Committee.

Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said, that if the Bill had dealt only with extraordinary tithe, he would not have troubled the House with any observations, as that was an impost of which, thank Heaven, the people in the county in which he lived knew nothing. But with the burden of ordinary tithes they were only too familiar. He agreed with the proposal of the Bill, that tithe should be made payable by the landowner rather than by the tenant. He knew that a great deal of friction arose between the farmers and the clergy through the payment of the tithe by the farmers; but, while he wished to see that changed, he trusted that the Committee, to whom the Bill was to be referred, would not recommend any course in carrying out the alteration which would increase the security at present possessed by the owner of the tithe. The owner's security now was in the produce of the land. He had no claim on the personal or other property of the landlord. If the land went out of cultivation, as he was sorry to say a good deal of land had gone out of cultivation, and he feared a good deal more would go, the tithe-owner could hold the land until he had paid himself out of the produce; but he had no other remedy, and he (Mr. Everett) did not think there would be any desire in the House to still further strengthen the tithe-owners' hands as against the unfortunate owner of the soil. He had also a word to say as to the question of the corn averages. This Bill proposed to lengthen the number of years on which the average was taken from seven to 40. Now, so far as the matter had come under his observation, all the complaints made in the past had rested on the fact that the number of years already taken had been too long. Singularly enough, it had happened that when farmers were receiving a high price for corn, they were generally paying a low tithe, and that when they were receiving a low price, they were paying a high tithe. Notably in 1879, the most disastrous agricultural year within the memory of this generation, tithe stood at 111 or 112. He hoped there would be a shortening of the seven years, not a lengthening. If the landowner paid instead of the tenant, the rent would be based, not on an average of 40 years past, but upon prices current at the time. In regard to the fear expressed by the last speaker (Mr. Hubbard), that we should never see tithe at par again, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman was wrong; and he was encouraged in the hope by this fact—the Church in the past had always shown singularly good judgment in dealing with temporal matters. When tithes were commuted, in 1836, the advisers of the Church had the option of having their future receipts for tithe, based either on so many bushels of corn, or on so many pounds sterling. They had more confidence in the stability of the value of corn than of the value of money, and so they elected to have the tithe based on corn. Their judgment had proved right in the matter, ever since 1836, until a few years ago. Now, the value of money had risen, after a long period of movement in the opposite direction. For himself, he believed that the miseries being suffered in agriculture and commerce to-day were mainly the result of that altered value of money. The purchasing power of the sovereign, in which our bargains had all been made, had risen, so that we had to give up a larger portion of goods to obtain the necessary sovereigns. That had been caused largely by the disuse of silver in Europe and America. He hoped we might soon see silver restored again to its former place, and consequently a restoration of money to its former value—the value in which their bargains were made. Looking at the tendency on the part of money to decrease in value, on which tendency the Church had based her decision to take her tithe in corn rather than in money, and looking at the shrewdness which had ever attended the Church in her bargaining in the past, he hoped events would yet prove that in this matter, too, she had judged right, and that we should see tithe come back to par.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that a reference to a Select Committee of this kind was, to a certain extent, a reference to a Committee of experts. A Committee formed to deal with the question of extraordinary tithes alone would, probably, be formed of Members who were well-informed on that subject, but might not necessarily have the wider experience required for the larger subject. He suggested that the fact that both subjects would come before the Committee should be taken into consideration in its constitution.

Mr. LONG (Wilts, Devizes) said, that the present system of the payment of tithes was seriously felt by the tenant farmers, and he regretted that the payment had fallen on the occupier instead of the owner. He confessed he would rejoice to see the system altered, as he believed it would remove a grievance, and would strengthen and improve the position of the Church. The more the Committee had before them the more probable it would be that they would be able to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. He therefore hoped that this Bill would be sent with the others to the Committee, and that something useful would be the result.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Select Committee on the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY (DURHAM) BILL.

(*Mr. Theodore Fry, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Dodds, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Paulton*).

[BILL 74.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. T. FRY (Darlington), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he need not detain the House very long, as the principle of the Bill was so exceedingly well known. As that, however, was the first occasion on which any county measures had come before the new Members embodying that principle, he might say, in a few words, why the county of Durham asked for special legislation on the subject. He did not hesitate to say, at the outset, that he would very much rather a Bill had been passed affecting the whole of England. He believed that, for many reasons, it would have been much more satisfactory; and if Her Majesty's Government had announced that they were really intending to take up and pass into law a general measure, it would not have been necessary for him to introduce the Bill to the notice of the House. In the absence of any such direct intimation on the part of the Government, the Representatives of the county of Durham did not feel inclined to wait any longer. Now, the two principal points which the House had to consider were, whether the principle of Local Option was to be applied to Sunday Closing in England; and, secondly, whether the county of Durham was ready for the application of the principle. So far as regarded the application of the principle of Local Option, the House had already affirmed, on three separate occasions during the last Parliament, a Motion, moved by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, declaring that Local Option, in some cases at any rate, was an exceedingly good thing; and a fortnight ago, when his hon. Friend the Member for the Barnard Castle Division (Sir Joseph Pease) brought in his Bill dealing with Sunday Closing, several Members opposite argued in favour of the application of the principle of Local Option to Sunday Closing, and thought it would be much better if the measure should be presented in that way. But it had always been found, when these questions had been before the House, that hon. Members who objected to Sunday Closing were divided into two classes; and when a measure came before the House advocating Sunday Closing for England generally, a number of Members said that they preferred that they should proceed by the counties; and when a county Bill was introduced other Members said they preferred to proceed by measures affecting the whole country. In reference to the question of Local Option, he reminded hon. Members who did not agree with him of the allusion made to the subject by the Marquess of Salisbury in the speech he recently delivered at Newport. The noble Marquess said the question of Sunday Closing was a burning one, and then went on to say—

> "We admit that the closing of public-houses on Sundays, where that is according to the views of the population, is a legitimate act to take place."

Mr. T. Fry

That he (Mr. Fry) hoped would be considered very high authority indeed on the question of Sunday Closing. If the first point were granted, the only other point to be considered was whether the county of Durham was ready for the application of the principle of Local Option to Sunday Closing. The House would remember that in 1883, when this Bill affecting the county of Durham was read a second time, 153 Members voted for it, and only 57 against it. The Bill conferring the same privileges on the county of Cornwall was passed by this House. The measure passed its second reading in the House of Lords, and was only thrown out on the third reading by an exceedingly small majority. Now, what was the position which had been attained in the county of Durham upon this subject? There were in the last House 13 Members from the county of Durham, and 12 of these were pledged to support the measure. The 13th Representative of the county (Sir George Elliot) said in his place in the House that, although he was personally opposed to the measure, he was so fully aware of the wishes of his constituents in reference to the matter that he could not vote against the Bill, and he left the House when the division was taken. There were now 16 Members from the county of Durham, and 15 out of the 16 were in favour of the measure. Only yesterday the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the City of Durham (Mr. Milvain) put down a Notice of objection to the measure. He hoped that when, in the course of the debate, the hon. and learned Gentleman found he was the only Member from the county who opposed the Bill, he would take the course pursued by Sir George Elliot, and not vote against the Bill, which, he must know, was so largely supported by his own constituents. This was not a political question. The hon. and learned Gentleman's Predecessor in the House was one of the most earnest supporters of the measure, and his name appeared upon the back of the Bill introduced in the last Parliament. He (Mr. Fry) did not think there could be any stronger test of the opinion of the district than that 15 out of 16 Members returned by the county affected were supporters of the measure. Furthermore, every Town Council in the county of Durham, with one exception—and that, he believed, was quite accidental—had petitioned at some time or other in favour of the Bill; every Board of Guardians in the county had petitioned in favour of the Bill; and out of 170 parishes, which there were in the county, no fewer than 133 had, at public meetings, passed resolutions in favour of the measure; and on almost every occasion the clergymen of the parish were present, and supported the resolution. Of the association which was specially at work for the propagation of this object, the Bishop of the diocese was President, and the Dean and Archdeacon of Durham were active promoters of the Bill. After all, what the House generally wanted was to ascertain, if possible, the wishes of the population at large. During the Session of 1883 Petitions from the county of Durham were presented to the House, representing about 200,000 persons. One Petition, which he presented himself, bore 140,000 signatures. From a canvass of 25 places, it was found that 16,892 persons signed in favour of the measure, only 1,317 against it, and there were 966 neutral; so that there were nearly eight times as many persons in favour of the measure as the opponents and neutrals put together. He might also mention that Mr. Jenkins, who employed 6,000 hands, said there was a great feeling in favour of the Bill in his district of the county; and the hon. Member for Mid Durham (Mr. W. Crawford), who was an official of the Miners' Association, and who was not able to be present in the House that day, had stated that if they were polled there would be an overwhelming majority of working men in favour of Sunday Closing. That, he thought, was very strong evidence indeed of the very great importance attached to this measure by the people of the county. He hoped, therefore, that the House would be willing to assent to the second reading of the Bill. Some persons argued that if this county measure were passed a great deal of difficulty and annoyance would be occasioned to those who lived just over the county line. With regard to that point, he might say that in two or three Sessions of the last Parliament the counties of Northumberland and Yorkshire promoted similar measures to this; and he had no doubt at all that if this measure passed into law those counties, and possibly other counties, would come forward with similar Bills. It must be remembered, moreover, that Sunday Closing had produced good results both in Scotland and in Ireland, and there had been no demand for its repeal. He had now only to allude to the action which the Government took on this question in 1883. He was glad to remind the House that on that occasion they had the very cordial support of the Government, and he trusted they would have it again upon the present occasion. The then Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) spoke most strongly in their favour. The right hon. Gentleman was convinced that an overwhelming majority of the people of the county were in favour of the measure, and therefore he gave the Bill his warmest support. He (Mr. Fry) hoped the House would excuse him for having given these few details. What he had to say, in conclusion, was, anxious as were the people of Durham in 1883 to have Sunday Closing, it might be taken for granted that they were more ready and more anxious to have it now. Having regard to the opinion expressed by the last Liberal Government, the opinion expressed by the Marquess of Salisbury at Newport, and the opinion expressed in the House a fortnight ago by many Members of the Opposition, and to the overwhelming wish of the people of Durham, he confidently asked the House to assent to the second reading of the Bill. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. T. Fry.*)

MR. MILVAIN (Durham), in rising to move, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, that, although a young Member of the House, he would not have asked their indulgence, while he addressed a few words upon the second reading of the Bill, had he not been in the anomalous position to which the hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Fry) had referred. The hon. Gentleman had said that, because 15 out of the 16 Members returned by the county of Durham were in favour of the closing of the public-houses in the county on Sunday, it was evident that it was the unanimous wish of the people of the county that Sunday Closing should be applied to Durham. With every deference to the opinions of the hon. Gentleman, he begged to contradict him, and he did so upon what, to his mind, was some authority. The hon. Gentleman had alluded to the fact that his (Mr. Milvain's) Predecessor was in favour of this measure. So Mr. Thompson was, and so he pronounced himself upon the hustings and in the constituency which he (Mr. Milvain) had now the honour to represent. Was it to be accepted that the people of the county of Durham were favourable to Sunday Closing because, as the hon. Member for Darlington said in 1883, Petitions were presented to the House of Commons signed by 200,000 persons? The hon. Member, as well as other hon. Members representing boroughs in the county of Durham, would be satisfied of this—that it was possible to have within a few years some revulsion of feeling. All the Durham borough Members would certainly agree with him (Mr. Milvain) that whatever was their majority in 1880, it was considerably reduced in 1885. The hon. Member had further said the county of Durham was ready for Sunday Closing. On whose testimony, he asked him, beyond that of 1883, was he in a position to say so? If it was because the county had sent up so many Liberal Members, he entirely differed from him. Durham was well known for its Liberal proclivities, and was at one time alluded to in a comic paper as the most "no-Tory-ous" county in England. Those who promoted the Bill had satisfied themselves by expressing their opinions on the hustings; and he denied they had the right to say that the whole county was prepared to accept, in every detail, their political programme. He did so on this ground, among others, that his opponent was a Local Optionist and Sunday Closer, and that he (Mr. Milvain) declared his creed on the subject on the platform, as he did now in that House, and beat him. There were on the register of the city of Durham 2,305 electors. Out of that number during the recent electoral campaign, which lasted only one month, he (Mr. Milvain) had personally canvassed over 2,000, and perhaps the hon. Member for Darlington and the House would be surprised to hear that out of the 2,000 whom he canvassed, there were not half-a-dozen who made it a *sine quâ non* that he should support Sunday Closing. ["No, no!"] He heard an hon. Member say "No;" but he declared that to him on his word, and as his experience; and if he, or any other hon. Gentleman, could pledge his own word in a contrary sense, he was at liberty do so, and to state his authority. Further, he might state that the men who made it a *sine quâ non* that he (Mr. Milvain) should support Sunday Closing were enthusiasts in the highest degree; they worked in the cause of Sunday Closing with a zeal and energy that was altogether exceptional. In the many meetings which he addressed during the month's electoral campaign, he was frequently asked if he would support Sunday Closing, and he as frequently denounced it as a means of obtaining an end by coercion which could be more satisfactorily and more permanently attained by means which were more Constitutional. He had every reason to believe that all the questions asked in the meetings he addressed, emanated from the same source. He submitted that if the hon. Member for Darlington and other Members for the county of Durham had personally canvassed their constituents and felt their pulse upon this question, as he (Mr. Milvain) had his, they would not come here to say that it was the unanimous wish of the people of Durham that there should be Sunday Closing. Before he left this point, perhaps he ought to say that it was a matter of some surprise to him that the hon. Member for Darlington should declare upon his *ipse dixit* that the county of Durham was ready for Sunday Closing, when the Bill had not been supported by a single Petition of any sort or kind. Now, the grounds upon which he always had and did now oppose the measure were, firstly, that it interfered with vested interests; secondly, that it interfered with the liberty of the subject; thirdly, that it was objectionable on the grounds of its being exceptional legislation for a particular district; and, fourthly, on the ground that he did not believe it would attain the object for which it was introduced. In the first place, he would deal with the first objection, that it was objectionable on the ground that it interfered with vested interests. Hon. Members opposite would, no doubt, admit that it interfered with vested interests; but they would argue that it did so in a very slight degree, that the interference was only in one day out of seven, and then only for a few hours on that one day. He would ask any fair-minded Member of that House whether it was just that anyone should thus be interfered with in the exercise of his calling? Let them suppose for a moment that a man of good character, by dint of labour, thrift, and energy, had scraped together a certain capital, which he was prepared to invest in the purchase of a house, and in procuring a licence for it. It would be said that the licence was only for a year, and depended on the man's character and conduct; but the capital was invested in the house, and what the publican maintained was that his good conduct and his character were the pledges for his security. Well, supposing it were admitted that the opening of his house for the few hours left upon a Sunday resulted in a profit of £1, that man would thus receive £52 a-year from his Sunday's trade. At 5 per cent, the measure of his losses through Sunday Closing would represent the return upon a capital of £1,040. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members laughed. He knew they had a very different feeling sometimes with regard to vested interests and existing contracts to that which he entertained; but he told them they were not acting justly, and he put the matter upon higher grounds, and grounds which he submitted to the House were practically unanswerable—it interfered, he said, with the liberty of the subject. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite laughed. [*Renewed laughter.*] Very different views on that subject had been held on the Benches opposite in former times; but he thought it was a principle which all might hold to-day, that the liberty of the subject should not be interfered with unless upon the strongest proof that the liberty had been abused to the detriment of a substantial proportion of the community. Now, where was the proof, he asked, that the liberty of the subject in the county of Durham as to the opening of public-houses on the Sunday in order to get beer had been abused to the detriment of a large proportion of the population? He maintained there was a total absence of any such proof. Fifteen years ago, when he was in the habit of attending the Durham Quarter Sessions, there were 108 to 115 cases set down for trial. Why? Because the sale of drink was almost wholesale; because the times were good and because the people were not educated. What was the condition now? Why, the condition of things was immeasurably altered, and, instead of there being the number he had given as formerly existing, there were only about 18 persons to be tried at Quarter Sessions. There was a diminution of crime throughout the whole county. If the hon. Member for Darlington had brought forward his measure 15 years ago, there might have been some ground for saying that the liberty of the subject had been abused to the detriment of a substantial portion of the community; but he submitted that now there was no ground for such an assertion. The proof justifying interference with the liberty of the subject ought to be much stronger in the case of exceptional legislation applicable to one county, than in the case of legislation applicable to the country at large; and during his personal canvass in the city of Durham it was his pleasure not to see in his canvass more than 10 men who were at the time in a state of intoxication. It was upon that ground that he asserted the county of Durham was not ripe for the measure proposed by the hon. Member. [*Laughter.*] His canvass lasted from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., and he could speak with a greater knowledge than hon. Gentlemen who laughed. It could not possibly be said the inhabitants of his constituency were suffering from over-drinking. Again, he wanted to know on what principle they were to attack the inhabitants of the county of Durham in the centre, whereas they did not touch those who were upon the borders? He had in his possession statistics of crime, giving the Returns of the convictions for drunkenness on Sunday throughout the county. Up to September, 1885, he found that in the city of Durham the total number of resident persons convicted of drunkenness upon the Sunday was only 10 in a year; he found that throughout the whole county 216 resident persons were so convicted, and that, upon a population of 600,745, was only a proportion of somewhat over one in 2,000. When they came to consider where the average was knocked up, they found it in such places as Gateshead, standing upon the banks of the Tyne, a very densely-populated district; they found there that, out of a population of 65,000, the convictions were 65 in one year for Sunday drinking, which gave a proportion of one in 1,000. They might take it for granted that the average was knocked up somewhere in the neighbourhood of the banks of the Tyne, and that was upon the border of the two counties of Northumberland and Durham. He thought he was justified in saying that if they looked at the statistics for all the other counties of England, the case of Durham would not be found to be at all exceptional. On turning to Northumberland, he found that the total average was somewhere about the same; but at Tynemouth, where there was a population of 44,118, 70 persons who were residents in the place were convicted in the course of a year of drinking on the Sunday. In Newcastle, which had a population of 145,359, 148 persons were convicted of Sunday drinking, an average of something over one in 1,000. Now, what would be the result of Sunday Closing in Durham? It must be that injury would be done to vested interests in the adjoining counties of Northumberland, Yorkshire, and Westmoreland. People finding Durham so highly virtuous would flock into that county, and thus the vested interests of the publicans in the adjoining counties would be seriously affected. But the converse they would find much more probable—namely, that persons would flock to the adjoining counties, and there increase the drunkenness on the Sunday. This was one reason, at any rate, why there should not be this exceptional legislation for the county of Durham; but, as he had said, he opposed the Bill upon another ground—namely, that it amounted to exceptional legislation. He desired to know upon what principle it was that this law was to be made to deprive the poor of their drink when there was no law to deprive the rich of their drink? If this law was good for the poor it was good for the rich. He asked the hon. Member for Gateshead, whose name he saw on the back of the Bill, upon what principle he could go into his constituency, attend Divine worship upon the Sunday, then turn his back upon Gateshead, cross over the bridge into Newcastle, walk into his club, and enjoy drink, while his poor constituents were to be deprived of any refreshment at all? Upon that ground, if upon no other, this Bill ought to be opposed. He maintained that if the measure were passed it would not attain the end in view, and he said that from experience. The hon. Member who had moved the second reading had spoken of what was done in 1883. He (Mr. Milvain) could tell the hon. Member what was done in Durham in 1883. During the time that the Bill was before the House preparations were made by the publicans as well as by private persons to provide themselves with three-gallon kegs—with what object? [“Oh, oh!”] He heard some hon. Member say “Oh, oh!” but did that hon. Gentleman contradict him? Those three-gallon kegs were intended to be filled on Saturday nights and conveyed to private houses for the consumption of their contents on the Sunday. During his canvass in the city of Durham he came across some total abstainers who, the hon. Member for Houghton-le-Spring (Mr. Wilson) would be surprised to hear, absolutely denounced this measure, and denounced it for the reason that it would not effect the object in view—because it would do in Durham what it had done elsewhere, and spirits and beer would be conveyed into private houses on the Saturday night for consumption on the Sunday. It was quite understood in the county that men would club together to attain their object, and that they would drink at home on the Sunday, and thus set a bad example to their wives and children. He did not wish it to be assumed that he was opposed to temperance. During his candidature he did not succeed in pleasing either the publican or the total abstainer. He advocated non-political clubs, in which drunkenness should be a sufficient ground for expulsion. He advocated cocoa-palaces; he advocated the enlightenment and amusement of the people by means with which the publicans did not agree; indeed, he maintained that the evil of which complaint was made ought to be met by some other measure than the one now before the House—by such a measure, for instance, as that introduced a few days ago by the hon. Baronet (Sir Joseph Pease). The hon. Baronet's Bill dealt with the question of Sunday drinking very fairly, for it provided that public-houses should only be open on Sundays during reasonable hours, and only then for the sale of drink to be consumed off the premises. That was a measure he was prepared to support, for the reason that it did not interfere with the liberty of the subject, and would not cause any individual county or place to be made the subject of exceptional legislation. There were other measures which were advocated at the present time. He thought, from his experience of the manner in which at present magistrates dealt with licences that the system worked satisfactorily, though some were of opinion their conduct was amendable, and ought to be improved. He would not touch upon the matter now; because, in the no distant future, he hoped it would be dealt with in the measure introduced by the hon. Member for Barnard Castle (Sir Joseph Pease). He must really apologize to the House for having occupied its time so long as he had already done; but he felt very strongly with regard to this measure. It was not within his memory; but, if report was accurate, it might be within the memory of the last generation, that drunkenness was common at the tables of the rich. Well, as to that, it was not so now, and what was the reason? It was the advancement of education; it was because drunkenness was looked upon with disgust and loathing now by the educated classes. If this was so with the rich, why should it not be so with the poor? They were being educated; they were learning themselves that drunkenness was a crime, and that drunkenness, without a conviction even, was a disgrace. He maintained that by example and education they would be able to meet the difficulty without proceeding to ends which might be unConstitutional. For those reasons, he had objected to the Bill among his own constituents, and for those reasons also he now moved that it be read a second time on that day six months.

MR. GREGORY seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Milvain.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring) said, that the views of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down would undoubtedly not harmonize very easily with those which he himself (Mr. Wilson) held, inasmuch as the hon. and learned Gentleman was the Member for Durham, while he (Mr. Wilson) was one of the electors for that city. Both sides of the question were, therefore, represented. The hon. and learned Member seemed to be the little leaven which leavened the whole lump, and he certainly represented that one iota of Toryism which had been sent by the entire county of Durham. He (Mr. Wilson) must confess that he was not one of the party of 10 that had been canvassed by the hon. and learned Gentleman in the city of Durham. They, it was to be presumed, saved the city from destruction. Those 10 righteous men, found not in Sodom but in Durham, were in favour of Sunday Closing.

MR. MILVAIN explained that it was six men who had made Sunday Closing a *sine quâ non* when he was canvassing. The 10 men were intoxicated.

MR. J. WILSON said, Durham was a Cathedral city, with some six or seven Dissenting and Congregational churches and chapels connected with different Religious Bodies; and there were Good Templar Lodges and Temperance Societies; and he maintained that the great majority of the clergy, as well as of the members of those Temperance Bodies, were in favour of Sunday Closing. In the Good Templar Lodge of which he was a member there were 200 or 300 of the male members who were entirely pledged to support Sunday Closing. He would multiply six by 100, and venture to say that there were not six but 600 men in Durham who would avow openly and plainly that the time had come when the public-houses should be closed on Sunday. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the city of Durham would, perhaps, forgive him if he (Mr. Wilson) said that the opinions he had advanced upon this Sunday Closing Question were about as old as the law the hon. and learned Member practised, and were taught before the hon. and learned Gentleman was born. He (Mr. Wilson) knew the people of Durham, and he knew the working men of Durham far better than the hon. and learned Gentleman. There was held annually, in the county of Durham, a meeting of the delegates of the miners in the county, who numbered some 100 to 150 men, and of which meeting he (Mr. Wilson) was the Secretary. He could tell the hon. and learned Gentleman that not once nor twice, but many times, had this matter been discussed, and there had always been a general consensus of opinion that such a Bill as this should become law. If the House desired it, he would undertake, before next week, to supply the House with Petitions from every colliery in the county of Durham, wherein a majority of the *employés*, above bank and below, would say that they were in favour of closing public-houses on Sunday.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) said, he rose to state the course which the Government would take in reference to this Bill. It was not very different from the Bill brought forward in 1883, when his Predecessor, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), spoke strongly in its favour, and referred to the almost universal desire of the miners of Durham for some legislation of this character. He (Mr. Childers) proposed to take the same course as his right hon. Friend on that occasion. He might be asked how it was he supported the Bill proposed by the hon. Baronet the Member for Barnard Castle (Sir Joseph Pease), which dealt in different ways with the town and the country districts, and had said he thought the principle of the Bill was sound, but that some provision should be made to enable the people in the country districts to get their supply of beer on Sunday for a limited number of hours off the premises. The explanation was simple. The Bill was proposed for the whole country, without an expression of opinion from the people of a particular district as to whether they desired it or not; and he said he should support it as a temporary measure, until a general Act dealing with local government could be passed under which each district could deal with the question for itself, and then it would be reasonable that the power of obtaining refreshment off the premises should be retained. In the present case, however, the House had before it a Bill supported by the great majority of the people whom it would affect. He noticed that it was supported by 15 out of the whole 16 Members for Durham; and, on looking at the polls, he found that those Members represented the overwhelming majority of the people. In these circumstances, he would vote for the second reading.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS (Lancashire, S. W., Newton) said, he had had peculiar opportunities for many years of late of knowing the habits and manners of the colliers and factory operatives in Lancashire; and he was happy to have observed growing up, not suddenly, but gradually, not universally, but very generally, a feeling in favour of habits of temperance. In some districts, indeed, that feeling among those classes had almost become a matter of religion. No one could possibly feel more thankful for such a change of opinion than he did. Formerly, intemperance prevailed to a considerable extent among the higher classes in this country; but, by the growth of a better feeling, habits of intoxication had practically ceased among those classes; and he had always held that they might also look for a similar result among the humbler orders from the influence of an improved public opinion. The hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings)—he was not quite sure whether he was in Order, at that present moment, in calling the hon. Gentleman by that title—had lately taken a very effective means of putting a stop to the efforts which Members of the late Government thought the wisest mode of meeting the difficulties of that question. When in Office, they declared it to be their intention to deal at once with a measure of local government for this country; and although the present Ministry had also promised to bring in such a measure, it seemed to have now receded into the dim and distant future. They had been reminded that, in his speech at Newport, Lord Salisbury had intimated that the question of Sunday Closing would be included among those questions that would be left to Local Authorities under the scheme of local government that the late Administration had intended to introduce. That seemed to be the wisest course, because then they should have been absolutely certain that it was the wish of the special locality before any measure of this kind came into operation. The hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Fry) had told them that the people of the county of Durham desired to have public-houses closed on Sunday; and, on the other hand, the hon. and learned Member for the city of Durham (Mr. Milvain) said that the general feeling of the inhabitants of that city certainly was not favourable to that proposal. All that only showed how much better, and how much more practical, it would be to have that question relegated to the Local Authorities, so as to get the real opinion of the community upon it. He had not quite gathered from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers), although much had been said about Local Option, whether it was the intention of the Government to bring forward a measure of that kind or not. He should have thought, if that was their intention, it would have been very much better to have waited a short time before passing this measure, in order that they might see whether a more comprehensive mode of dealing with this question might not have been found. It might be preferable to give Local Authorities the power of regulating that matter. If that Bill were passed, he certainly hoped that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see justice done to one class of persons to whom allusion had been made. There could be no doubt that at present all those licensed victuallers, whether in the county or the city of Durham, who had taken out existing licences, had taken them out on the faith that they would be allowed to sell liquor on Sunday as they had hitherto done; and if that Bill became law, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to restore a portion of the money he had received for the licences of those persons whose public-houses were to be shut up on Sunday. Some years ago there had been introduced a measure by which persons could take out six-day licences at a lower rate of payment than that for licences for seven days in the week; and if the licensed victuallers of the county of Durham were to have their houses entirely closed on Sunday, it would be only fair that they should not have to pay for seven-day licences, otherwise they would be heavily mulcted by the passing of that Bill. If any such Bill was to be passed at all, he would much prefer that proposed on a former occasion by the hon. Baronet the Member for Barnard Castle (Sir Joseph Pease) to the present one; but he thought it was a question whether the hon. Member for Darlington should divide the House on his Bill at all.

MR. CHILDERS said, that if he correctly understood the right hon. Gentleman's appeal, it was that whereas for the present year, which he presumed ended in September, some licensed victuallers in Durham had taken out a seven days' licence, it would be fair, if the provisions of this Bill were to come into operation, that they should be repaid the difference between the seven and six days' licence for the remaining period of the year. At first sight that seemed to be fair; and he would mention it to his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in order to see if a considerable proportion of the money paid should not be returned.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that he had spoken of next year also.

MR. CHILDERS said, he understood it, of course, to apply to next year. If the public-houses were to be closed on Sunday, the licence would be only for six days.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said, he was unable to support the second reading of the Bill. He was an advocate of temperance, and likewise of Sunday Closing; but he was also for Sunday Closing on principles common to the whole country. It would be with reluctance that he should find himself in the opposite Lobby from the hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Fry); but he himself advocated temperance in a temperate way; and he held that there were many other important principles which should go hand-in-hand with temperance, among these being the liberty of the subject and regard for vested interests, which required to be carefully treated. He was sorry that the matter should be settled offhand, after only an hour and a-half's discussion. He had come to the conclusion that there was a very strong feeling, gradually increasing throughout England, in favour of Sunday Closing, whether in small rural parishes or in centres of population like Liverpool, where something like 40,000 heads of houses had signed a Petition in favour of it. Therefore, what he wished to recommend was that his temperance friends and the House should go slowly in dealing with this very important and burning question. That should all the more be done because Sunday Closing must be dealt with in any Local Government Bill; and he was glad that Lord Salisbury had put it in the forefront of his speech at Newport that he was prepared to deal boldly with that great question. When the subject of Local Government was brought forward, a crowd of other questions would come up to which the principle of Local Option would apply. He felt bound to warn the House that the principle of Local Option, if once introduced, could not be confined to the question of temperance only, for there would be a crowd of places desirous of exercising Local Option on particular questions—as, for instance, Portsmouth and Plymouth might desire to keep in operation Acts which the House the other day condemned. Being opposed to dealing in an off-hand and piecemeal fashion with those matters, he felt unable to support the Motion before the House.

MR. GENT-DAVIS (Lambeth, Kennington), who rose amid great interruption, said, he did not propose to detain the House at any great length. He could well understand the anxiety of hon. Members below the Gangway on the Government side of the House in crying "Divide, divide!" but he thought that it was one of their privileges that they should have freedom of speech. He had a few words to say on this subject; and he believed that he was quite within his rights in speaking, notwithstanding the impatience of hon. Members, and stating why he intended to oppose the second reading of the Bill. He should have thought that the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Fry) would have furnished the House with reliable statistics, showing actually what the opinion of the people of Durham was upon this question. But nothing of the kind. He had no statistics to give them. It was true that he had quoted a few figures; but they had been told that figures could be made to prove anything or nothing; and he held they ought not to take away the rights of the minority of the people of Durham, even at the instance of the majority—supposing, of course, that the supporters of the measure were in a majority. He could heartily sympathize with the hon. Member that such noted local optionists as Mr. W. S. Caine and Sir Wilfrid Lawson were not now in the House; but he thought it would be well if they postponed the second reading of the Bill until they could obtain some authentic information as to the real desires of the people of Durham in the matter. At all events, he did not think that they should exclude the people of Durham from taking their glasses of beer or glasses of whisky upon the mere expression of opinion of a Board of Guardians or a Town Council, however conclusive hon. Members below the Gangway might think such views were. He objected to their interfering with the rights of the people, and he particularly objected to this piecemeal fashion of dealing with a great question. Hon. Members who were so loud in their demand for this measure should remember that they were taking away from the poor that which they permitted to the rich and well-to-do. Why was it that the publicans were specially selected for this restrictive legislation? Why were the clubs not mentioned? Was it because the hon. Member belonged to one of those clubs that he had failed to include them in his Bill? Did he wish that they should still remain open? And why were the rights and privileges of the publican to be sacrificed? The publican was heavily taxed, and was entitled to their protection; and why was he to be sacrificed to these clubs, many of which were supported by the lowest class of the community? Local Option was a craze; and to gratify a mere craze they were asked to pass this Bill. For the purpose of enabling them to ascertain the views and opinions of the people of Durham on this question, he moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gent-Davis,*)—put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 163; Noes 82: Majority 81.—(Div. List, No. 43.)

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (EXTRAORDINARY) REDEMPTION BILL.

(*Mr. T. H. Bolton, Mr. Thorold Rogers, Mr. Borlase, Sir John Lubbock.*)

[BILL 63.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. T. H. BOLTON (St. Pancras, N.), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was well understood that this measure was to be referred to the same Select Committee as the Bills which had been under discussion at an earlier period of the day.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. T. H. Bolton,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to the Select Committee on the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

(*Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Puleston, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Burt, Mr. Arch.*)

[BILL 49.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. JACKS (Leith, &c.), who had charge of the measure, said, he would move that the second reading be postponed until that day fortnight. [*Cries of* "Go on!"] If it was desired that the Bill should proceed, he would at once move the second reading.

COLONEL MAKINS (Essex, S.E.) rose to Order, and asked if the hon. Member, who had named a future day for the second reading of the Bill, was in Order in now proceeding with his Motion?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member, having named a future day for the second reading of the Bill, cannot move that it now be read a second time.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday* 7th April.

MARRIED WOMEN (MAINTENANCE IN CASE OF DESERTION) BILL.

(*Mr. Pulley, Mr. Thomas Blake, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Warmington.*)

[BILL 111.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. PULLEY (Hereford), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was to relieve a difficulty in the existing law. As hon. Members were aware, women who were deserted by their husbands were compelled to enter the Union before anything could be done to make the husbands support them. This Bill would enable a woman who had been deserted to go before a Stipendiary Magistrate or two Justices acting in Petty Sessions, and obtain that order for maintenance which she could now only get through the Parish Authorities. Women would thus be spared the degradation of becoming inmates of a workhouse, and would have a much more simple means of getting relief. The Bill also proposed to give such a woman the custody of the children of the marriage under 10 years of age. He would move the second reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Pulley.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) said, he was unable to support the Bill, which went a great deal too far, in his opinion. Before the House assented to the second reading of this measure, they ought to know what it was intended to effect. The object of the measure was to give to any two Justices of the Peace the power of decreeing a separation in case of the desertion of a married woman by her husband, which was now exercised by the Divorce Court. He doubted whether the House would be prepared to thus so seriously interfere with the powers of the Divorce Court, or to hand over such an important power to any two Justices of the Peace, without having further and fuller information on the subject. The Bill ought not to pass without far more consideration being given to it than could be given to it now. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Member would postpone the further consideration of the Bill for a week, so that the House might not be taken by surprise.

MR. PULLEY said, he willingly consented to the postponement of the debate, as suggested by the right hon. Gentleman.

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* next.

COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF LAND COMPENSATION BILL.

(*Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Joseph Bolton, Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

[BILL 145.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. GREGORY (Sussex, East Grinstead) said, that although the hon. Member who was in charge of this Bill was not in attendance to move its second reading, he (Mr. Gregory) wished to protest against the inconvenience to which the House was subjected in such a case as this, where not only the hon. Member in charge of it was not in attendance to move the second reading of the Bill, but had not even taken the trouble to have his project printed.

MR. SPEAKER said, he must inform the hon. Gentleman that the second reading of the Bill had been postponed for a fortnight to enable it to be printed.

MR. GREGORY said, he should move that the Order for the second reading of the Bill be discharged.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order for Second Reading be discharged."—(*Mr. Gregory.*)

MR. SPEAKER said, that such a Motion was unusual in the absence of the hon. Member having charge of the Bill.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.) said, he thought that this was a case in which the House ought to take the course, unusual though it might be, of marking its sense of the equally unusual course that had been adopted by the hon. Member. The hon. Member, in the small hours of the morning, had obtained permission to introduce the Bill; and in such a crude state were the ideas of the hon. Member, that he had not even yet taken the trouble to embody them in a printed Bill. It was scarcely respectful to the House that they should be asked to assent to the principle of a Bill which had not yet been even drafted.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the Motion of the hon. Member (Mr. Gregory) would be contrary to the practice of the House; otherwise, an hon. Member, who had really good ground for postponing his Bill, might come down and find that the Order of the Day relating to it had been read and discharged.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) said, he would remind the noble Lord that the House had already that afternoon had before them one or two Bills which had not been printed, and which had been postponed in consequence, and he would suggest that the same course should be taken in this case. He had never heard of the Order of the Day for the Second Reading of a measure being read and discharged before the Bill had been printed. He was quite sure that in the present case the hon. Member for Stafford intended to proceed with the measure.

MR. GREGORY said, he was quite satisfied with having drawn the attention of the House to the subject, and he would therefore withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Second Reading *deferred* till *Wednesday* 7th April.

DROWNED PERSONS (DISCOVERY AND INTERMENT) BILL.—[BILL 123.]

(*Colonel Hughes, Mr. Boord, Mr. Baggallay, Mr. Norris, Colonel Duncan.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that in 1878, in the well-known case of the *Princess Alice,* a very sad accident had occurred on the river off Woolwich, by which 600 people lost their lives, with the result that the parish had to sustain the whole of the cost of paying the amount of the rewards for the discovery of the dead bodies and of their interment—some £1,200—it having been decided that it could not recover any part of the sum from the county, as would have been the case had the river been the sea. It was therefore proposed by the Bill that in the case of all drowned bodies discovered in tidal rivers, or in running streams, notice should be given to the Local Authorities, and the amount of the reward for the discovery of the bodies and of the cost of the interment should be re-imbursed to the Local Authorities by the county. Since the parish of Woolwich had refused to offer pecuniary inducements for the recovery of corpses, a great scandal had originated, several coroners having made representations that bodies were allowed to float up and down rivers, and that watermen had no inducement to lose their time by picking them up. He hoped the House would allow the Bill to pass, and he would be happy to consider any Amendments in Committee which might be thought desirable.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) said, that he knew the hon. Member for Oxford University (Mr. J. G. Talbot) was opposed to the Bill on behalf of the county of Kent, on which it might throw a great additional charge. But the Bill was not such a bad one as the one which had been introduced on a former occasion; and, on the understanding that Amendments would be considered in Committee, he was prepared to allow the second reading without a division, and to leave his hon. Friend the Member for Oxford University to deal with it on a future occasion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) said, he would not object to the Bill, which, in principle, proposed to effect a sound change. He would support the second reading; but the measure would require a great deal of consideration in Committee. He did not think, for example, it should apply to brooks.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, he wished to know whether it was intended to extend the Bill to Ireland? When he was in the Navy, he remembered seeing bodies of seamen floating in the River Lee and Queenstown Harbour. But officers were instructed not to interfere with them, as the Local Authorities were unwilling to bear the expense of providing decent burial. Such a state of things was not creditable to a Christian country.

COLONEL HUGHES, in reply, said, he should have been happy to have done as the hon. Baronet wished; but he believed that as the original Act of George III. did not extend to Ireland, he could not extend the present Amendment Bill to Ireland.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 7th April.

House adjourned at a quarter after Five o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 25th March, 1886.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; Lunacy (Vacating of Seats) * (47).

Second Reading—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Fermoy) * (32).

THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS—EVENING OPENING.—RESOLUTION.

LORD DENMAN, in rising to call attention to the two majorities of the House for opening Museums on week-days and for opening them in the afternoons of Sundays; and to move a Resolution, said, the proposal for opening Museums on week-days was formerly an alternative for opening on Sundays, but had now been carried unanimously, whilst that for opening Museums on Sundays was carried by a small majority. It appeared, however, that the South Kensington Museum was now opened three nights on week-days and lighted up all the year by electric light, and the pictures, including the cartoons of Raphael, were glazed and air excluded from them. A short visit that morning had given him much pleasure, and a short time on Sundays might suffice; whilst the Bishop of Peterborough's invitation to all classes to enter their churches might be acted upon, especially as in the afternoons there was much room in them. The reading room of the British Museum was open till 8 o'clock in summer and winter, to those who had tickets of admission; the other parts were closed according to the duration of daylight. He was sure that Sunday was more happily spent in family visiting than in Museums. His lamented Predecessor would not belong to Brooks's Club, because he said it would prevent his visiting his aged mother. He (Lord Denman) apologized to their Lordships for detaining them; but, as it was the only Notice on the Paper, he might be excused.

Moved to resolve,

"That it would be expedient that museums should be opened by daylight only, and should be closed during the time of afternoon Divine Service, on Sundays."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

On Question, *Resolved* in the *negative.*

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 25*th March*, 1886.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—Army Estimates, Vote 11—R.P.

Public Bills—*Ordered* — *First Reading*—Cape Race Lighthouse* [151]; Burial Grounds (Scotland) Act (1855) Amendment* [152].

Second Reading—Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal (No. 2) [147]; Army Annual* [150].

Committee — *Report* — Compensation for Damages [120].

Committee — *Report* — *Third Reading* — Drill Grounds* [143], and *passed.*

Considered as amended—Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment [10].

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 2),* and *passed.*

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS (BARROW IN FURNESS).

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House, that he had received from Sir William Ventris Field, knight, and Sir John Charles Day, knight, two of the Judges selected for the Trial of Election Petitions, a Certificate and Report relating to the Election for the Borough of Barrow in Furness:—

The Corrupt Practices Prevention Acts, 1854 to 1883.

To the Right Honorable the Speaker of the House of Commons.

We, the Honorable Sir William Ventris Field, knight, and the Honorable Sir John Charles Day, knight, Justices of the High Court of Justice, and two of the Judges for the time being for the trial of Election Petitions in England, do hereby, in pursuance of the said Acts, certify that upon the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 22nd, and 23rd days of March 1886 we duly held a Court at the Town Hall, in the Borough of Barrow in Furness, in the County of Lancaster, for the trial of and did try the Parliamentary Election Petition for the Borough of Barrow in Furness aforesaid, wherein Henry William Schneider was the Petitioner and David Duncan was the Respondent, which Petition prayed that it might be determined that the said David Duncan was not duly elected or returned, and that the Election of the said David Duncan was null and void, and that the Petitioner was duly elected, and ought to have been returned to serve as Member of the said Borough in the next Parliament. We report that the Petitioner's claim to the seat was abandoned during the course of the Trial and the recriminatory charges withdrawn by the Respondent, with our approval.

And, in further pursuance of the said Acts, we report that at the conclusion of the said Trial we determined that the said David Duncan, being the Member whose Election and return were complained of in the said Petition, was not duly elected and returned, by reason of illegal practices, within the meaning of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act, 1883, having been committed by or with the knowledge and consent of the Respondent, in reference to the said Election, and also by the Election Agent of the Respondent (with the like knowledge and consent), and we do certify in writing such our determination to you.

And whereas charges were made in the said Petition of corrupt and illegal practices having been committed at the said Election, we, in further pursuance of the said Acts, report as follows:—

That no corrupt practice was proved to have been committed by or with the knowledge or consent of any Candidate at such Election.

That the following persons were proved at the Trial guilty of illegal practices, namely, illegal employment, to both of whom we have furnished Certificates of Indemnity:

David Duncan, the Respondent;

Abraham Langhorn Garnett, the Respondent's Election Agent.

We further report that there is no reason to believe that either corrupt or illegal practices have extensively prevailed at the Parliamentary Election for the Borough of Barrow in Furness, in the County of Lancaster, to which the said Petition relates.

Dated this 23rd day of March 1886.

William V. Field.
John C. Day.

And the said Certificate and Report were ordered to be entered in the Journals of this House.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — MR. BARRON, COUNTY COURT JUDGE, CO. MONAGHAN.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Tyrone, S.) (for Mr. T. M. Healy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to certain proceedings at the recent Monaghan Assizes, when Lord Chief Baron Palles had before him for adjudication, by way of appeal from decisions of Judge Barron, County Court Judge for the county of Monaghan, certain cases, four in number, in which one George Blackburne, a receiver appointed by the order of the County Court over a farm of land in the townland of Carrowkeel, county Monaghan, the property of a man named Sherry, was, in consequence of the irregular order under which said receiver acted, mulcted in damages and costs in said Civil Bill appeals in a sum amounting to over £40, and did the Chief Baron, who tried the cases, state, in delivering judgment, that neither the County Court, the highest court in the land, nor the House of Lords itself could make such an order as that under which the said Blackburne acted as receiver, and that Blackburne had no more right to bring an action for trespass on foot of the said order than that his butler would have to bring an action against him (the Lord Chief Baron), and did the Lord Chief Baron further caution litigants in future from using orders framed in such an illegal manner as that, if they did, they would certainly get themselves into serious trouble; and, what course the Government propose to adopt in future so as to protect litigants at Monaghan County Court?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Mr. Barron is a County Court Judge, and the Executive, as an Executive, have no control over him, and would not be justified in calling upon him for an explanation of any particular judgment. It appears that in this case he has made a judgment which was erroneous; and probably the reversal of the decision complained of, coupled with the observations of the learned Chief Baron, will have the effect of preventing similar erroneous decisions again.

LAW AND JUSTICE—CARDIFF COUNTY COURT—WELSH WITNESSES.

MR. A. J. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the fact that, in a case tried on the 3rd of March instant, in the County Court held at Cardiff, the defendant, Ann James, said that she was but imperfectly acquainted with the English language, and claimed to give her evidence in her own, the Welsh language; and, whether His Honour, Judge Owen, declined to allow her to do so, and peremptorily stopped her when she attempted to give her evidence in Welsh?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): It is a fact that Ann James, the defendant in the case referred to, told the Judge that she was imperfectly acquainted with the English language. As, however, in a previous case, tried before the same Judge, she had given evidence in English, the Judge asked her if she would again do so, whereupon she was sworn in English, and answered every question without hesitation, and in such a way as not only to satisfy the Judge, but, as I am informed, also her own solicitor.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—DEATH OF CORNELIUS COSGRAVE AT EDGEWORTHSTOWN, CO. LONGFORD.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it has come to his knowledge that on the 13th of September last a man named Cornelius Cosgrave died in the constabulary barrack at Edgeworthstown, in the county of Longford, from congestion of the brain; that he had been taken up the previous day in a state of coma, from which he never recovered, and placed with prisoners arrested for drunkenness for seven hours in the strong room; whether it is the fact that, at the inquest which followed, the jury empannelled in the case expressed themselves in strong terms on the unsanitary condition of the lock-up, and its unsuitability for such a purpose; whether their observations were confirmed and deposed to by the local sanitary officer, and whether, in their verdict, the jury directed the attention of the authorities to the matter, "in order to have it remedied;" whether the defective state of the strong room was brought under the notice of the grand jury of the county, of which the landlord of the premises is a member, at the last assizes; whether steps have been or will be taken to improve the condition of the barrack at Edgeworthstown; and, whether instructions will be given to the constabulary to take care that cases of comatose persons have proper medical attendance?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that Cornelius Cosgrave died at Edgeworthstown on the 13th of

September last from congestion of the brain, brought on by cold and exposure previous to arrest, and accelerated by excessive drinking. He was placed with other prisoners, where he remained six hours and a-half, and where he was visited frequently. He was attended by a doctor during the night, and a second medical man was called in next morning. The Coroner's Jury attached no blame to the Constabulary. On the contrary, they stated that they discharged their duty well. In the course of his evidence the sanitary officer spoke of the unsanitary condition of the barrack, which the jury endorsed. The matter was brought before the Grand Jury, of which Mr. Barron, the landlord, is a member. Steps had since been taken to remedy the matter complained of.

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) asked, whether a Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) had not promised to issue instructions to the Constabulary regarding the imprisonment of persons in police cells; and whether the instructions had been issued as promised?

Mr. JOHN MORLEY was unable to say.

SUNDAY CLOSING (IRELAND)—EXTENSION OF LEGISLATION.

Mr. T. FRY (Darlington) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, during the present Session of Parliament, to bring in a Bill similar to that mentioned in the Queen's Speech opening the Session of 1884, and subsequently introduced by the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, making the Irish Sunday Closing Act of 1878 permanent, and extending its provisions to the five cities and towns exempted from its full operations?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle - on - Tyne): It would be more convenient if my hon. Friend would be good enough to ask the Question on Monday next.

NAVY—PEMBROKE DOCKYARD.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether an additional dry dock, greatly needed at Pembroke Dockyard, will be constructed there?

The CIVIL LORD (Mr. R. W. Duff) (Banffshire): In reply to my hon. and learned Friend, I can only say that, while recognizing the desirability of increasing the dry dock accommodation at Pembroke, the Admiralty are not at present prepared to commence such a work.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—TELEGRAPH OFFICE, SHANAGOLDEN, CO. LIMERICK.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick Co., W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether a postal telegraph office will be established in Shanagolden (Limerick county), the nearest office in Foynes being three miles distant, and the cost of transmitting a telegram eighteen pence?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): Inquiries are now being made on the question of opening a telegraph office at Shanagolden, and the result will be communicated to the hon. Member as soon as the decision is arrived at.

NAVY—H.M.SS. "NILE" AND "TRAFALGAR."

Mr. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether facilities can be given to Members for the inspection of the plans of the *Nile* and *Trafalgar;* whether he can say what defence they are to have against torpedoes; and, how many new engines are being built for ships of the Royal Navy, and to what extent they are of the most modern construction, that is, worked by steam of not less than 150 pounds pressure, used expansively in three or four cylinders?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Hibbert) (Oldham): Arrangements will be made for enabling Members to inspect the plans of the vessels referred to at the Admiralty if they will be good enough to apply in writing to Admiral Graham, the Controller of the Navy. These vessels will be defended against torpedoes by internal sub-divisions and strong passage bulkheads, as well as by torpedo steel net defences. In 1885-6 engines were ordered for 19 ships. These are all of the most modern design and construction, on the triple expansion type, to be worked with steam of

130 lb. to 140 lb. pressure. Money is also taken in 1886-7 for the completion of the machinery of 16 other ships ordered in previous years. These are of the compound type, to be worked with steam of 90 lb. to 130 lb.

THE DUCHY OF CORNWALL—THE COINAGE DUTIES.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the sum of £16,216 15*s.* 1½*d.* paid annually to the Duchy of Cornwall for compensation for duties on coinage of tin, ought, in accordance with the Treasury Minute of 15th February 1839, to have been reduced, as from the 5th April 1841, by the sum of £634 14*s.* 2*d.* in lieu of post groats; and, whether, for nearly 45 years, an annual excess of £634 14*s.* 2*d.* has been paid out of the Consolidated Fund to the Duchy of Cornwall; and, if yes, what steps Her Majesty's Government will take in the matter for the recovery of such excess, and in restraint of future over payment?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to inform him that pursuant to the provision of the Act 1 & 2 *Vict.* c. 120, the Treasury, by the Minute to which the hon. Member refers, fixed the annual payment to be made to the Duchy of Cornwall at £16,216 15*s.* 1½*d.* The Minute also proposed that after April 5, 1841, a deduction of £634 14*s.* 2*d.* should be made, as stated in the Question. The Council of the Duchy of Cornwall objected to this deduction as illegal. The Treasury acquiesced in the objection, and there is no doubt that the view taken by the Council of the Duchy was the correct one.

MR. BRADLAUGH asked, whether there was any official record at the Treasury as to the Minute referred to; and whether that record did not show that the payment of £634 14*s.* 2*d.* ought not to be continued?

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: The hon. Member is under an entire misapprehension of the facts of the case. There was an official communication pointing out unanswerably the illegality, and the Treasury at once acquiesced in that view, and have continued to do so for 40 years.

POST OFFICE—ABBREVIATED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helen's) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Committee of the New University Club (St. James's Street, S.W.), recently registered an abbreviated telegraphic address, "Oxbridge," for which they paid the usual fee; that, subsequent to the said payment, they were verbally informed that it would be necessary to add the words "care of," in order to complete the address, involving an additional payment for each telegram sent, thus practically rendering useless the above abbreviated address; that numerous telegrams, addressed to members of the Club under above address, have not reached their destination; whether a member of the aforesaid Club does not come under the definition of "person" in the Post Office Rules, for whom the aforesaid abbreviated address "Oxbridge" would be sufficient; and, whether the Post Office authorities can adopt some means to prevent the payment of fees for valueless and inoperative abbreviated telegraphic addresses?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): My attention has been called to the fact that the Committee of the New University Club have registered the word "Oxbridge" as the abbreviated telegraphic address of the Club, and that subsequent to the registration they were informed that the words "care of," or the symbol c-o, would be necessary for messages addressed to members at the Club; but I cannot admit that this addition renders useless the registration of the abbreviated address. I am not aware that numerous telegrams have not reached their destination. It is absolutely necessary, when any addition is made to the word registered with the Post Office, as in the case of a message addressed to a member of a Club, that the name should be divided from the registered address of the Club, which can be done by the addition of the symbols c-o, the payment for this being a half-penny. As the Club fee appears to have been paid under misapprehension, the Postmaster General will repay the amount.

THE PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER—THE VESTRY CLERK OF ST. PANCRAS.

Mr. BAGGALLAY (Lambeth, Brixton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the fact that the honourable Member for the East Division of the Borough of St. Pancras, in his capacity of vestry clerk and clerk to the directors of the poor of the parish of St. Pancras, conducted by himself and his clerks the preparation of the present Register of Parliamentary Voters for the Borough of St. Pancras; and, if he will take steps, by legislation or otherwise, to provide that in future no person act as a paid official in preparing the Register of Voters in the constituency which he represents or for which he is an accepted candidate?

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Jesse Collings) (Ipswich) (who replied) said, he had communicated with the hon. Member for East St. Pancras (Mr. Gibb), who stated that it was not a fact that he conducted by himself and his clerks the preparation of the present Register of Parliamentary voters for the borough of St. Pancras.

Mr. BAGGALLAY: Can the hon. Gentleman state who did prepare the Register?

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: The hon. Member for St. Pancras is in no way under the Local Government Board. I will, however, make further inquiries, and will get the information required.

THE PHŒNIX PARK (DUBLIN)—PRIVATE ENCLOSURES.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House, Copies of the documents by virtue of which private clubs, associations, or individuals have been allowed to occupy or to enclose portions of the Phœnix Park, Dublin, for their private purposes; and, whether he will consent to lay upon the Table, a list of any official investigations that have been held within the last twenty years into the conduct of Phœnix Park officials, with the names of the persons charged, the names of the persons composing the tribunals, and the nature of the charge and result of investigation in each case?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.) (who replied) said, that if the hon. Member would be good enough to call at the Treasury, he would be afforded the opportunity of inspecting the documents referred to; but he did not think it of advantage to the Public Service to lay them on the Table. As to the second part of the Question, during the last 20 years there had been only two official investigations into charges against Phœnix Park officials. One was in 1868, and was held by two of the Commissioners of Public Works into a charge against a park keeper. The second, in 1875, was held by two Commissioners, and was an inquiry into charges of intemperance against a park bailiff. In the first case, the official was allowed to remain in office; in the second case, the bailiff was called on to resign his appointment.

PRIVILEGE—FORGED SIGNATURES TO PETITIONS.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the honourable baronet, the Member for Walsall, with reference to the statement in the Third Report of the Committee on Petitions, that the Petitions presented by the Member for South Belfast, against a separate Parliament for Ireland, contained many names which were "in the same handwriting," Whether he will state the number of names to which this statement applies; and, what course he is prepared to take with those Petitions recently presented to which forged signatures were attached, to prevent the recurrence of such irregularities?

Sir CHARLES FORSTER (Walsall), in reply, said, it was an undoubted fact that the document purporting to be a Petition against a separate Parliament for Ireland, and presented by the Member for South Belfast, contained a large proportion of signatures which were in the same handwriting. Of 5,428 signatures, 1,268 appeared to be written in batches of three and four in the handwriting of 324 persons. His duty in the matter was purely Ministerial. They had not the power to reject spurious Petitions when the Rules were complied with. All they could do was to mention the facts of irregularities in their Report, according to their usual practice. He was sorry to say that this was the third Petition of the kind, and that the practice of putting forward fictitious Petitions appeared to be on the increase.

MR. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): Would the right hon. Gentleman kindly inform the House whether it is not a fact that in the Petitions against Home Rule there are a large number of signatures of infants less than a month old?

MR. CLANCY: To make the answer clear, is the House to understand that of the 5,428 signatures all but 324 are fictitious?

SIR CHARLES FORSTER: No; out of a total of 5,428, 1,268 appeared to be in the handwriting of 324 persons.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—OMAGH DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUM.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will inquire into the management of the Omagh District Lunatic Asylum, particularly into the circumstances under which a female patient, who was admitted on 25th November last, committed suicide a few days after admission, and whether the resident medical superintendent kept a portion of the remains without the knowledge of her friends, and was exhibiting them after the body had been interred; if it is true that a female patient, to whose case the attention of the resident medical superintendent was specially directed on the 15th February last, died on that day, during his absence from the Asylum, without the ministrations of a clergyman; and, have the friends of patients frequently complained of the treatment by which patients have been subjected by the resident medical superintendent?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that the first case referred to was one of suicide, the facts of which were so painful that he would not trouble the House with them now. The case was investigated by the Coroner and a jury, who found a verdict in accordance with the medical testimony, and added that the patient received every care and attention from the doctor and the other officials. The woman's husband, who was present at the inquest, expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the attention shown. The portion of the remains was never shown to any outsider, except the Coroner. The second case was one of syncope, in which death occurred in the absence of the doctor, and when his assistant was in charge. The doctor was summoned; but the woman was dead. She had been seen in the morning, and, though not well, death was not expected so soon. The Chaplain was informed, and the Coroner was also communicated with. The latter did not think it necessary to hold an inquiry. In none of these cases did it appear that complaints were made by the friends of the patients as to the treatment they received in this asylum. These two cases were reported to, and investigated by, the Board of Governors of the Asylum concerned.

MR. O'HANLON: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary, do the Government intend to hold an inquiry into this asylum in Omagh; and whether——

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. Gentleman is exceeding the Rules.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—MESSRS. J. W. PAYNE AND JOHN E. PAYNE.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What decision the Lord Chancellor has come to relative to the complaints made against Messrs. J. W. Payne and John Orpen Payne for their refusal to attest the signatures of voters to claims to vote at Poor Law elections of guardians?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in reply, said, that the Lord Chancellor of Ireland had called on the gentleman last mentioned for an explanation, which was furnished, to the effect that one of the signatures which he refused to attest was that of a girl of 10, and the other of a youth of 18. When the Lord Chancellor was making the inquiry, Mr. Payne sent a letter resigning his commisssion, and he has ceased to be a magistrate. No complaint has been made against Mr. J. W. Payne.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—MAIL SERVICE BETWEEN ATHENRY AND GORT.

MR. SHEEHY (Galway, S.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What steps, if any, are being taken to improve the Mail Service between Athenry and Gort, in connection with the "Midland" accelerated Mail Service between Dublin and Galway?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.), in reply, said, the Post Office was in correspondence with the Railway Company on this subject, and no conclusion had yet been arrived at.

LAW AND JUSTICE—"BRYCE v. RUSDEN"—SIR ARTHUR GORDON.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to a report of a case "Bryce *v.* Rusden" recently tried before Mr. Baron Huddleston; whether it is the fact, as stated therein, that Sir Arthur Gordon, being at the time Governor of New Zealand, did address a letter to the defendant conveying serious imputations on the character of Mr. Bryce, who was at the time one of his ministers, with a view to the publication of the matter of the letter in a history of New Zealand written by the defendant; and, whether Sir Arthur Gordon is now Governor of Ceylon; and, if so, whether the Government intend to take any action in the matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN) (Denbighshire, E.): I have no knowledge of the case of "Bryce *v.* Rusden," beyond what I have derived from a newspaper report of the trial. From that report it appears that Sir Arthur Gordon, who was at the time Governor of New Zealand, and who is now Governor of Ceylon, did address a letter to the defendant conveying serious imputations on the character of Mr. Bryce, then one of his Ministers. But as the letter appears to have been marked "private," I could not undertake to say that it was written with a view to publication. I understand that an application for a new trial is now pending; and as the matter is, therefore, still *sub judice*, Her Majesty's Government do not consider that they can properly take any action in the matter.

MR. COBB asked whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman was aware that the new trial was only applied for with the view to the reduction of damages, and did not affect the cause of action?

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN said, he was not aware of that fact.

MR. COBB gave Notice of a further Question on the subject.

6 & 7 WILL. IV. c. 85, s. 17—REGISTRAR OF MARRIAGES AT CONWAY.

MR. KENYON (Denbigh, &c.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Rev. James Spinther James has been appointed a Registrar of Marriages at Conway; if this is the same person who, on the 27th of May 1885, before the Bangor Bench of Magistrates, pleaded guilty to a charge of drunkenness in the public streets, and was fined 10*s.* and costs; and, on whose responsibility these appointments are made?

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS) (Ipswich) (who replied) said: I have made inquiry of the Registrar General, and find that the Rev. James Spinther James has been appointed a Registrar of Marriages at Conway. He was appointed by the Local Superintendent Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, under the powers given by the 6 & 7 *Will.* IV. c. 85, s. 17. The appointment was reported to the Registrar General; and, as the person appointed appeared to satisfy the requirements of the Regulations, the appointment was approved by him as a matter of course. The Registrar General had no knowledge of any such conviction as that referred to. He would, no doubt, consider any representations which the hon. Member, or persons in the locality, may think it right to submit to him on the subject of the appointment.

BANKRUPTCY—APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT RECEIVERS.

MR. LIONEL COHEN (Paddington, N.) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether Assistant Receivers in the Department of the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy have been appointed without competitive examination; and, if so, why the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade should be excepted from the Orders of the Commission, which prescribe open competition to give entry to the Civil Service; and, whether, notwithstanding such exception, Civil Service certificates have been issued to gentlemen so appointed, and, if so, upon what ground have such certificates been issued?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): It is the case that assistant Official Receivers in the Department of the Chief Official Receiver in Bankruptcy have been appointed without competitive examination. The Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade is not, however, as such, exempted from the Regulations with regard to admission to the Civil Service. The Civil Service Commissioners have dispensed with examination, and have issued their certificates to the gentlemen so appointed, in pursuance of the powers vested in them under Clause 7 of the Order in Council of the 4th of June, 1870, upon a representation being made to them by the Treasury and the Board of Trade that the qualifications in respect of knowledge and ability deemed requisite for the situation of Assistant Official Receiver under the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, are wholly professional and peculiar, and are not ordinarily to be acquired in the Civil Service. The Commissioners also state in their certificate that they have satisfied themselves that the gentlemen appointed to these posts possess the requisite knowledge and ability, and are duly qualified in respect of age, health, and character.

ARMY—OFFICERS OF THE RESERVE CORPS.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT (Rochester) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will take into consideration the expediency of publishing in the monthly as well as the annual Army List the names of the Officers forming the Reserve Corps, seeing that space is found for the Warrant Officers and Sergeant Majors of the Army?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): The full list of Reserve Officers is given in the official quarterly Army List. The monthly Army List is intended to be a distribution list of the officers in active employment, and as such it properly contains only such of the Reserve Officers as are actually employed at the time of publication. I am afraid that if this principle is departed from there would be no valid reason for refusing to insert everything which is in the quarterly list. In which case the monthly list would not only be increased in cost, but become far too bulky to fulfil the object desired.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—LOSS OF THE "OREGON," CUNARD LINER.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he can state what was the net registered tonnage of the *Oregon*; what proportion the registered tonnage bears to the number of passengers a vessel may carry; what number of persons were on board the *Oregon;* and, what number could have been accommodated in her ten boats?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): The net registered tonnage of the *Oregon* was 3,529. The number of passengers a vessel may carry does not depend upon her registered tonnage, but on the extent of her passenger accommodation as to light, ventilation, space, and other circumstances. The number of persons on board the *Oregon* was 878, and her boats were capable of accommodating 365.

MR. MACFARLANE asked, whether the House was to understand that if the vessel had foundered in mid-ocean only 300 out of 800 passengers would have found accommodation in the boats? He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether in the case of two vessels of identical registered tonnage, one carrying 500 passengers and the other 1,300, they were both obliged to have the same number of boats?

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I should like to ask, at the same time, whether it is possible for large steamers carrying passengers to carry as many boats as they carry passengers?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have answered all the Questions which have been put to me on the subject of the *Oregon.* Now I am asked whether, if she had gone done down in mid-ocean, her boats would have been sufficient. Certainly not; and every man who goes to sea knows that passenger vessels do not have sufficient boats for all their passengers. The Channel steamers, for instance, probably accommodate 300 or 400 passengers; but the boats they carry would only be sufficient for 40 or 50 passengers. But the *Oregon* had boat accommodation largely in excess of the statutory requirements. I may add that the Board of Trade are not at all satisfied with the present statutory requirements. When the loss of the *Oregon* was reported I ordered an inquiry to be made by practical men as to how far it would be possible to enlarge the boat accommodation of such vessels; but I do not want the House to suppose that any large sea-going ship can carry as many boats as will accommodate all her passengers. The effect of that would be either to render the vessel unseaworthy or to quadruple the charge to passengers.

Captain PRICE (Devonport) asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that in the United States there was a law which required that all passenger ships should carry boats or lifebelts sufficient to accommodate all their passengers?

Mr. MUNDELLA said, he was not aware of any such law, and much doubted whether any such law existed. If there were such a law he would have no faith in its being carried out.

Captain PRICE asked, whether the President of the Board of Trade would lay on the Table of the House a copy of section 4,488 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, which required that every ship should carry a sufficient number of boats and life-saving apparatus?

Mr. SPEAKER ruled that Notice of the Question must be put on the Paper in the usual way.

ARMY RECRUITING.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the success of the experiment in certain regiments, he will consider the expediency of trying more generally the plan under which recruits are permitted to enlist for three years, and are practically not liable to be sent to India, but have afterwards the option of accepting long service if they desire to do so, and are found to be likely to make efficient soldiers?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) (Stirling, &c.): The necessity for providing every year large drafts for foreign service makes it desirable to treat with great caution any further application of the system of enlistment for three years. The Foot Guards, to which regiments it has been applied, are during peace essentially for Home service; and I should prefer to have longer experience of the proportion of men extending their service in those corps before going much further.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE CURTIN FAMILY.

Captain M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that on Thursday last two men proceeded from Killarney to Firies Chapel for the purpose of erecting there a new pew for the Curtin family, their previous one having been broken in pieces by a crowd of men and women on a former occasion; that they were seen by a large number of men who were engaged in tilling land belonging to the mother of the moonlighter whom Mr. Curtin shot; that they immediately turned on them, took the pew from them, and smashed it to atoms against the chapel railings, at the same time seriously assaulting the two men; and, whether any arrests have been made?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): It appears that a carrier in charge of a new pew for the Curtin family was seriously assaulted, and that the pew was broken in pieces by a crowd of men, who had assembled for the purpose of tilling the farm mentioned in the Question. The police were not made aware of the intention to convey the pew to Firies on that day; but immediately on hearing of the affair they took the necessary steps and succeeded in arresting two men who have been fully identified for the assault on the carrier.

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE—THE GRÆCO-TURKISH FRONTIER.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If any information has been received by the Foreign Office to the effect that both the Porte and the Government of Greece, or either of them, would learn with satisfaction that steps were being taken by Great Britain to submit the still unsettled questions as to the Greco-Turkish Frontier to mediation; and, if so, whether the Government proposes to take any steps to promote such a settlement of the question?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): If, by the expression "unsettled questions as to the Græco-Turkish frontier," my hon. Friend refers to the desire of the Greek Government to obtain further extensions of territory to the North, I may inform him that Her Majesty's Government are fully convinced that the Porte would not agree to the re-opening of these questions, which were settled by the Convention of May 24, 1881. If, on the other hand, my hon. Friend refers to certain questions which have arisen under that Convention with respect to legislation by Greece on the subject of the Vakouf or religious property in the districts ceded by Turkey, I may inform him that the Porte desired these questions to be submitted to the Powers; whereas the Greek Government maintained that their action was within the terms of the Convention. For the last few months the discussion of this subject has remained in abeyance.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CONTEMPT OF COURT.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention had been drawn to a recent case in the county Longford, wherein three orders for attachment had been issued against three persons for contempt of court; whether the contempt of court consisted in forcibly retaking possession of a farm from which they had been evicted; whether the Sheriff had only been successful in arresting one of the parties, John Clarke, now in Sligo Gaol; whether, in alluding to the other two cases, Judge Boyd had said, as follows:—

> "That it was a strange state of affairs to which the Country was reduced, when there was a warrant issued by one of Her Majesty's Courts, and the authorities refused to give the police authority to execute the warrant. The idea of a sheriff making a return that, in consequence of the refusal of the authorities to give police protection before 8 a.m., the two persons could not be arrested;"

and, whether the Irish Executive contemplated taking any steps to carry out the Law?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am informed that the local Constabulary authorities acted as stated, relying on a section of their Code, which provides that in certain cases protection parties are not to start in winter before 8 in the morning. I am advised, however, that the section relied on does not apply to proceedings such as were contemplated on the occasion referred to, and the Constabulary authorities have been so informed.

MADAGASCAR AND FRANCE—THE TREATY OF PEACE.

MR. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received from their consular representative in Madagascar any official account of the recent negotiations between the French and the Malagassy authorities; and, whether they have received from the French Government any special communication as to the nature of the authority which France now claims to exercise in Madagascar; and, if so, will he lay these Documents upon the Table?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. BRYCE) (Aberdeen, S.): The Consular officers at Antananarivo and Tamatave have reported the conclusion of the Treaty; but having taken no part in the negotiations they have forwarded no account of them. The French Government has confined itself to notifying verbally through the French Ambassador here the ratification and publication of the Treaty, and to stating that its conditions would henceforth govern the relations of the Hovas with foreign countries.

METROPOLIS—PROCESSIONS OF THE UNEMPLOYED.

MR. BRISTOWE (Lambeth, Norwood) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to processions of men, describing themselves as unemployed, parading the streets of the southern suburbs of London, and collecting alms from the inhabitants; and, if such processions are in accordance with the police regulations; and, if not, if he will give directions for their suppression?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to these processions in the suburbs of London for the purpose of collecting alms. It does not appear that the persons composing them are amenable to the Vagrancy Law, this having been expressly decided in the High Court of Justice in February, 1884, in the case of "Pointon *v.* Hill," when a conviction by a Stipendiary Magistrate was quashed by the Court. The police have been instructed to caution these men "not to beg, as it may get them into trouble;" but they cannot otherwise interfere, except in the event of pressure or threats being used, or any disorder arising.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BOERS AND THE SWAZIES.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that the Boers have captured ten waggons of merchandise en route for Swazieland, stating that, as the Swazies have refused to pay them taxes, they will not allow them to trade with the English; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take steps to keep open a road so important to the commerce of Natal?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Osborne Morgan) (Denbighshire, E.): We have not received any information which I can identify with the statement quoted by the hon. Baronet; but a despatch was yesterday received at the Colonial Office from Natal, reporting that three waggons were stated by Natives to have been seized by Boers, two of them in the Usibebu country, which is near to Swazieland; and that on explanations being demanded, Mr. Esselen, who styles himself the "Government Secretary to the new Republic," replied that one waggon only, belonging to a man called Weber, who was not a British subject, had been sent to Vryheit to be dealt with, and that the owner had since been fined £10 for trading without a licence, and ordered to pay £7 10*s.* for the cost of a licence; that to defray this charge the goods had been sold for £21 12*s.* 5*d.*, and that the balance. £4 2*s.* 5*d.*, would be paid to Weber. With regard to the last Question, Sir Arthur Havelock, the Governor of Natal, is about to enter into personal communications with the Boers for the settlement of the Zululand Question; and I trust that, as part of those negotiations, satisfactory arrangements will shortly be made for keeping open the trade route from Natal to Swazieland.

IRELAND—GOVERNMENT LOANS FOR IRISH PURPOSES.

Mr. ALBERT GREY (Northumberland, Tyneside) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he can inform the House what is the amount of the loans guaranteed by the Government, for Irish purposes, since the year 1840 to the present time; what amount has been paid off; what amount has been remitted; and, what is the total amount still outstanding?

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Longford, N.): I would like to ask the hon. Gentleman if he can inform the House what is the amount of the loans granted by the Government of England from time to time for Turkish purposes, for Greek purposes——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman must give Notice of the Question in the usual way.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I would ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if he can, in his reply to the hon. Member, distinguish between the loans granted respectively to owners of land in Ireland and to the occupiers of land in Ireland?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): I must ask my hon. Friend (Mr. Grey) to postpone his Question for a week, in order to give time for the compilation of an accurate Return, and I shall be glad to include any information asked for by the hon. Gentlemen opposite. Does my hon. Friend only refer to loans guaranteed by the State, or does he also refer to loans advanced by the Government?

Mr. ALBERT GREY: To both.

Sir JOHN GORST (Chatham): I would ask the hon. Member whether he would consent to the Return, of which I gave Notice some days ago, and which could not be granted in consequence of the opposition of certain Members of the House?

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: I have no objection to the Return; but I have no control over hon. Members.

Sir JOHN GORST: Cannot the Treasury lay the Return on the Table?

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): In his reply, will the hon. Gentleman be good enough to say what parts of the loans were due to the occurrence of a famine between the period of 1846 and 1849?

POST OFFICE—ABBREVIATED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will take into consideration the expediency of reducing the fee now charged for registered telegraphic messages in provincial towns to one-half, with a view to increase the revenue by augmenting their number, and lessening the charge to each individual who may wish to register?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): It is found that the fee now charged does not cover the cost to the Department and the loss of Revenue by the curtailment of the address. At the same time, the use of abbreviated addresses leads not only to delay in the delivery of messages with abbreviated addresses, but also necessarily causes delay in the delivery of messages containing a full address. The Postmaster General desires me to say that the use of abbreviated addresses is detrimental to the general public service, interferes with the regular working of the Telegraph Service, and largely increases its cost. Since the introduction of the 6*d*. tariff the practice of registering addresses has so enormously increased, and the Departmental difficulties which have arisen have been so great, that it is a question with the Postmaster General whether, after a certain date, it would not be well to abolish the use of abbreviated addresses, at all events for inland messages; and he cannot, therefore, lessen the present charge.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA (JOINT COMMITTEE).

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether statute 23 and 24 Vic. c. 100, and other Acts relating to the Army in India, are included in the Acts referred to the proposed Select Committee?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Act mentioned in my hon. Friend's Question is not one of those we propose to refer to the Committee.

BURMAH, UPPER AND LOWER—THE MILITARY COMMAND.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the military command in Lower Burma is under the Madras command, and that in Upper Burma under the Commander-in-Chief; and, if so, when it is proposed to put an end to this divided control?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH) (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The military command in Lower Burmah is certainly under Madras, and the Viceroy is in communication with the Secretary of State in Council as to placing the whole of Burmah under the Commander-in-Chief in India.

MINES REGULATION ACT.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Wexford, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is in receipt of a Letter from the editors of *The Labour Tribune*, containing suggestions from practical working miners for the amendment of the Mines Regulation Act, and if such suggestions will receive attention; and, if, considering the present state of the Law as to Coroners' Courts, and the numerous Bills that have been introduced to regulate the proceedings of such Courts, the suggestions as to power being given to attend and examine witnesses might be acted upon, by such power being given in the event of the Mines Bill not being passed during the present Session?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): Yes; I have received a letter from the editors of *The Labour Tribune*, and the suggestions contained in it are before a general meeting of Mines Inspectors which is now being held at the Home Office. The question of the attendance of witnesses at Coroners' Courts is a very important one, and will be dealt with in the Mines Bill, which is now being prepared by the Government. I do not see how power could be given to alter the procedure of Coroners' Courts, except by legislation. I could not undertake to bring in a special Bill for this purpose.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAMS—INCOMPLETE ADDRESSES.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Postmaster General has been able to relax the instructions given to postmasters not to deliver telegrams for the delivery of which a reference to a directory is required, so far as to allow such search being made in cases where the senders have evidently done their best to give a full address?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER) (Wolverhampton, E.): In reply to the hon. Member, I will read a copy of an Instruction which the Postmaster General has caused to be issued for the guidance of officers of the Department—

> "The Postmaster General has had his attention called to certain cases in which, although the addresses were incomplete, the senders had evidently made no attempt at curtailment, and had done their best to give a sufficient address. His Lordship considers that a distinction ought to be made between cases of this kind and cases in which the addresses had evidently been cut down with the view of saving expense; and he desires that the responsible officers at the various telegraph offices throughout the country will endeavour to secure the delivery of telegrams of the former class, even although this should involve a reference to directories. It may be somewhat difficult to distinguish in all cases between the one class of incomplete addresses and the other; but where a doubt arises the public mind should be given the benefit of the doubt, the message being delivered and the case reported to headquarters."

HALL-MARKING OF FOREIGN PLATE.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If the Returns from the Goldsmiths' Company show that, out of 26,053 gold watches marked by that Company between May 1884 and May 1885 with the Hall Mark, no less than 4,812 were of Foreign make, and, of the 153,408 silver cases so marked, 32,339 were also of Foreign manufacture; and, if, in the proposed Measure dealing with marks on Merchandise, he will consider favourably a proviso to prohibit this use of a Mark, generally recognised as a Mark applicable only to British manufactures, being affixed to Foreign products, thus misleading the public in this Country, as well as the people in our Colonies?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): Sir, 21,241 gold and 121,069 silver watch cases were marked at Goldsmiths' Hall between May 29, 1884, and May 29, 1885, of which 4,812 gold, and 32,339 silver, cases were of foreign manufacture. The hall-mark is a test of quality and not of origin, and is not, as the hon. Member supposes, "a mark applicable only to British manufactures." Hall-marking is compulsory, and foreign plate cannot be sold in this country without it, as it is part of the machinery employed for the collection of duty.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—FOREIGN BOUNTIES ON SUGAR PRODUCTION —RETALIATION DUTIES.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that another sugar refinery, employing 1,000 hands, at the East End of London has recently closed its doors, another firm having closed and discharged 300 hands, and two others having discharged about 270 each, and that they attribute the necessity of closing these works to the Foreign bounties on sugar; whether the Board of Trade possess, or will make any, calculations to show whether the destruction of such an industry, and the several other industries which more or less depend on it, involves a loss to this Country greater or less than the alleged gain in the price of sugar to the consumer actually attributable to the bounties; whether, if such industry has been so destroyed, there is anything to prevent the same system being applied by Foreign nations to each of our other industries in turn; and, whether, without entering on any war of tariffs, more energetic efforts of diplomacy, such as succeeded in the cases of Germany and the United States against Spain, can be adopted with the prospect of equal success by this Country?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. MUNDELLA) (Sheffield, Brightside): I have no information of the facts stated in the first Question of the hon. Member, except such as is given in the daily papers. As to the influence of bounties upon this and other industries, I understand the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade purposes making a complete investigation into the subject. The question of the loss or gain arising to this country from the sugar bounties was considered by a Committee of this House in 1879-80, and has also been dealt with in a Report of the Board of Trade on the progress of the sugar industry in 1884. I must refer the hon. Member to these Reports for information on the subject. I cannot enter into a dissertation of a contentious character in answering a Question.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): Can the right hon. Gentleman give the House any information as to when the Royal Commission on the Depression of Trade is likely to report on this subject?

Mr. MUNDELLA: I am afraid not. I daresay the right hon. Gentleman himself will be able to inform the House.

Mr. RITCHIE (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Would the Board of Trade reconsider the question of calling a Conference together to settle this question of sugar bounties, as was suggested by the Earl of Derby?

Mr. MUNDELLA had no personal knowledge of the suggestion, and desired Notice of the Question.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked whether the Board of Trade possessed, or would endeavour to obtain, calculations showing the extraordinary burdens thrown on the French consumer and the French taxpayer by the present system of bounties?

Mr. KIMBER asked whether the Reports to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred as having been made to the Board of Trade would be continued; and whether the statistics that might be collected might not induce the Board of Trade to alter the conclusion at which it had arrived?

Mr. MUNDELLA asked for Notice of these Questions.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—BRITISH COMMERCIAL INTERESTS ABROAD—INSTRUCTIONS TO H.M. AGENTS.

Lord WILLIAM COMPTON (Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is in a position to give to the House any further information respecting the Treasury minute, stated by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, in a speech at Manchester on the 4th of March, to have been issued by the present Secretary of the Home Department, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the detriment of British trade, and also respecting the special instructions which the noble Lord added had been sent to Her Majesty's Agents abroad, with a view to the encouragement of British commerce?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): I may confirm the accuracy of the reply which on the 11th instant I gave to the Questions addressed to me by my noble Friend himself, and the hon. Baronet the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir Julian Goldsmid), and I can now positively assert that no such Treasury Minute or Special Instructions to Her Majesty's Agents abroad, as those referred to in the speech of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), exist. My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers), who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, informs me that, so far as he is aware, the only expressions of his which could possibly have given rise to such a statement are words which he used in observations written on certain despatches from Pekin, forwarded to him for his perusal, in which he condemned the interference of Her Majesty's Representatives in cases where British subjects were attempting to induce Foreign Governments to borrow from them money at exorbitant rates of interest—a practice which he conceived to be most objectionable, especially in the light of our experience in other countries.

VACCINATION—THE ISLAND OF RUGEN.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he will obtain information respecting the vaccination with humanised lymph of seventy-nine children in the Island of Rügen in June last; whether it is true that seventy-six of them were attacked in a few days with contagious disorder, which was communicated to their parents, brothers, and sisters, to the number of three hundred and twenty; what number of the children died; and, whether the lymph was obtained from the Royal Vaccine Institution at Stettin?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin has been instructed to report on this subject; and I shall be glad to communicate the Report, when received, to the hon. Member.

PRISON DISCIPLINE—TREADMILLS.

Mr. RUSTON (Lincoln) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the fact that treadmills are now being constructed in Her Majesty's Prisons; whether they are practically the same description of instruments as were, many years ago, discarded in our Prisons as inhuman and wasteful; is it intended to use these treadmills for the infliction of hard labour sentences; has he any objection to state what reasons have led the Prison authorities to re-introduce this method of punishment; and, what are its advantages over crank labour?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.) The hon. Member is under a misapprehension in thinking that treadmills have ever been condemned as inhuman and wasteful. On the contrary, a Committee, which was appointed after the Prison Act of 1877 to consider this question, reported that the treadmill was the most suitable form of hard bodily labour. It is now being used for this purpose, and was never, as far as I am aware, generally discontinued. The crank is used in some prisons instead of the treadmill; but I am not aware that the one form of labour has any marked advantages over the other.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—ANNUAL REPORTS FROM THE COLONIES.

MR. HUTTON (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, The nature of the Instructions given by Her Majesty's Government to the Governors or other officials of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates with respect to annual Reports being transmitted to Her Majesty's Government relative to the commerce, industries, and products of, as well as to emigration to these Colonies and Protectorates where they hold appointments; and, what is the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government and by the Colonial officials relative to these instructions, as also relative to Parliament receiving periodical and early publication of the Reports?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN): (Denbighshire, E.): I think I can best answer the Question of the hon. Member by reading the Instruction given to Governors of Crown Colonies, which is as follows:—

"The Governor shall punctually forward to us from year to year, through one of our principal Secretaries of State, the annual Book of Returns, commonly called the Blue Book, relating to the revenue and expenditure, defence, public works, legislation, civil establishments, pensions, population, schools, course of exchange, imports and exports, agricultural produce, manufactures, and other matters with reference to the state and condition of the colony."

The Instructions sent to the Governors of self-governed Colonies, except Canada, are to the same effect, except that the Governor is requested to forward the annual Returns, which are prepared by the Colonies themselves. These Returns, or summaries thereof, or Reports on them under the title of "Papers relating to Her Majesty's Colonial Possessions," are laid before Parliament as soon as practicable after their receipt, and every effort is made to produce them without delay. It will be found, I think, that they give full information upon the subjects referred to in the Question; but more detailed and more recent particulars can at all times be obtained at the offices of the High Commissioner for Canada, and of the Agents General of the other Colonies represented in London, who have always shown themselves ready, and, indeed, anxious, to supply all the information in their power.

NAVY—ROCHE'S POINT COASTGUARD STATION.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether Roche's Point Coastguard Station, which is inhabited by fifty-one persons, is provided with a pier, a boat harbour, or a boat slip; whether the want of any one or all of such structures involves risk of the lives of the men employed on boat service in tempestuous weather, as well as the boats in use, the property of the Admiralty; whether it is true that the inhabitants of the station, being unprovided with drinking water, have been obliged to utilise as such the water collected from the roofs of the houses in the station during rainy weather, and if it is a fact that the Naval authorities considered this water to be so bad that they issued orders that all water so collected should be boiled prior to its being used by the men or their families; whether the Naval authorities have been repeatedly urged by the inspecting officers to remedy the existing dangerous state of affairs by sinking a pump; and, if the present Lords Commissioners will recommend, without further delay, the providing for some means of preventing any outbreak of sickness which might ensue from the want of fresh water on the station?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. R. W. Duff) (Banffshire) (who replied) said: No pier, boat harbour, or slip exists at Roche's Point Coastguard Station. The boats are not used in rough weather, and therefore no accident is likely to occur. The well at the station yields brackish water, and the occupants use rain water, boiled to insure purity. Representations have been made to the Admiralty as to the desirability of sinking a new well; but the negotiations entered into for that purpose have hitherto failed, owing to the rent asked for the ground being considered excessive. There has been no sickness at the station for the last two years.

GUN LICENCES (IRELAND).

In reply to Mr. Macartney (Antrim, S.)

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. John Morley) (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) This is a Question regarding a gun licence being erroneously given. My answer briefly is, that the Reports disclose considerable irregularities on the part of the magistrates concerned, of which notice will have to be taken. I have decided to refer the action of the Local Justices to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

REGISTRATION ACT (IRELAND), 1885—NON-PAYMENT OF POSTAGE OF REQUISITION FORMS.

Lord ERNEST HAMILTON (Tyrone, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether complaints have reached him from various Boards of Guardians in Ireland with reference to the great expense to which the ratepayers are placed, owing to the fact that numbers of the Requisition Forms (Registration Act (Ireland), 1885), requiring the names of inhabitant occupiers, are returned to the clerk of the Union without the postage prepaid, thus putting the ratepayers to the expense of twice the deficiency of postage; and, whether, in consideration of the fact that these forms must be dealt with (under statute) by the clerk of the Union, whether returned stamped or otherwise, the Government will consider the advisability of allowing the Requisition Forms to be transmitted free through the Post Office?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): I must ask the noble Lord to postpone this Question, as I am endeavouring still to gather the materials for the answer.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the space provided for the clerical establishment of the Post Office Savings Bank is insufficient for the needs of the Department, and unhealthy to the staff; and, whether, considering the permanent nature of the overtime work in that Department, the Lords of the Treasury will, with the assent of the Postmaster General, sanction the application of the seven hours' scale to the Savings Bank Department, as recommended by the Treasury Minute dated 19th June 1884?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) (Wolverhampton, E.): The present Savings Bank premises are not unhealthy; but the space is insufficient, and active steps are being taken, under an Act passed last Session, to acquire an additional site, and in the meantime to provide temporary accommodation. As regards the latter part of the Question, I am informed that the subject to which the hon. Member refers is under consideration.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—REPORTS ON FOREIGN TRADE—INSTRUCTIONS TO H.M. AGENTS.

Mr. HUTTON (Manchester, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, The nature of the instructions given to Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Agents abroad with respect to Reports on the Trade and Industries of the place where they reside, and as to the course pursued by the Foreign Office with respect to these instructions, and to Parliament receiving periodical and early publication of these Reports?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Bryce) (Aberdeen, S.): Her Majesty's Consuls abroad are required to furnish, as soon as possible after the termination of each year, a General Report on the commerce and navigation of their districts. It is directed that such Reports shall show the amount and character of the trade carried on, and the special circumstances which may have caused fluctuations; that means of developing trade shall be suggested, and notice taken of all public works undertaken for advancing the interests of the port at which the Consul is stationed; that Consuls will enumerate the various articles of British and Colonial produce or manufacture for which the market seems to be favourable or unfavourable, together with opportunities for return freights, industrial institutions, new patents, inventions, or appliances which may affect manufactures and industry, harbour improvements and dues, landing and embarking facilities, public announcements for tenders for works, and so forth. These Reports are sent immediately to the printer, and issued in parts from time to time as soon as possible. It will be seen, on reference to Blue Books No. 20, 21, and 22, Commercial of last year, that three of these parts were issued in the month of August alone. I may add that, in addition to the Annual Trade Reports to which I have already referred, both Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular officers are instructed to furnish Reports on subjects of commercial and general interest when and as occasions arise, and it has hitherto been the practice to publish these as a separate series. Secretaries of Embassy and Legations are also required to furnish Reports from time to time on the trade and finances of the country to which the Head of their Mission is accredited, and the same course is followed with regard to their publication as that described in regard to the Consular Reports.

Mr. HUTTON asked what was the usual course of procedure if the Consuls did not carry out these instructions?

[No reply.]

IRELAND—A SEPARATE PARLIAMENT.

Mr. DE COBAIN (Belfast, E.), who had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed at the "Ulster Liberal Convention" on Friday last; and, if not, whether he is aware that the resolution stated that the Liberal party in Ireland would offer a most determined opposition to the establishment of a separate Irish Parliament, as it would be certain to produce a disastrous collision between sections of the people holding conflicting views on social, economic, and religious subjects, and would produce a feeling of insecurity which would jeopardise all industrial and commercial pursuits, and that the maintenance of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland was the best safeguard for the peace, prosperity, and liberty of all classes in Ireland; and, whether he would endeavour to produce a copy and lay it upon the Table of this House, the declaration of the opinions from those who were the adherents of the Liberal party in Ireland? said, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman he would postpone the Question until to-morrow.

After a pause,

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.) said, if any of the Ministers intended answering the Question, he would also ask whether at this Convention an amendment favourable to a separate Parliament was not moved by Sir Thomas Esmonde?

Mr. SPEAKER observed that the Question had already been postponed until to-morrow.

IRELAND—POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir William Harcourt) (Derby): I am sorry to say the Prime Minister is unwell, and unable to be in his place to-day, though he hopes to be so to-morrow. He has desired me to state that on Thursday, April 8, he proposes to bring forward the subject of the Irish policy of the Government in this House.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman is in a position to give us any more definite information as to the statement to be made on April 8—whether the Prime Minister intends to bring in a Bill, or in what way he intends to state his policy to the House. But the Question I wish particularly to ask has reference to the Business of the House between this date and April 8. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what Business will be taken next week, and also when the right hon. Gentleman himself proposes to move his Budget? I see the Crofters Bill is the second Order for to-night; but I understood yesterday evening there was an understanding that it would not be taken till Monday.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: As regards the method in which the Prime Minister will introduce the question of his Irish policy, I am not able to state definitely. What I understand is, that he will state the views of the Government with reference to the Irish policy on the 8th of April. With reference to next week—and I do not know that I can go further than that—we propose not to take the Crofters Bill to-night, but on Monday, and we desire to go on with that Bill and complete the Committee stage as early as possible. If the Crofters Bill in Committee is not completed on Monday, of course we shall go on with it on Thursday. The next Bill in point of order it is desired to press forward is the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill. I cannot say anything as to Thursday, as I do not know anything of the condition of the Crofters Bill on Monday. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to name a day for the Budget a little later; but it will probably be introduced in the first fortnight in April.

MR. MACFARLANE (Argyll): Will the Crofters Bill be the first Order on Monday?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £866,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887."

MR. TOTTENHAM (Winchester): I was precluded by the Forms of the House from moving the Amendment, Sir, which stood in my name on the Paper of the House the other day; but I believe it is understood that a general discussion upon the Army Estimates is to be taken to-day. The Vote now under discussion is that for clothing; and the understanding was that a general discussion should be taken upon that Vote. Before proceeding to make some remarks upon the Motion of which I had given Notice, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will allow me to congratulate him upon the direction, which I consider is the right one, that he has taken in regard to the number of men he has estimated to be necessary during the coming year. I believe that it is an honest attempt on the part of the Government to grapple with the question which every soldier and everyone who has given his attention to the matter has, almost without intermittence, advocated for many years past. But in saying that it must not be supposed that we are satisfied that enough has been done in that direction. It is, no doubt, a step in the right direction; but it is only a partial one, and one which in the future will require a considerable increase. The increase in the number of men is simply one step; but what we say is that we require not only more men, but more regiments and more units, if the severe strain to which the Army system has been subjected during the last few years is to be relaxed. We require not only, as I said before, more men, but a greater number of units. And you have now, in the year 1866, or will have in 1886-7, notwithstanding the increase proposed in the present Estimates, a fewer number of men than you had 20 years ago, although since 1866 you have largely extended the area of your operations. During the last five years you have an average of 3,000 men more in Ireland than during the five years which preceded 1866. You have now something like 18,000 men employed in Egypt; you have close upon 10,000 additional men in the new stations at Quetta and elsewhere on the Frontiers of Afghanistan, and a largely-increased force in South Africa; and yet with all this, and with an addition of 10,000 men in Burmah, in regard to which you cannot look for a reduction for a number of years to come—with all these additional stations and even additional countries to be provided for, you have now the same number of units which you had in the year 1866. You are trying to do all this work over this increased area of country without the addition of a single unit to the force you had then. I maintain that this involves an undue straining of our military system. It is placing additional work upon both the men and the officers, even supposing that your units are efficient. Unfortunately that is not the case. Your battalions in India are, no doubt, efficient; those in the Colonies and in Egypt are only partially so; but those at home are wholly and utterly inefficient. You have 12 battalions first on the roster for foreign service on an increased establishment; but if they are in the condition in which I recently saw one of these battalions in England, with a paper strength of 916 rank and file, but which had sent out some 180 men to its foreign battalion in the course of a few months, and although it may be ordered on foreign service at any moment, consists only of some 730 effective men—or so-called effective men—because out of those 730 there are some 400 under one year's service, 260 under six months' service, and 400 under 20 years of age. Consequently, the bulk of the battalion are recruits, most of whom are under 20 years of age. Can any man in his senses call that an efficient fighting machine? The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, following the precedent set by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), who now sits behind him, when he was asked recently for information touching the strength of some of the battalions that were first for foreign service, prudently declined to give the information—I say prudently, because it is no doubt prudent that others should not be in a position to see us as we see ourselves. At the same time, I say that it is a position which the House and the country should fully understand and appreciate, and it is a position in which we should not be allowed to continue. We are living in a fool's Paradise. I am not, however, going to be satisfied with the figures of one battalion alone—I will take the whole of the five battalions which now form one of the largest garrisons we have in England. These five battalions have on paper a strength of 3,450 men; but their actual strength is not more than 2,400—being 1,000 men short of their established strength. These five battalions within the last 12 months of the trooping season—have sent out to their battalions abroad no fewer than 1,500 men, being three-fifths of their present total effective establishment, and what would be, if they were up to their full strength, three-sevenths of the entire body. Now, Sir, the Committee will be further startled to hear that within the past week, and it is only a sample of the previous ones, that these five so-called efficient paper fighting machines were able to turn out for garrison and other duties 398 men; being less than half of the strength of one full battalion on its foreign establishment. Now, I think that the Committee may gather from these figures, as to the accuracy of which I have not the slightest doubt, a fair idea of the state of the rest of the battalions in the Army at home; and hon. Members may be able to form an opinion of the state to which the whole Army has been reduced. I think that a more damning condemnation of the system under which the Army has been groaning so long could not be given than is supplied by the figures I have quoted. The system was well described by the late Adjutant General of the Forces in giving evidence before the Committee which sat some five years ago, in which his opinion was extracted upon the system of one battalion feeding another, or of men being transferred from one battalion to fill up another. He stated that a more pernicious system than that now in vogue the wit of man could not devise. That opinion is one which will be endorsed by every man and officer in the Service. This abominable invention of one battalion feeding another, to the entire destruction of the efficiency of the home battalion, has met with the universal condemnation of every officer who has commanded an Infantry Division, Brigade, or Battalion; aye, and not only of every commissioned officer, but of every non-commissioned officer and private as well. It is a system which is utterly destructive of all efficiency in the battalions, and in the Army at home. It is one which destroys all interest on the part of the officers in their men, and of the men in their officers. It unsettles the men; it makes the officers discontented, and it is utterly destructive of that *esprit de corps* which ought to exist in the Service, and which has been the means of winning for the country many a fight at long odds. An extract from the letter of a commanding officer, which I will take the liberty of reading to the Committee, is only a specimen, and a fair sample of many which I have received, not only from officers who are now in command, but from officers who have been in command, and from officers of a rank senior and junior to those now in command. This officer is in command of a battalion serving at home, and he says—

> "The system of one battalion feeding others is absolutely destructive of all efficiency. It unsettles young soldiers, and turns every home battalion into a very expensive training depôt. It must be done away with."

Not only by letters, but in conversations which I have had with other officers, that opinion has been endorsed by everyone to whom I have spoken. In 1879 the Committee, known as "Lord Airey's Committee," was appointed to investigate this and other kindred matters. That Committee, describing the condition of two battalions which had suddenly been sent abroad and brought up to war strength, as all the Home Army would have to be in the case of emergency at the present moment—that Committee, in describing their condition, said—

> "It can only be described as being such that if their services had been immediately required in the field their employment would have been calculated to court disaster. In fact, they were not such troops as could be properly entrusted with the protection of the interests of the British Empire, or with the maintenance of its honour."

What stronger evidence could the country have than the deliberately expressed opinion of 12 or 13 of the most experienced officers in the Service? Lord Airey's Committee further reported—and I quote the opinion of the Committee freely, because I do not wish the Committee to suppose that I am intruding unsupported views and opinions of my own upon it; but I wish to show what the opinions are of officers of very great experience, and of much greater length of service than myself—and to whose views the Members of this House would do well to listen—Lord Airey's Committee, I say, further reported in favour of training all recruits at training depôts in place of the present system, which they say is, in their opinion, most unsuitable. They also recommend that, once posted, no man should be liable to be removed without his consent; and in the concluding paragraph but one of their Report they say—

> "With a view to prevent the drafting of men from one regiment for service in another to the cessation of a system by which one regiment serves as the depôt for another and for the re-establishment."

I would ask the Committee to mark these words, for it is manifest that Lord Airey's Committee considered that that *esprit de corps* which formerly prevailed had departed—

> "For the re-establishment (they say) of *esprit de corps* in, and efficiency of, regiments, the present system of linking should be done away with."

In saying that the system of linking should be done away with, they had previously explained what they meant by linking or the transfer of officers and men from one battalion to another; and they expressly stated that they were not attacking, any more than I am, the territorial system which was not in vogue at the time of their Report. The territorial system may be a good one, and I am not to be understood as saying anything against it. What I contend is, that every regiment should consist of three practical units. At the present time it consists of one actual unit and two mythical units, the actual one abroad in a state of complete efficiency, another battalion at home in a state of inefficiency, and a skeleton depôt of 50 men which is utterly useless for all military purposes; and if the home battalion is to continue to usurp its functions, it might, for all the use it is, be done away with. I have said that each regiment should consist of three units; and whether the depôt should be an amalgamated or combined depôt of different regiments, as recommended by Lord Airey's Committee, or whether each regiment should have its own depôt in its own territorial district, are matters of minor consideration comparatively speaking. I am aware that some officers advocate the principle of the home battalion enlisting its own recruits. I am not prepared to say that that would not possibly be the best system, provided the recruits are retained and kept in the battalion after enlistment. That, however, I consider a question of minor detail. As far as my own individual opinion goes, I believe that the old system of a depôt belonging to a regiment itself which is not brought into contact or into connection with another regiment is the true and proper system ot adopt. Some such system as that we shall have to revert to if the efficiency of the whole Army is to be restored. The system which is provided for in the present Estimates, where both the battalions are abroad the depôts at home to have a strength of 600 men, is, in my opinion, one which ought to be followed in all cases, whether there are two battalions abroad, or one abroad and the other at home. But whether it is that, or whether the system of permitting the battalion to enlist and retain its own recruits, is, as I said before, a matter of comparatively small importance. The great point which I wish to impress upon the Committee and the country is, that it is absolutely necessary that we should not deplete the home battalions and destroy their efficiency by turning them into training depôts. I and others who hold the same view as that which I have myself advocated are of opinion that there should be an increase in the number of men at all depôts. I am aware, of course, that this will involve an increased expenditure, and the Committee over which Lord Airey presided was also fully alive to the fact, and stated so in their Report. I have no doubt that they had in their minds what has been running in my own—namely, that there should be no question to a rich country like England equal to that of the absolute efficiency of her small Army; and where the safety, welfare, and honour of the country are concerned, the question of the paltry saving of a few hundreds or thousands in the year should not be put in the balance. It is of the first importance to a country which has a small Army, as compared with the Armies of other countries, that the Army she possesses should be kept in the highest possible state of efficiency; and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, who has taken the first step in a right direction, has now an opportunity of associating his name with a scheme of reform which I believe will earn for him, not only the gratitude of the Army, but also of every man who is a well-wisher of his country. He will find that he is amply supported by the Reports of various Committees—Lord Airey's, and others which have sat on this and kindred matters—and by the Returns and figures to which he has access. The Report of Lord Airey's Committee was a most exhaustive one. It sat for nine months, and examined no less than 72 witnesses, ranging from the Commander-in-Chief down to the sergeant-majors of several regiments and depôts. The evidence extended over 700 pages, and was presented to Parliament in the year 1881; and the Report was couched in the most unequivocal terms. No notice whatever has been taken of the Report of that Committee since it was presented, either by the Government or by Parliament; and I say that if it is admitted that such an evil exists which makes it necessary to appoint a Committee consisting of the most experienced and capable officers in the Service, it is not treating that body with anything like the respect which is due to the labour they have expended upon it if their Report is simply to be pigeon-holed. To treat such a Report as so much waste paper means withholding from the country the reforms which the country has a right to expect will be applied by the Executive Authority, under the advice of men who have deliberately given their recommendations as the outcome of a lifelong experience and observation. Before the debate closes, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to say that he is alive to the vital importance of the question, and that he will give the Committee and the country some assurance that he will continue to look into the matter, and to see what steps can be taken, before the Estimates for next year are framed, to bring about what I am confident he will find to be a state of circumstances in accordance with the universal opinion of soldiers. I am not attacking the territorial system. I am not touching upon the question of long or short service. They are questions of policy upon which a civilian is as capable of giving an opinion as a soldier; but the question which I have brought before the Committee is one on which only the soldier who has served, or is now serving, and who is acquainted with the wants, the wishes, the hopes, and the essential qualities of the soldier is competent of expressing an opinion. A soldier is fully aware of what can or cannot be done in practice; and I think that the opinion which has been or probably will be enunciated by others besides myself will be one which every soldier in the Army will adopt. So far as the Government are concerned, they cannot afford absolutely to ignore the opinion of old and trusted servants solemnly and deliberately given; and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be able to tell the Committee he will give to the subject that consideration which I am sure he will admit it deserves.

Mr. MAGNIAC (Bedfordshire, N., Biggleswade): I wish to call the attention of the Committee to a Return which has been given in regard to a portion of this subject, and I desire to appeal to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War for some sort of explanation in regard to this Clothing Vote. Hon. Members may not have inquired into this Vote, and I think they will be somewhat surprised to find that, although this is called a Vote for clothing the Army, it really includes many other subjects. In fact, it is the entire Clothing Department of the country. So far as the Government is concerned, it comprises not only the Army, but the General Post Office, the Metropolitan Police, the Irish Constabulary, the Custom House, the Board of Trade, Colonial Governments, India, and, in fact, every official in the service of the country. In any other country, I suppose, except a commercial country like this, these so-called clothing establishments would be under commercial management; but it seems to be supposed that because this is called the Army Clothing Establishment and the Army Clothing Vote, that therefore it is necessary that this trading establishment should be managed by colonels in the Army; and I am led to suppose that this is so in consequence of certain reports and rumours of complaints in regard to the matter which has been brought under the notice of the House. The House, as a matter of fact, granted a Return on my Motion, and that Return, which I have already received, is signed by Colonel Ramsey. [An hon. Member: Who is a private gentleman.] Well, I may have been under a misapprehension with regard to that Return; but I do not think that it will very much affect the point I wish to make; because, whether the Director of the Clothing Establishment is a colonel in the Army or only a private gentleman, I do not think that it is less evident on the face of the accounts that a great amount of improvement is capable of being effected in this Establishment. When I moved for the Return I carefully considered the terms in which I couched it, and the House agreed to it. That Return has now been presented, and I regret to say that it is entirely a misleading document. I think it is scarcely respectful to the House that a Return ordered by the House should not only be contrary to the letter of the Motion upon which it was granted, but also entirely opposed to the spirit of the Motion itself. The Return for which I moved was intended to give an account of the number of persons employed in the Royal Army Clothing Factory and of the wages which they receive. I believe it is known to everybody that there have been very great complaints in regard to the management of this Factory. I will not say whether those complaints are well or ill-founded; but in moving for the Return I wanted to ascertain if there were any grounds for those complaints. I find from the Return that there are 5,000 persons employed monthly in that Establishment—that is to say, that an average number of 1,200 or 1,300 persons are employed there per week. The information I asked for was to be a Return showing a comparison between the wages paid in the month of February, 1886, and the wages in the same month in 1885; and my object in making that inquiry was to show whether or not it was true that the work was now being conducted on some different system in this Factory, and that the people were being ground down to a lower rate of pay than that which had been previously given. My hon. Friend the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Woodall), in answer to a Question put to him, said that it would be found the wages had not been reduced, but that, on the contrary, they were somewhat larger now than were paid in 1885. That is absolutely true in the letter, though it is anything but true in the spirit, of the inquiry that was made. A Return has been given for the year 1884, showing the work done during the past year by the workpeople employed in that Establishment. I think it is well known, as is stated in the Return, that the work itself is only partially taken home. A similar Return to 1886 has been given, showing all the work done in the factory hours, and including that taken home out of the factory hours, and done in what may be called overtime. I find that the average rate of pay of the workpeople employed in this Factory in 1885 was 17*s.* 11½*d.* per week; but by the

Return it would appear that the average payment is 18*s*. 8*d*. per week; so that I say the Return is true in the letter, but not true in the spirit; and if you eliminate the work done on Sundays, I believe that the average will come out at 16*s*. 8*d*., or nearly 6*d*. a-week less than the payments of last year. I do not mean to say that the workpeople are underpaid or that they are overpaid; but what I do say is that, when a Return is ordered to be given by the House, it ought to be given so that the House may be able to judge of its accuracy. One particular point I had in my mind is this—It was said that a large number of the persons employed were working at what are called starvation prices. My hon. Friend below me (Mr. Woodall) gave a Return in very minute detail, showing the number of persons employed at determined rates and wages, and the Return for the last class shows that a very large number of persons receive no more than 10*s*. per week. In a Return given so minutely, I am certainly interested to know how persons who receive less than 10*s*. a-week can manage to exist. Taking 10*s*. as the minimum, I find that in 1886 559 persons were employed in the Army Clothing Factory who only earned 10*s*. a-week, while in 1885 the number was 384. So that I cannot help thinking that some alteration has been made in the Regulations of the establishment which has brought an increased number into that class. I have no wish, Sir, in this House to ask that any person should be paid a higher rate of wages than that to which he is fairly entitled. I would not for one moment make a condition of that kind; on the contrary, I think that every Government Establishment should be conducted upon commercial principles; but, at the same time, I maintain that there are certain commercial principles which ought to be adhered to, and that there ought to be a minimum rate of wages for persons employed in the Government Factories, in order to secure that only competent persons should be employed, and that every person employed in a Government Establishment should be able to earn a suitable and sufficient amount of money to maintain him in a respectable condition of life. Now, I believe that no person can rent decent rooms to live in under 4*s*. 6*d*. per week; and what I would ask is, how any person can maintain himself or herself out of 10*s*. a-week, if he or she has 4*s*. 6*d*. to pay for rent? It is altogether impossible; and I can only infer that there is a system of employment by which persons who are practically incompetent to earn an adequate rate of wages are engaged in the Public Service. We all know, from what we read in the newspapers, how easy it is to cause a fall in wages. There is nothing easier; but I think that an evil of that kind ought always to be avoided in an establishment conducted by the Government. No doubt, such an establishment ought to be conducted on commercial principles; but it should be upon a principle which would prevent any person from being ground down and placed in such a position as to produce a public scandal. Of course, this question of wages must always be governed by the value of labour on the spot; but I would seriously urge upon my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War the necessity of giving it full consideration. A claim may be made that the rate of wages should be governed by the wages paid in London. I do not think that that is a fair test. On the contrary, I think that the wages paid should be governed by the rate properly paid in the place in which the labour is obtained. I am quite aware that this argument has been used in favour of a similar rate of wages being paid in the country to that which is paid in London; but I trust that that principle will never be acted upon, because it is quite clear that wages very materially depend on the cost of living, and the cost of living in London, as everybody knows, is much more expensive in London than in any other part of England, Ireland, or Scotland. There is another question which I think ought to be addressed to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War, and it is that he should not allow this Clothing Establishment to be converted into anything in the nature of a charitable institution. The object is to give satisfaction, and the only way to give satisfaction in an establishment like this is to conduct it not only on commercial principles, but in a spirit of equity and fairness with regard to those who are employed in it. When we come to look at the enormous magnitude of this establishment I think it will be generally admitted that the management can hardly be expected to be such as would give entire satisfaction. I am quite aware that I may be charged with a desire to increase the expense; but I would ask anybody concerned in commercial affairs whether he thinks that he could conduct a business with a turn over of £1,320,000 by means of a Director, who only receives £1,200 a-year? I do not know how this has been brought about, or how it has occurred that a Director of an establishment like this should only receive £1,200 a-year. I certainly believe that a man who is competent to conduct such an establishment would be worth a great deal more than £1,200 a-year in any manufacturing town in Europe. I am quite aware it may be said that he has a technical assistant at his side. I know that the Assistant Director, whoever he may be, is supposed to be a technical man; but it is very difficult for an outsider to make out who is responsible for anything at all in connection with this establishment. It will be found that the Indian Government receives no less than £270,000 worth of clothing a-year. Who is it who superintends that work? Again, clothing is supplied to the Admiralty and to the Volunteers, and there are many other separate heads in regard to which clothing is issued on terms of repayment, and yet under all of these heads there does not appear to be anyone responsible except the Director of Clothing at £1,200 a-year, with an Assistant Director at £800 a-year. If the assistant is not a technical man then I say he ought to be. A great part of the trade consists in viewing and inspecting clothes which have been bought by contract outside. Anyone acquainted with the woollen trade will be perfectly aware that there are few things which require a more searching examination, or a more competent examiner, than the purchase of woollen clothing. Without a thoroughly competent Director there would be room for any amount of fraud. Only last year, or the year before, we had a great scandal with respect to the purchase of a particular kind of furniture for the Government Offices. That case showed the particular care which was required, and also the necessity for personal and practical knowledge; and if those objects are not secured no amount of technical knowledge in connection with any trade will be of the slightest use whatever. I say that the Estimates are not sufficient to cover the proper amount of pay which ought to be given to the workpeople, and I think it will be necessary to make some additional charge, although, perhaps, not to a very large extent. Having made these remarks, I ought to explain that the Return which I moved for, and which has been laid upon the Table, I shall not ask the House to print, because I do not think that the information it contains is worth printing. It does not appear to me to contain the information which I required. I hope that in another year the matter will be more fully considered, and that a clear and intelligible Return will be given, so that the House, if it is anxious to know, shall know what is being done, and that no charge of injustice in connection with the payment of starvation prices shall in future be made.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.): Sir, the experience of four recent years in command of a Camp of Exercise, during which period some 35 battalions were under my observation, induces me to trespass on the indulgence of the Committee on matters of deep interest to every constituency. The Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting affords complete evidence that the home battalions of the Infantry of the Line on the low establishment—although maintained at a large cost to the country—are utterly useless for garrison duties at home, and unfit for service abroad. This has been the state of the battalions for a long period. The Inspector General of Recruiting remarks—

> "If men are unduly worked, as they always will be in very weak battalions, the Army obtains a bad reputation, and becomes less popular with those to whom we look to fill its ranks."

It must be borne in mind that "unduly worked" includes the tour of guard coming round much too quickly, thereby reducing the number of nights in bed to an extent that the medical officers strongly deprecate. Sometimes I have seen guard duty come round so frequently that the men have not had more than three nights in bed, while the medical officers say they require at least five. The home battalions have been reduced to a state of absolute inefficiency by being sacrificed to the feeding of battalions abroad, and to the formation of a Reserve. Many battalions at home last year, and the year before, were on a nominal establishment of 520 rank and file, which included bandsmen, pioneers, boys, batmen, garrison and regimental employ. And we had to send abroad each year 300 men—at times between 200 and 300 at one draft. A battalion thus situated has never the chance of being practised in the field—for months and months Commanding Officers have no opportunity of parading their regiments—phantom regiments I may call them. The few men who are not recruits—and some regiments have 300 out of 520—are dribbled away in garrison employ, standing orderlies, hospital, fire brigade, Staff officers' servants, and by other causes; and so Commanding Officers have no opportunity of training the officers and men in their duties in the field. The loss of this practice, consequent on the debilitated state of the battalions is most serious; for unless the troops are exercised in the practice of scouting, outpost duties, protection of their flanks, taking advantage of ground, the skill of attack and defence, and other most important duties, they are worse than useless in a campaign. Theoretical instruction is of no use without practice. The addition to the number of men in these battalions proposed in the Estimates will be of the greatest benefit to the Service—as on the 1st of January, 1886, there was a deficiency of 3,613 men. The prospect of recruiting the extra 10,000 is not promising unless greater temptations are held out to recruits to join and to remain. The Inspector General of Recruiting reports—

> "The waste should be calculated at not less than one-sixth of the strength."

On January 1, 1886, the strength was 192,929, which would make the waste 32,000. From the Inspector General of Recruiting's Report we learn that 45,613 men will be required in 1886—namely, estimated waste 32,000; proposed increase to Establishment, 10,000; and deficiency on January 1, 1886, 3,613, making a total of 45,613. The strength of the First Class Army Reserve on the 1st of January, 1886, was 41,889. It may be said that though the home battalions are but skeletons the Reserve can be recalled to fill their ranks. They may in case of great national emergency; but where then would be the Reserves?—in the first Line! With regard to deserters. It appears that in 1884 4,462 men deserted from the Army, and that out of this number 3,051 were under one year's service. In 1885, 5,147 deserted, and 2,975 remained away in a state of desertion. In 1885, 1,909 recruits bought their discharges within three months of enlisting. This decrease must have caused great expense to the country, and the reason for this waste requires explanation. As a general rule the recruits who purchase their discharge are respectable; they have enlisted not from being badly off, but with the wish to become soldiers. As a general rule they are of a superior class to the ordinary recruit, and their discharge is a loss to the Service. With regard to recruits—the present standard being, height 5 feet 3 inches, chest measurement 33 inches, and age 17 years—it is hard to conceive that—

> "As a rule the men are as good as ever entered Her Majesty's Service."

To use the words of the Inspector General, we may well believe that a cry has been

> "raised against the recruits because they were not effective as soon as could be wished."

The rule at Aldershot Camp is that recruits must be returned as fit for duty in four months after joining. As a matter of fact, very few are then fit for the ranks—which is not surprising, as they certainly have not had time to mature; and yet no more time can be allowed, for the Report shows that there were 75,352 men under three years' service on January 21, 1885, out of which 31,758 were under one year's service. With an Army like our own, enlisted entirely on the voluntary system, whose duty calls it all over the world, no pains should be spared to render the Service popular, and to raise its tone and efficiency. Much has been done in this direction of late—much remains to be done. Perhaps the Committee will now permit me to enter into a few details. There is no source of discontent more burning than the arrangements by which a soldier has to accept the cast-off clothing — part worn is the term — of others. A country lad brought up in godliness and cleanliness joins and receives a shabby, stained, greasy suit of part worn, and very much worn, clothing. This system is strongly condemned by Commanding Officers—it leads to crime, as men make away with these articles purposely, and thereby render themselves liable to severe punishment. The saving to the Government by this system is not equivalent to its disadvantages. There is no objection to the reissue of great-coats, capes, and tunics, if fit for wear. Forage caps, jackets, and trousers are strongly objected to. There is a very strong feeling in the minds of all soldiers that the clothing given to them, and repaired at their own cost, should be, as of old, their own property. This was the system formerly, and it answered well. It led to thrift and care, and it was a source of great encouragement to the good soldier. Another cause of disappointment to the recruit is that, under the "conditions of enlistment," published "by authority," he is promised a "ration of bread and meat." He finds that it consists of 1 lb. of bread and ¾ lb. of meat, which includes bone and gristle. This small ration is not enough for growing lads who have to be matured. The ration being so small, men are induced, in many cases, to stay their appetites by drinking. Deferred pay has not been a success. In the majority of cases it finds its way into public and other houses less respectable in a very short time after the man to whom it is paid leaves the barrack-yard, and does neither him nor his friends the least good. This money ought to be spent on extra messing and comforts; it would be more beneficial than handing over a lump sum to a soldier, who will quickly spend it in most instances. Men can always, if so inclined, place their savings in the regimental or Post Office Savings Bank. The discharge of bad characters is of great benefit to the Service. The example of worthless, disreputable men is most injurious to the behaviour and happiness of the young soldier, and their dismissal from the ranks would render the Army much more popular. The bad characters in a regiment are the curse of it. The expansion of the time of service—that is, allowing men to take on for different periods until ultimately they may earn a pension—is a source of infinite gratification to all who take an interest in the Service, and again opens up a career for a soldier. Beyond the loss of strength to battalions at home, occasioned by the passage of men to the Reserve, and the transfer of men to the battalions abroad, the waste is immense from other causes, such as from desertion, purchase of discharge, invaliding, and deaths; 12,726 men were lost to the Service last year by such waste, My experience of the state of battalions inclines me to conclude that the battalions at home should drill their own recruits, and that the regimental districts should furnish the drafts for the battalions abroad. The present system, by which the battalions abroad are fed by the battalions at home, cannot be maintained, as duty calls for a larger number of battalions abroad than are retained at home. Therefore there must be certain regiments with both battalions abroad. There are at present 14 Line regiments with both their battalions abroad. In thanking the Committee for its indulgence, permit me to express a hope that a system of dealing with our soldiers may be adopted which will tend to decrease the number of desertions, to diminish drunkenness and crime, and to induce recruits to come and to stay. Let this old feeling of regiments be brought back. Let all ranks again look upon the battalion as their home, to be happy in, to work for, so that it may excel and take a pride in its old associations, traditions, and renown; to be looked upon as an effective unit of the Army that has gained honour, and will do so again when opportunity occurs.

Mr. W. H. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): I quite agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Winchester who initiated this discussion (Mr. Tottenham) that there cannot be a more important question than the efficiency of our Infantry battalions; but I do not propose to follow my hon. Friend precisely in the manner in which he has referred to these topics. I wish rather to address myself to the general question which has been raised in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, and to ask him for further information than the Committee and Parliament have yet received. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the strength of a battalion at home was to be in no case less than 750. There was, I believe, a distinct understanding to that effect. The right hon. Gentleman admitted very much of the contention of my hon. and gallant Friend behind me (General Fraser), that the strain on the resources of the Army under the existing system during the last two or three years has been exceedingly great, and that, in fact, it is not possible to continue it. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that in all cases in which the two battalions of a regiment were abroad a depôt of at least 600 was to be maintained in this country. That was the arrangement which was, I believe, laid down by the late Government, and was found to be absolutely necessary in order to supply the drafts that were requisite to keep up the battalions on active service. I am exceedingly glad that the right hon. Gentleman has followed our advice, and that he has come to a conclusion that it is necessary to maintain that system, so that in case of an arrangement for having two battalions abroad a depôt of at least 600 shall be retained in this country to supply the demand. I think I have given to the Committee an accurate representation of what the right hon. Gentleman stated. The figures themselves appear in the Estimates. I find that the right hon. Gentleman, under the circumstances, has asked for an Establishment of 148,518 men, and in order to carry out the engagement he has made with Parliament and the country it is necessary that that Establishment should be maintained. I think that follows as a matter of course. The figures are given on page 15 of the Estimates. I find that last year the Establishments were considerably less than they are this year. Last year the Establishment voted was 138,986 men, with a total number of 142,194 men; whereas in the present year there is an Establishment of 148,518 men, and a total number of 151,867 men. The gross Estimates for last year showed an outlay on the Army of £5,542,000. If the right hon. Gentleman makes a rule-of-three sum of these figures, he will find that if 142,194 men cost £5,542,000, then 151,867 men would cost £5,919,000. But the gross Estimate is only £5,657,300, and, on the basis of the same calculation as last year, the money taken is £261,700 less than last year. Therefore, the proportions in the Estimate are wrong to that extent. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman took credit to himself for the modesty of his Estimates. He said it was inevitable that the Estimates should be, to a large extent, conjectural; that it was better, more satisfactory, and more regular that the Government should fix the Estimates on a moderate rate of expenditure, rather than estimate for a larger outlay which might not in reality be incurred. I do not wish in the slightest degree to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman; but, as I understand the Estimates, they are based upon the necessities of the Army, and the obligation of the Government to maintain a certain Force in Egypt. The modest Estimates—the conjectural Estimates—the hypothetical Estimates of the right hon. Gentleman would not do more than keep up an Army of Occupation in Egypt of 8,800 men, and upon that assumption the whole provision for the Army is founded. It is assumed that a Force of 8,800 men will be retained in Egypt, and that the other battalions—eight or nine now there—will be recalled, that they will be added to the home strength, that it will not be necessary to maintain depôts of 600 for these battalions which are abroad, and that a certain number of depôts—I think seven—will be reduced. But that modest Estimate—that conjectural Estimate—based on the lowest Estimate which the right hon. Gentleman deems to be a proper and reasonable one—that modest, conjectural, and hypothetical Estimate, for which the provision of only 151,867 men is taken, shows that the proportion between the Establishment and the total numbers is exactly the same as last year. Therefore I infer that the cost of the soldier, the proportion to be raised, and the expenditure to be incurred, ought to be precisely in the same proportion, and therefore I maintain that the Estimates have been framed not only on a modest and restrictive view of the requirements of the Service, but that they are also framed insufficiently to meet those modest requirements. I now turn to a record of financial wisdom which was given to the world some years ago. I remember, when I was in Office, that I and my Colleagues were severely rated by the present Prime Minister for making further demands on the Exchequer than those which had been estimated for in the first instance. I will read the paragraph from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which lays down the canon law on the subject. In a speech which the right hon. Gentleman delivered in Edinburgh, in 1879, he said—

> "The second rule, gentlemen, is this—and this is, perhaps, the most essential of them all—that once in the year, and only once, the Chancellor of the Exchequer shall make his Financial Statement, shall say such was my income and such was my charge for the year that has expired, so that Parliament can judge me upon it; such is my estimated income ond such is my estimated charge for the year that is to come, so that Parliament can form its judgment with reference to the condition of the country, whether it is reasonable, and, if there be need, what measures it shall take in order to supply the means. Now there are great occasions, undoubtedly, when it is necessary for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to depart from such a rule. A war may break out, which could not have been anticipated, long after, months after, his Budget—of course I do not speak of cases like this. If you will look over the Budgets of the last Government, you will see that in almost every case we spent less money than we had asked Parliament to give us. We acted upon this old, well-established—aye, and I will venture to say, conservative principle, not in a Party sense, but in a sense higher than a Party sense—this conservative principle of compelling the Minister to state all the charge that he is likely to incur, in order to maintain the efficacy of popular control."

I would add further—in order also to maintain the efficiency of the Services for which he was responsible. We notice that in the present case there will in all probability be a Supplementary Estimate, if the Force in Egypt cannot be reduced to the number mentioned in the Estimates. Now, I say that that is a distinct breach of the canon law laid down by the present Head of Her Majesty's Government. We are told that it is the duty of a Minister to state the outside expenditure which he is likely to incur, and rather to ask for more money than he expects to spend than to take less than in all probability will be required. Yet the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War excuses himself for not stating the full cost of the services which are likely to be entered into on the ground that it will be in his power to ask for a Supplementary Estimate. It is, at all events, an unsatisfactory departure from the sound principles laid down some six or seven years ago. I will now pass from that subject; but I do hope that, whatever the circumstances may be, the engagement which has been made to maintain the Force at a strength for each battalion at home of at least 750 men will be observed. Let the Committee consider what position we are in. We are now adding 100 men to the strength of each battalion in India. That addition of 100 men, as the right hon. Gentleman told us, will involve a large increase of the drafts required from year to year from the country. Perhaps from 170 to 180 men will be required to be sent out to the battalion on foreign service every year. If it has only 750 men, or less than 750 men, you will have something which really is not a battalion capable of service, but a mere depôt, which is nothing but a training machine. You recognize this by saying that in the case of double battalions abroad you will supply a depôt of 600 each. But in many cases last year it is notorious that the battalion at home had only 20, 30, or 40 men for duty, after the drafts for foreign service had been sent out. No one can justify a continuation of such a condition of things. I wish now to say a word or two about another item which appears in the Estimates, and which was spoken of the other night. With regard to Suakin, we are told that £58,000 is to be taken for the garrison of that place. On that point I am anxious to obtain from the right hon. Gentleman an assurance that Her Majesty's Government, who contribute the full cost of the service, will provide that at least the officers in charge of the troops at that place shall be British officers. I have heard that there is likely to be some difficulty on that point, and therefore I think it is necessary that we should have an assurance from the Government that the troops intended for the defence of Egypt will be thoroughly efficient. While in favour of the employment of Native troops in Egypt, I believe that they can only be efficient and useful, at all events, for two or three years to come, under the direction and control of British officers. I value the Egyptians very highly indeed, and I believe that the Egyptian officers would be of value in the direction and discipline of their troops; but in the recent past they have not been capable of leading their troops, and it is necessary that for the present British officers should be employed. The right hon. Gentleman made some remarks about recruiting. As regards recruiting, it has, I think, been most satisfactory during the past year; and I wish to join with the right hon. Gentleman in giving the highest possible tribute of praise to General Bulwer for the services he has rendered to the country in the matter of recruiting. General Bulwer has been a most able and efficient recruiting officer during the past five years, and his sole object has been to make the Service popular. I will venture to say that in a Voluntary Army the conditions of service must be always such as to attract the soldier himself, and that any attempt to enforce the regulations and conditions which may be possible with a Continental Army would be quite out of place. In this country we appeal to the public and ask them to join the Colours as volunteers, and not as forced men or as conscripts; and therefore the general condition of the soldier must be such as to be attractive to them, and give them confidence that not only the rate of pay, but every other advantage offered to them, will be maintained. There should be nothing excessive in the way of duty. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Lambeth (General Fraser) has told the Committee that under the present system men are kept out of their beds for three or four nights a-week. I believe that if proper care were exercised many of the inconveniences which now arise would be remedied to a large extent. In the first place, the constitution of the recruit should be carefully considered, and there should be no strain put upon him which is likely to lead to an unsatisfactory result, and which frequently becomes the cause of desertion. The right hon. Gentleman remarked that with regard to the Militia officers there have been an increase in the number of 160 or 170 during the past year, notwithstanding the fact that 222 subaltern officers had joined the Line from the Militia. Now, I venture to think that the very fact that these subaltern officers have joined the Line from the Militia goes very far indeed to account for the increase in the number of Militia officers. If Militia officers find that they can get employment in the Line by doing their duty well in the Militia, and qualifying themselves while in the Militia for Line employment, it will undoubtedly render the Militia Service more popular by showing that it is a channel by which young and energetic men can obtain an entrance into the Regular Forces. It certainly affords a source of attraction to young men to join the Militia which has not been previously experienced or realized, and I therefore support the view which the right hon. Gentleman has adopted in regard to this particular matter. Another question was raised by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan), who spoke of the compulsory retirement of Captains and Majors. Now, I cannot help drawing the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Non-Effective Vote is growing—perhaps slowly, but growing year by year—and assuming dimensions which are now really alarming, and form good ground for serious apprehension. The Vote is growing, notwithstanding the fact that the charge for pensions, as far as the soldier is concerned, has decreased. The charge for long-service pensions, which was so large some years ago, has been very much curtailed owing to short service; and therefore it comes to this, that the increase we deplore is due to the fact that officers are forced out of the Service at the age of 40, or 45, or 48, when in the prime of life, and quite capable of discharging their duty to the country and the Army. They are compulsorily retired at a moment when they are most anxious to remain, and their retirement is a loss not only to the country, but to the Army itself. I hope, most sincerely, that the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues will be given, not alone to the economy which may be effected by extending the period of service, but to the increased efficiency of the Army which may be secured. There are many other ways in which economy may be effected; but knowing that these subjects had not been fully investigated when I left the War Office, I will not now enter upon them. I will content myself with simply expressing a hope that both economy and efficiency will be studied together, and that both will receive the attention of Her Majesty's Government and of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State, with special reference to the charge for this branch of the Service. I believe that nothing, on the whole, would be more popular in the Service itself, and that there is nothing that would more tend to relieve the disagreeable sensation of a man of 40 years of age who finds himself compelled to be a pensioner for life, and who knows that he has rendered himself unfit for any other useful occupation by the 17 or 18 years of his life which he has devoted to a Military Profession. My right hon. Friend made some remarks as to the amount of the Estimates which he has submitted to the House. No doubt, they are large Estimates; but he has explained to the House that these Estimates have been rendered inevitable by the fact that the improvements in machinery, and the scientific discoveries of the last few years —the march of invention, in point of fact—have made it absolutely necessary that Her Majesty's Government, if it did not excel, should at least follow, the exertions which are being made abroad in qualifying the Forces of the country for any service they may be called upon to perform. Well, Sir, I must confess that I do regret that some of the work which was in progress has been stopped. I am very far, indeed, from advocating that Her Majesty's Government should at any time offer employment where there is no work to be done that is necessary in the interests of the United Kingdom. I would not advocate, under any circumstances, the addition to the Estimates of a single £1 for that purpose. But the question is—What are the necessities of the country at the present time? Can you undertake to supply her requirements more economically, more successfully, and more efficiently now than you can in a time of panic and alarm? I have witnessed successive panics and successive alarms, and I have been conscious of the fact that, under the pressure of those panics and alarms, the money voted on a Vote of Credit melts away very rapidly, and that the country rarely gets full value for the money it expends. I believe that a judicious expenditure of money now in bringing up the stores required to the amount at which a sound judgment would fix them, would be an economical expenditure of money, because you would expend that money under no pressure, with no panic, with no waste, and with no over-crowded Department of any kind. You would have the full control of your machinery, full control over your materials, and you would be able to produce results which would give confidence and a sense of security to the country. A few days ago a Circular was issued by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Chamberlain) addressed to the various Local Authorities throughout the Kingdom, in which he suggested to them that, in consequence of the exceptional depression which has prevailed, they should undertake any public works that required to be undertaken, and that if they required the consent of the Local Government Board to the borrowing of money that consent would be given. I do not ask even for the application of that principle in this particular case; but the present state of the labour market affords an opportunity which would render a judicious and necessary expenditure in this direction more than justifiable. I do not ask Her Majesty's Government to authorize loans, or any extravagant amount of expenditure; but I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to this fact—that Her Majesty's Government are discharging some 400 or 500 men at Woolwich and Enfield, and probably at other Government works. If they will allow the authorities at Woolwich and Enfield and elsewhere, money to carry out those works which are deemed to be works of utility, although, perhaps, not works of pressing necessity, the services of these men might be retained. What I maintain is, that although it might not be an example to be followed except in exceptional circumstances, it would be at the present moment a wise and judicious expenditure, and probably one which would not only be economical but absolutely justifiable in the interests of the country at large. I do not know that I have any further occasion to detain the Committee from the discussion which they are anxious to enter into. One point to which I wished specially to draw the attention of my right hon. Friend was the very slow progress which has been made with the manufacture of the new rifle. I understand that only 55,000 stand are to be produced during the year; and I must remind the right hon. Gentleman that last year the demand from India and the Colonies was very large indeed. Indeed, there is a danger that we may almost come to a standstill for the want of small arms, unless they are produced at a much more rapid rate than the 55,000 stand of arms authorized in the coming year. After the new rifle has been sanctioned, I do not think it will be wise to go on manufacturing the Martini-Henry rifle, for it is quite certain that the Martini-Henry will be altogether superseded in the course of a few years. The new arm is certain to be demanded; and it will be impossible, if the expectations now formed with regard to it are right, for any authority to resist the pressure which will be brought upon it. It is, therefore, most undesirable that the Martini-Henry should be manufactured; but the new arm which is to take its place should be pushed forward with the utmost rapidity. In every respect, thorough efficiency in all matters connected with the Army is of the utmost importance. Some hon. Gentlemen seem to think that efficiency is not needed; but, so far as I am concerned, I would very much rather have fewer battalions and strong battalions than a larger number of weak battalions. So, also, I would prefer to have fewer arms than arms upon which no reliance can be placed. I maintain that it is absolutely essential to maintain your Army in a state of the most complete and thorough efficiency; and rather than reduce the efficiency of your Army I should prefer that you should reduce its strength.

COLONEL SALIS-SCHWABE (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I must congratulate the Secretary of State for War on the clear manner in which he has placed the Army Estimates before the Committee. At the same time, I am prepared to admit that some apprehension has been created among hon. Members at the enormous size of these Estimates, and also at their rapid increase. They have now reached the large sum of £18,000,000; and the taxpayer naturally considers, first, whether the proposed Establishment for the Army is necessary; secondly, whether the proposed Establishment cannot be maintained for less; and, lastly, whether the country gets the maximum amount of efficiency for the amount of money that is spent. Now, a great Conservative Leader has laid down that "Establishments must depend on policy;" and I must say that I, for one, very much regret the meddlesome foreign policy which was really commenced in 1874, and has continued, more or less, ever since. But, considering what our foreign policy has been, and what the consequent requirements are, I do not think the number of men voted for the Army is too many. No doubt, 141,000 men at home and 68,000 in India, making a total of 209,000, is a very large number indeed. ["Hear, hear!"] Those hon. Members who sit here and say "Hear, hear!" ought to keep a jealous watch over our foreign policy, and should remember that the only way of doing that is to avoid a reckless policy, to urge arbitration in lieu of war, and not to undertake to be the police of the world. It is only by pursuing such a course that we can ever hope to be able to reduce our armaments and effect a corresponding reduction in the Army Estimates. I must, however, say that the Secretary of State for War, by increasing the number of men in each battalion, has very greatly contributed to the efficiency of the Army. As has been stated by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Lambeth (General Fraser), the skeleton battalions which we have had are of no good at all, and afford no opportunity for teaching the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men the mere rudiments of their Profession. It is, therefore, desirable to get rid of skeleton battalions as speedily as possible; and I am glad to learn that in future we shall have no battalion of smaller strength than 750 men. But in regard to the second and third points—whether the proposed Establishment for the Army cannot be maintained for less, and whether we get the maximum efficiency for the amount of money we spend—I must say that I entertain very grave doubts. I have no desire to detain the Committee at any length; but there are one or two matters I should like to point out in regard to which I think we might economize. I begin with the pay of the General Staff. The General Staff pay amounts to about £200,000, while that of the Commissariat and Transport Staff amounts to £90,000. Now, I am of opinion that these two Staffs may very well be both amalgamated and reduced, and that the amalgamation would lead not only to economy, but to greater efficiency. Then, again, the War Office Staff costs £88,000 a-year, making a total for the three Staffs, exclusive of clerks, of £378,000. It appears to me that the most sensible plan would be to assimilate our Home Peace Staff, as far as possible, to the system carried out for the Staff on active service. At home, the Military Staff is divided into the Adjutant General's Department and the Quartermaster General's Department, which it was decided to amalgamate 16 years ago, but which are still maintained as independent Departments. The Commissariat and Transport Department, the Ordnance Stores, the Medical, Financial, Veterinary, Artillery Stores, and other Staffs, are all more or less independent of the Military Staff, and of each other, and are divided in their allegiance between the Commander-in-Chief, the Secretary of State for War, and the Surveyor General of the Ordnance. The result naturally leads to great expense, very great delay, confusion, want of efficiency, and a certain amount of friction; and I do not believe that the machinery of the Army would work at all if it were not for the fact that all of these various Departments co-operate loyally, and do their best to work harmoniously together. Nevertheless, the system is a very bad one, and in a time of war it is greatly strained. Now, on active service the General in command has a Chief of the Staff, and an officer commanding the lines of communication and base; the Chief of the Staff looks after the duties which are managed by the Adjutant General's Department at home, whereas the officer commanding the lines of communication and base superintends the duties which at home are under the Quartermaster General, the Commissariat Staff, the War Office Staff, and the Surveyor General of the Ordnance's Department. These comprise transport of every description, the Commissariat supply of food, forage, and all requisites; supply of clothing, ordnance stores, such as tents, pay, medical and veterinary arrangements, the telegraph and post-office service, re-mounts, and military police. Why cannot we have the whole of these various Departments amalgamated at home, and placed under that time-honoured officer, the Quartermaster General, just as on active service under the officer commanding the lines of communication and base? At the present moment, in each district of any size, the General commanding has a Quartermaster General, and also a Commissariat Staff officer. It seems to me that if you amalgamated the various Staffs, one Staff officer would do the work of two, and, in addition, he would superintend all the work of the minor Staffs. The Staff of the War Office itself might be much reduced, the Army would be placed in a much higher state of efficiency, and the country would save at least £100,000 a-year. I come now to the question of the clerks, because each unnecessary Staff officer requires two or three unnecessary clerks; and I find that last year—1885-6—the War Office had 391 civil clerks, drawing salaries which amounted to £115,921 per annum. I regret to find that the number of clerks is going to be increased, and that in 1886-7 there will be 406 civil clerks, with salaries amounting to £118,087. Now, the civil clerks are, no doubt, very hard-working and deserving public servants, and I have nothing to say against any one of them. They work very hard, and at present they have a great deal of work to do; but what I maintain is, that they are employed in very useless and mischievous work. In fact, the system of centralization at the War Office has a most paralyzing and pernicious effect, in addition to being most expensive. The officer commanding a regiment, who is perfectly competent to settle many small matters himself, is obliged to refer to the General Officer in command of the district, whereupon the General Officer refers to the War Office, and thus this expensive system of routine, involving much delay and inconvenience, is followed in regard to every trumpery point, which the officer in command of the regiment is quite capable of settling himself. The same system is pursued in regard to Returns. Monthly Returns might be substituted for weekly, quarterly for monthly, and annual for quarterly. A whole army of clerks is kept up, not only at the War Office, but in all the districts and all the battalions and regiments. The regiments and battalions are, in fact, denuded of fighting men in order that they may carry on a constant round of mischievous and useless correspondence with the clerks who are at the War Office. Those 406 civilian clerks are to cost the country in 1886-7 a sum of £118,000, or an average of £290 each; but I find that there are 86 military clerks at the War Office, and that the average salary of each is only £105. All the clerical work which is absolutely necessary, with the exception of that which is carried on in the Accountant General's Office, could be done by military clerks, retired non-commissioned officers, or retired Quartermasters, or even by retired officers who have occupied a higher rank. The country would by this means save not only the difference of pay between civil and military clerks, but the pensions which these retired Quartermasters and other officers are now drawing. I think that, in this way, by reducing the number of the clerks now in the Service and employing military clerks instead of civilian clerks, we might reduce the Estimates for the Army by another sum of £150,000, making, with the reduction I have already suggested, a saving of £250,000, without losing a single fighting man, while, at the same time, the efficiency of the Army would be greatly increased. The existing system has a bad and pernicious tendency to take all power out of the hands of the Commanding Officer. The idea seems to be that some Commanding Officers are not to be trusted. If you find a Commanding Officer is not worthy of trust, let him be ruthlessly sent about his business; but trust those whom you do keep. Commanding Officers naturally wish to get rid of men with bad characters; but confidential instructions are forwarded from the Adjutant General's Office not to allow the men to be discharged except under certain excessively stringent conditions. The consequence is that the same men are tried by court martial over and over again, but are not discharged; and the cost of military law is very great—no less than £35,000. I think that this item, and £122,000 for transport, would be very considerably reduced if the Commanding Officer were more trusted, and were allowed to discharge any bad character he wished to get rid of. In 1885 there were 7,721 courts martial at home, which involved 6,681 sentences of imprisonment; but the number would have been greatly reduced if the Commanding Officers were only allowed to get rid of bad characters. There were 5,096 district courts martial, and 2,622 regimental courts martial. Now, a district court martial costs the country a great deal more than a regimental court martial, because there is a considerable expense incurred in getting the officers together from the out-stations to try the men. There is a rule that no non-commissioned officer may be tried by a regimental court martial. No doubt, that rule was introduced for the protection of the non-commissioned officers; but the non-commissioned officers themselves are quite willing to be tried by their own officers; and, therefore, I think it would be as well to revert to the old system of trying non-commissioned officers for certain offences by regimental courts martial instead of district courts martial, whereby the country would save a considerable amount of expense. Intimately connected with the soldier, after all, is the soldier's weapon. Well, Sir, I think that with regard to the £3,000,000 voted for warlike material and clothing, there is undoubtedly room for saving. Take, for instance, the Cavalry swords. In 1882, a pattern was invented by a Birmingham contractor and an Assistant Adjutant General. A few were issued to certain regiments on trial, and the Commanding Officers reported on their weight, balance, and so forth, but were not called upon to test their quality. No one tested it; and some paramount official in the Surveyor General's Department wrote snubbing letters to every Commanding Officer who objected to his men's lives being endangered by worthless weapons. I, myself, when in command of the 16th Lancers, objected to the swords, and I was told that I had no business to test them, and that if any were spoilt in being tested I was to pay for them out of my own pocket; if I thought them unserviceable, I was to report them. Of course, I could not find out whether they were serviceable without testing them, and the result was that the swords were re-tested by the authorities and withdrawn. Not only was £2,000 paid to the contractor for these worthless swords, but there was also the expense of issuing and taking them in, and engaging persons to test them. The present pattern swords have been, I am glad to say, tested by a proper Committee. They were tested on dead horses and sheep by men riding at a gallop and in every possible way. The right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for War (Mr. W. H. Smith) ordered £20,000 worth of these swords in Germany. Now, I do not seriously quarrel with him for having ordered them in Germany, because it is quite true that the taxpayer ought to buy in the cheapest market, whether at home or abroad. But an exception should, perhaps, be made with regard to munitions of war, because in time of war they are contraband, and we might not then be able to get them. Therefore, I think we ought to encourage, as far as possible, the manufacture of warlike stores at home. It seems incredible that there should not be a single manufacturer in the United Kingdom who can make swords by machinery; there is, I believe, only one place where it can be done, and that is at Enfield. It appears that no steps were taken to let the trade know that there was so large an order in the market for swords manufactured by machinery; and I cannot but think it likely that if the trade had known of the order, some manufacturer would have started the plant necessary to produce them, and would have been able to compete with Germany. I sincerely hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) has not the same views as his Predecessor with regard to enlarging our Government Manufacturing Establishments. I regret to see that the sum of £30,000 is asked for enlarging the Establishment at Enfield. I would rather this Establishment were reduced, and that the trade were encouraged instead. I should like to see our manufactures for military purposes in the hands of manufacturers at home, so that the country might not be at all dependent upon foreign countries. With regard to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith), that this is a good time to increase our stores, if you get more stores than you require they will only become obsolete, and there are thousands of obsolete Cavalry saddles now at the Arsenals. Besides, I think the outcry which is raised by hon. Gentlemen opposite for the employment of men in the Government Factories, because it is a time of distress, is unreasonable, because most of the taxpayers who are artizans are working on short time; and it is hard that these taxes should be increased to employ men in the Government Factories on work which is not required. Now comes the question, whether we get our money's worth for the £4,500,000 voted for pay, and I am inclined to be a little sceptical on that point. I believe that out of 40,000 recruits, 15,381, or nearly two-fifths, were under 8 stone 13 lbs. in weight. Now, an Infantry soldier has a large weight to carry, and small and weak men are not equal to it. These men are all probably 16 or 17 years of age. All the statements made about age by recruits are valueless. It does not matter what age a recruit says he is; it is perfectly well known what are the limits, and he gives any age between 18 and 25. If these men remain in the Service and develop, no doubt at the end of two or three years they become good soldiers; but in 1885 there were 3,497 desertions by men of under one years' service; and it is very natural that they should desert, for being immature they get sick of being put to do the work of men which they are not fit for. My own opinion is that weak men ought not to be put on full duty—that it ought to be eased for them; but, at the same time, I do not see why they should be paid as men. They are merely boys, and as such I think a reduction should be made in the amount of their pay until such time as they can do the work of men. Of the 88,000 men said to be effective, at home there must, I think, be 20,000 who are immature, and are only growing into effective men. One word with regard to the Non-Effective Vote of £3,000,000. I think there are grave objections, from an economical point of view, to the present system of pensions; but taking into consideration the pay and the pensions of non-commissioned officers and men, I do not think they are at all highly paid as compared with the regular rate of wages. I must consider officers as coming under two categories—purchase and non-purchase. The terms of the purchase officers are finally settled; but I regret that there is an enormous number of officers drawing public money in the shape of half-pay, who are both able and willing to serve. The hon. and gallant Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan) made a very strong appeal the other night in connection with these officers. He made an appeal from their point of view, and there was much of his speech with which I quite agree; but I should like to make an appeal from the point of view of the taxpayers of the country. The retirement scheme was drawn up in 1873, after several years of comparative peace, and is totally unnecessary and extravagant considering the flow of promotion which has resulted from the wars of the last 12 years. I would recommend, Sir, that there should be no compulsory retirement except for inefficiency, or after five year's non-employment. Voluntary retirements, too, should be restricted If it were thought that promotion did not go on fast enough in each rank, it would be easy for the Secretary of State for War to say that there should be so many retirements open during the year. I think that plan has been tried in the Navy, and that it has to some extent succeeded. I hope I have drawn attention to some points giving room for economy and efficiency; but I feel that reform from within is hardly to be hoped for, because, probably, no Secretary of State for War single-handed can overcome the *vis inertiæ* of routine and vested interests, and we must look forward not only to a Parliamentary Committee to go into the Estimates in their complete form, but also to pressure from this House, for a reorganization on the lines I have indicated, which I think will be conducive both to economy and efficiency.

Colonel BRIDGEMAN (Bolton): I think the question of deferred pay was started 10 years ago by Viscount Cranbrook. It was a most excellent idea. It was thought that the soldier when he went back to his native village would, under that system, have a certain sum of money in his pocket, and that this would be an inducement to other young men in the village to enlist. I am afraid, however, that it has not had quite the effect that was hoped for. There are many cases of men leaving the Army who, in the course of a few weeks, and even a few days, come to the barrack-gate to ask for a few shillings to carry them home, having spent the whole of their deferred pay. In this way the taxpayer does not get the advantage which it was intended he should get, because the money does not remain in the man's pocket. I think the country is also disadvantaged by the system, because the six-years'-service man when he leaves the Army is at his very best. He is a well-trained soldier; he has gone through six or seven courses of musketry, and he is probably 25 or 26 years of age—the very age at which you wish to keep him—and one would have thought it wise that he should be offered some inducement to remain. But instead of that you offer him an overpowering inducement to leave the Colours, because it is only by doing so that he can obtain his deferred pay. Therefore, I think we are doing a suicidal thing in offering this money instead of an inducement to remain. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War said the other night that when a man is satisfied with his career, it is most unfortunate that any Regulation should debar him from continuing in it. I maintain that this is a Regulation which must have the effect of debarring him from continuing in it, because the only way he can get this money is by leaving the Colours; and I wish to point out how, in my opinion, deferred pay may be made much more beneficial to the soldier and to the country. If there is one thing which the recruit thinks more of than anything else—and the subject has been touched upon by several hon. Members—it is the promise of a free ration. When a man enlists, he is told that he will have 1*s.* a-day and a free ration; and not unnaturally he thinks he will be supplied with whatever food is thought necessary by the authorities. But the first thing he discovers when he joins the depôt is that the authorities stop 3½*d.* out of every 1*s.* He immediately thinks he has been let in, and this feeling rankles very deeply indeed; he feels sore about it, and in many cases thinks he has been allured into the Service under false pretences; and it is possible that this accounts for the numerous desertions which take place in the first three months of the soldier's career. It would, in my opinion, be well if the Government undertook this charge of 3½*d.*, and if the recruit were told that he would receive 8½*d.* per day, and then he would not consider himself deceived. But a better plan still would be that the Government should give the 1*s.* a-day, together with the extra ration now paid for by the soldier, and that the deferred pay should be discontinued in order to meet the extra expenditure. The Government could buy the things for which the stoppage is made cheaper than the soldier can, because it could buy them without the necessary profit which goes into the pockets of the tradesmen. The Government can also supply tea and coffee duty free, and there is on that ground every reason to believe that it could supply the goods at 2½*d.* instead of the 3½*d.* which is now charged. I think this plan would be of great advantage both to the soldier and the country, because the soldier would have the advantage of knowing exactly what he would get, and the country would have the advantage of possessing a soldier less inclined to desert or purchase his discharge during the first three months of service.

Lord ALGERNON PERCY (St. George's, Hanover Square): I rise with great diffidence to speak upon military subjects in the presence of officers holding high commissions in Her Majesty's Service; but having held an appointment when in the Army, which gives considerable knowledge as to the interior economy of the Service and of its requirements, I venture to endorse what has fallen from my hon. Friend the Member for Winchester (Mr. Tottenham) and the hon. and gallant Member for Lambeth N. (Major General Fraser), with regard to the very great error of insisting upon the present system of feeding the battalion abroad from the battalion at home. We are all perfectly aware of the great improvement which has taken place in consequence of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War deciding that there shall be no battalion at home of a less nominal strength than 750 men. Of course, this is a great step in the right direction; but I am afraid that the good effect of that change will be neutralized or destroyed if the present system of feeding the battalions abroad is continued. The stronger you make the battalion abroad the stronger becomes the argument which I lay before the Committee. In the case of a battalion abroad of 850 men—and, of course, many are stronger—it is clear that, as enlistment is for seven years, one-seventh will be transferred annually. You will have 120 men going to the Reserve, and you must allow also for the ordinary waste of the battalion by desertion, purchase, sickness, and other causes, which it is not too much to say will amount to 5 per cent. That will give 160 men whom the battalion abroad will lose annually, and which must be supplied by the battalion at home in order to fill up the vacancies thus caused. But then you must also take the vacancies occurring in the battalion at home. Taking the strength at 750, one-seventh will be transferred to the Army Reserve yearly, and 5 per cent will represent the waste from other causes; and thus the number of men required to fill up the vacancies in the battalion at home will be 140, or a total of 300 men, whom the battalion at home must recruit in order to fill up its own vacancies and those of the battalion abroad. Therefore, you will have in the home battalion only 450 men of over one years' service; and I venture to say that any officer would admit that a battalion of 750, having 300 men under one year's service, is not in a state of efficiency. You must take away all the "casuals," as the hon. and gallant Member for Lambeth has said; and everyone is aware that when a battalion is supposed to stand at 750 on parade it is a very small number who really appear under arms. In addition to what I have shown is the effect of the present system, the constant changes which take place in battalions are ruinous to their efficiency—the men do not know their officers, and the officers do not know their men. It seems to me that there is only one remedy for the present condition of affairs, and that is to make the depôts real, and not mere shams as they are now. Let the depôts supply both battalions; let the recruits be kept at the depôts until they are fit, or nearly fit, to pass into the ranks. At the present time the recruits dribble into the depôts; they thus only get a knowledge of the rudiments of drill, and I know Commanding Officers say that they would rather have the men just as they join as recruits than as they come to their battalions from the depôts. In the Guards the system is a better one; they have a large recruit establishment, and the men recruited are sent down to that establishment. There they are thoroughly drilled, and when sent to the battalion they take their place in the ranks almost immediately, and are able to perform their duties. I think that the waste in the Army is a subject which is not sufficiently considered by the authorities. Looking at the Return, we find that, deducting transfers to the Reserve, the net waste averages 20,596 men, or about 12 per cent. We find that in this number there are 5,147 desertions. Desertion is one of the most disgraceful forms of waste, and should be checked if it is possible to do so. At present it constitutes absolutely one-fourth of the total waste in the Army; and, of the number I have given, 1,653 represent desertions in the first year of service. Then must be added the number of those who purchase their discharge. I venture to endorse entirely what has fallen from my hon. and gallant Friend on my left (Colonel Bridgeman). It is perfectly clear that there is discontent, and the cause of the discontent which leads to this desertion and purchase of discharge, is, I am convinced, the stoppages made from the pay of the soldier. I know, of my own personal knowledge, how much the men dislike the stoppages. I say that stoppages should be confined to punishment. If a man gets drunk, or wilfully damages his clothing, for instance, let his pay be stopped; but it is absolutely unfair and unjust to stop the pay of a soldier to make good accoutrements worn out by no fault of his own, and in the performance of his duty; and that is the condition of affairs at the present moment. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bolton (Colonel Bridgeman) has spoken of the free rations which the recruit is told on joining he will have, and upon that subject I will not touch; but he is undoubtedly led to believe that he will have free rations and a free kit, but upon joining he finds he receives neither one nor the other, and I am justified in saying that, as a rule, recruits are about £1 in debt at the end of the year for clothing or "necessaries" which have to be replaced by them. Now, that seems to be a very bad system indeed, and nothing can be more disheartening to the recruit than that he should find himself in this position from no fault of his own, but simply because he has been engaged in very heavy duty. Under the present system the soldier is given boots to be kept black, and a belt to be kept white; but in order to do that he has to buy the necessary materials, which I think is hardly fair, and undoubtedly it is the cause of much dissatisfaction. The soldier is stopped 3½*d.* per day for his evening meal, and ½*d.* for his washing; so that while the country leads the recruit to believe that he will get 1*s.* a-day, in no instance can he get more than 8*d.* This is a most important question, and it is one to which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would do well to give his attention. Of course, we shall be told that we are creating expense, and increasing the Estimates; and, perhaps, if the Prime Minister were in the House, he would say that I am taking an unconstitutional course in advocating such a course. But there are many points in connection with which, as has been pointed out by several hon. and gallant Gentlemen, economies may take place; and, indeed, the stopping of desertion would be a saving of expense, as every deserter costs the country a considerable amount. Then with regard to the question of deferred pay. I think there is much to be said in favour of the opinion that the system of deferred pay should be discontinued; and, if it were, it would set free a considerable sum which could be devoted to giving the soldier free rations, and relieve him from the system of stoppages. Another point where a saving could be made would be be by discontinuing the system under which the men who join the Army from the Militia receive, after 42 days, £1 as bounty. Under this system it is to the interest of the man to go into the Militia first, instead of direct into the Line, because, in the latter case, he would get no bounty at all. This seems to me to be a very unnecessarily expensive way of recruiting. With regard to the clothing and accoutrements of the Reserve men, it seems to me that these should be kept at the depôts, where every man's clothing should be ticketed, so as to be known exactly; and not at Woolwich, as at present. In the event of the Reserve being called out, there is great delay and expense in sending the clothing to the depôts. In time of war this mischievous system might have terrible results. In 1878, I remember, the men of the Army Reserve were not clothed for something like two months. As we have a small Army, it is of vital importance that there should be rapidity of equipment, in order that the men of the Reserve may be ready the instant they are required, and a large Force placed in the field as quickly as possible. It may, perhaps, be said that these are small matters; but I venture to remind the Committee that it is upon small matters that the contentment of the soldier depends, and that in small matters of detail the efficiency or non-efficiency of an Army consists.

LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I do not think that I ought to allow the present opportunity to go by without making some observations on the increase which the present Government has sanctioned in the number of troops in India. I own that it was with an immense feeling of relief that I read in the Estimates that an increase was to be provided for, because the rumours that were about shortly before with regard to the Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave me a very uneasy moment as to whether the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War might not be forced to curtail or retard that increase of troops in India. However, the right hon. Gentleman has been able to hold his own, and I would respectfully congratulate him upon having been able to overcome any opposition which the Treasury might have offered. I say might have offered; for nothing will induce me to believe that it was not offered. There is nothing that is of more vital importance to the safety of India than that that increase should be carried out, and carried out without loss of time; and I am indeed glad that the Government determined to take steps to raise the Army in India by the end of the next recruiting period by 10,000 men. But there is one remark I am anxious to make, to extract, if possible, some kind of assurance from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), and that is, that this 10,000 increase to the British Forces in India shall not be a mere paper increase or an illusory increase. The right hon. Gentleman is no doubt aware that there have been among the Viceroy's military advisers men of position and authority, who advocate an increase of 15,000 men, which they consider to be absolutely essential. But one of the chief reasons for advocating that larger increase of 15,000 men to the British Army in India was that the Military Authorities felt no confidence whatever that the War Office at home would keep the strength of the Indian Army up to that number which is absolutely necessary for the safety of India, and therefore they asked for a considerably larger number of men than they thought necessary in order to be certain that what they did get from the War Office would be sufficient to maintain their military strength. The Viceroy and his Council, however, were not impressed with the value of that advice, and thought it better to ask for the precise number which were absolutely required; therefore, they did not agree with the Military Authorities to whom I have alluded. But what I wish to impress upon the Committee is that the Viceroy and his Council, in coming to that decision not to ask for more than 10,000 men, have confided in the determination of the War Office at home never to let the Army be practically one man below its strength; and I think it is not at all unreasonable that I should make that remark. The Committee will bear in mind that only in 1884 the Army in India was allowed, from some motive connected with recruiting, or for some obscure reason, to fall no less than 8,000 men below its proper strength. Now, of course, if disturbances with Russia in Central Asia had taken place that year, the situation would have been of a most desperate character; and I do most earnestly appeal to the Committee and the right hon. Gentleman, as representing the Government—as representing a Liberal Government and the Liberal Party—to give an assurance and guarantee that, so far as he is concerned, and so far as his Colleagues are concerned, this increase to the British Army in India is to be a *bonâ fide* and genuine increase, and that under no circumstances whatever will he, so long as he remains in power, allow the British Army in India to undergo that which took place in 1884. I wish to extract from the right hon. Gentleman a guarantee which shall be binding on the War Office whilst he is there. I see no reason why my right hon. Friend sitting near me (Mr. W. H. Smith) should not be willing to give a similar guarantee. [Mr. LABOUCHERE: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member for Northampton may object to the policy of the increase; but I am certain that even he will go with me in this, that if there is to be an increase it ought to be a genuine one. I am certain he would not wish to see the increase, if an increase is decided upon, a sham one. If we are to have an Army in India at all, it should be a real one. The hon. Member may think that we have no need for such an Army. If he does, I shall be quite ready to argue that point with him on a fitting occasion; but I do not think that, nowadays, that point is likely to be very seriously disputed by any man of common sense. What I want is, that all rational beings in the House, or, at all events, all rational beings in the two great Parties, should enter into a covenant that they will not allow the decrease of 1884-5 and the consequent military risks which were run to occur again. There should be an understanding and an undertaking between the two sides of the House that the Government of India shall not suffer through having made upon us a less demand than the Military Authorities deemed it necessary to make. These are practically the only remarks I wish to make to the Committee, with the exception of some observations on the new rifle. I own I join entirely with my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) in the great regret he has expressed that the right hon. Gentleman opposite has not been able to provide for a more rapid manufacture of the new rifle. It was my earnest hope that before the end of the year 1888 the whole Indian Army, both British and Native, might have been provided with a similar weapon, so that there might be no longer that distinction between the Snider and the Martini-Henry which exists in the Indian Army. I had hoped that the very best weapon that modern science can produce might have been issued to the whole of the Indian troops, Native as well as British; and I think I may say that to bring about that state of things was the policy of the late Government. That was their intention; but now I understand that, owing to the decision of the right hon. Gentleman, the new rifle this year will be manufactured in very small quantities indeed, and that it is no use looking forward to the Indian troops possessing in the near future that efficient weapon which is the latest development of modern times. We must rest content with the knowledge that these troops will have to defend themselves for years to come with the Martini-Henry. One great objection to the use of the Martini-Henry in India is that many of the Native troops will be unable to use it with efficiency on account of the recoil. It is likely to try very severely many of our regiments of Native Infantry, who do not possess the strong physique of British troops. There is one further point to which I wish to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman is aware that there were great military manœuvres a short time ago in India, and that they were carefully watched by military men representing every Power in Europe. But I do not know whether he is aware that whilst these foreign critics were greatly impressed by the general aspect of the troops that were assembled and the general development exhibited of Indian military resources, there was one thing upon which they unanimously formed an unfavourable opinion. They all commented upon the absolute uselessness of our Artillery, if opposed to European troops. This I happen to know as a fact. The Artillery —I am speaking now of the guns alone, and not the equipment—was the object of universal condemnation amongst the foreign representatives at Delhi. You cannot exclude—it would be ludicrous to exclude—the fact that there may be no very long time before your Indian Army is called upon to meet European troops. That being the case, I should be glad to know from the right hon. Gentleman that he does contemplate progressing rapidly with the construction of field guns and the sending out of new batteries to India, of a type similar, if possible, to those at home. These are all the remarks I wish to make to the Committee. While congratulating the right hon. Gentleman on the increase he has decided to make in the Indian Army, I would venture to express a hope that he will give us some guarantee that it is his intention to keep up the strength of the Army to the fullest extent.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I have no desire to interrupt the course of the discussion, and I hope it will not be thought I am anxious to do so by making a few observations at this point. I think, however, I must answer at once the appeal—the solemn adjuration—which the noble Lord has addressed to me on the subject of the condition of the Army in India. The noble Lord, in solemn and impressive tones, asks for a guarantee from me as to what the future course of events will be. [Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL: No, no!] Well, as to the maintenance of the Establishment of the Indian Army in the future; and he alludes to circumstances which have happened in the past—in the year 1884-5—with regard to the number of men falling below the Establishment. Now, I confess that I did not at the time follow the course of events, and I am not aware of the cause to which they may have been due; but if that cause again arises—and it is, no doubt, possible that it may—I can assure the noble Lord that I have no desire, and that my Colleagues have no desire, to do otherwise than maintain the full Establishment in India. For my own part, however, I cannot help the fact that I am only a human being, and only a transient human being; and not having been long in the Office I now have the honour to hold, I can give no promise or pledge of the serious nature called for by the noble Lord; but I can assure him that there is no intention on the part of the Government to do other than give the Indian Government the Force they desire, and to maintain it with full efficiency. I explained the other night the exact composition of the augmentation. That will be done which India desires; and I can assure the noble Lord there is no desire to commit the shortcomings to which he has alluded. With regard to the new rifle, as I said, 55,000 are to be produced at Enfield next year, but that is for Imperial purposes; and the Indian Government will also receive such quantity of rifles as they require. The demand of the Indian Government is not, in my opinion, a very large one. From the point of view of the War Office, it would have been satisfactory if it had been larger, because, of course, it would have kept our Establishments going and our workmen employed. But all I will say is that we are prepared to furnish the Government of India with the quantity of new rifles that they require during the year. At present, the number proposed to be manufactured on repayment is 20,000. I speak from recollection, however, and am not certain as to the figures. At all events, the exact number to be produced is not a matter for my decision, but will be fixed at the request of the Indian Government. I wish to take this opportunity of relieving the noble Lord from the apprehension he seems to be under as to the disposition of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the final determination of the Estimates, I may say that my right hon. Friend has not only met me in a most reasonable spirit, but in a generous frame of mind. Any impression to the contrary is, therefore, entirely erroneous. He may be full of proposals of economy, and I believe he is; but whenever I have put before him—as I have on one or two matters—the strength of an individual case, I have found him extremely ready to listen. So that nothing is to be feared in that direction, I think. As regards field guns, we are, I admit, not pushing forward quite so fast as the Service would have us; but there are so many things we would like to do and cannot do with the money we have at our disposal that we are obliged to delay those which we think most susceptible of being postponed. As I am speaking, perhaps I may answer one or two of the observations which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Strand (Mr. W. H. Smith). He pointed out that the sum of money taken in Vote 1 is not proportionately as great for the Establishments as that taken last year. But I think the difference is to be accounted for in this way—that the number of soldiers is at present under the Establishment, and the Estimates are framed with that in view. Again, the increase is in privates alone, and not in officers, which makes a considerable difference. I believe that for the total number, if they were now actually in the ranks, the additional cost for the whole year would be £172,000, whereas the amount provided for in the Estimates is £145,000. These two facts will, no doubt, cover the difference pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman. Then the right hon. Gentleman made some caustic observations on the strength of the Force we propose to provide for in Egypt. Well, what I said was simply this—that it was impossible for us to be perfectly certain, in the present condition of things in that country, that we can reduce the Force, as we desire to do, to 8,000 men. But we do hope to be able to effect this reduction. I said, however, that if we were disappointed in that expectation we should undoubtedly require more money than is provided in these Estimates. As to the troops at Suakin, I may say that it is intended to put British officers over them. Then this terrible question of the dead-weight of the Non-Effective Vote, and especially the question of compulsory retirement, was referred to by the right hon. Gentleman. It is very easy to rail against compulsory retirement; but if you have no compulsory retirement, you must have something else to keep a proper flow of promotion. I know, by my experience in these matters, how delicate and difficult a thing it is to adjust the flow of promotion so as to deal fairly and reasonably with the whole career of the officers. The slightest change at any one point, and especially in what is often called, by the use of a common expression, the "neck of the bottle"—namely, the promotion to Field Officer—the slightest change there, I say, has a wonderful effect, and one which experience proves to be much greater than might be expected all through the junior ranks. In a Return which was moved for by the right hon. Member for North-East Manchester (Sir James Fergusson), and which I laid on the Table to-night, I was astonished myself to find that the total number of officers who have been compulsorily retired from the ranks of Major and Captain since 1870 in the Cavalry and Infantry is only 214. So that I do not think that that in itself accounts for the great increase of the Non-Effective Charges; but if I may quote another figure from this Return, it certainly does appear that the increased charge on this account is very great. The total cost of pensions and gratuities on retirement borne on the Estimates was £504,388 in 1855, and this year it is £1,354,000. That is a very startling state of things, and it will go on increasing. I quite admit to the full this very serious result; but, on the other hand, it is not easy to decide how it can be avoided. The same principle of compulsory retirement, or a substantially similar system, prevails in the Navy. It would be difficult to interfere in any sweeping way with the one Service without re-arranging the other; and I am rather disposed to be cautious in making any change, however slight and harmless it may appear, because my experience shows me that a small change sometimes produces much more extended results than one would anticipate. As to the double battalion system, I am afraid I cannot enter again into the old arguments with which we have all been familiar. I was rather astonished that the leading attack upon the double battalion system should have been made by the hon. and gallant Member for Winchester (Mr. Tottenham), and that he should have been supported more prominently than by anybody else by two gallant Officers in the Guards. I am astonished at this, because the very idea of the double battalion system was derived from the Rifle Brigade, to which the hon. and gallant Member for Winchester belonged, and from the Guards. I should have thought that hon. and gallant Members who have had experience of the benefits of having at least two battalions to support each other would have been most in favour of the double battalion system. I think it will be generally admitted, at all events, even by those who are opposed to the system, that in what we have done in raising the establishment of even the weakest battalions in this country to 750 men, we have taken a step towards meeting the difficulty. We have been asked if we intend to maintain the establishment, and make it a real establishment. Again, I say, we have no other intention than to do so. My hon. and gallant Friend, who, I am afraid, has now left the House—I allude to the Member for one of the Divisions of Lancashire (Colonel Salis-Schwabe)—made a number of suggestions on the score of economy in connection with these Army Estimates. He suggested instances in which money could be saved in order to supply funds for improvements. He alluded to the large number of civil clerks in the War Office, and suggested that greater powers should be given to Commanding Officers. But what is the cause of the amount of centralization with which we are afflicted at the present time? I would point out to my hon. and gallant Friend that the maintenance of all these clerks in the War Office, and the degree of centralization which exists, are due in a large part to the House of Commons itself. The House of Commons insists, and very properly insists, on a most rigid and accurate account of every item of expenditure. Every shilling that is spent has to be submitted to the Auditor and the Accounts Committee of this House. In order to have that exact and rigid account kept of every penny that is spent, we must maintain this, I admit, somewhat clumsy and involved system, and we must keep all these public servants working hard. When we come to a state of war, things are widely different; the purse-strings are thrown away, and the General Officer commanding in the field may do as he likes, because there is no time to appeal to Auditors General or Committees of this House. But so long as this House insists upon having an account kept of every penny spent, we shall have to keep these clerks, and we shall not be able to get rid of this large item of expense of which the hon. and gallant Member spoke. Allusion has been made to the well-known topic of German swords. I can speak of the German swords with a perfectly clear conscience, because the whole transaction occurred before I had any responsibility in the matter at all. The truth is this—that the sword trade is an exceedingly small trade. I have no doubt the Committee will be as astonished as I was when I heard it to learn that for years back there have been only two manufacturers of swords in this country, and that one of them struggled on for some time and expired in a business sense some years ago. For a good time back there has been only one man in the country who can take an order for swords, and he is a small manufacturer who can make comparatively few; and what was the experience on this last occasion? He was invited to tender. I may say that not only is the trade a small one, but the work of manufacture and the knowledge of the technical part of it was, I believe, confined to two individual families of workmen in the country. This one manufacturer was invited to tender, and he received an order for the largest number of swords that he could undertake to produce. The rest were given to a Solingen firm at a smaller rate than we paid him; but he had the power to make as many as he could. But before many weeks were over he had to come to the War Office, hat in hand, confess that he could not make the swords, and ask our permission to substitute Solingen blades for blades of British manufacture. When I state these facts, I think the Committee will agree that all the stories about a penurious Public Department, out of mere wantonness of economy, employing the wretched foreigner to do things cheaply, and thereby giving the go-bye to British manufacturers at home, are actually without foundation. So far as I have been able to investigate the matter, no supplies for the War Department are sought for on the Continent, except in respect of articles which cannot be produced in this country. I listened with great interest to the speeches of the noble and gallant Member for St. George's, Hanover Square (Lord Algernon Percy) and to the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Bridgeman). There was one point dwelt upon which I should be sorry to believe was true to any great extent, and that was the allegation that the recruit is misinformed at the time of his enlistment as to the real nature of his pay. I hope it is not true that the recruit is told that he is to get 1*s.* a-day and a free ration. I am very certain that if my friend General Bulwer, or any of his officers, caught a sergeant telling men anything of that sort, the sergeant would immediately be put to some other duty. But I will undertake to make inquiry, and discontinue any practice which may lead to misapprehension on the subject.

SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL (Renfrew, W.): There are one or two points that I should like to bring before the Committee. They have not been touched upon by any of the hon. Members who have addressed the Committee up to the present, and my apology for referring to them is that I approach them from a point of view which is that not altogether of an officer of the Army, though, having served for a long time in the Army, I have some experience of the Service. I have had experience of the Reserve Forces, having commanded a regiment of Volunteers, and I have also the honour of commanding the regiment of Militia in my county. In these positions I have had exceptional opportunity of seeing what becomes of the men who pass out of the Army. As a result of my experiences, I think that a step might very well be taken in the direction which has already been taken by my gallant friend General Bulwer, than whom there is no better officer in Her Majesty's Service, and under whom I was proud to serve on more than one occasion. I am very glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) spoke of him in such admirable terms, because I feel sure he has done everything he possibly could for the good of the Army, and has moved in the direction I should like us to move—the direction indicated in his recommendations upon the Service and upon the duties of a man when he enters the Service. There is one thing which always struck me as very necessary, and that is that, inasmuch as our Army is a voluntary one, we ought to endeavour to make it as easy as possible to men; and, in fact, to work, if we can, upon the feelings of the recruits. What I found when in the Army was that, whatever the term of enlistment was, if you asked a man whether he would like to leave he would assuredly answer "Yes." The men wanted to get their liberty again; but when they did go away and found that their home or the place which knew them before knew them no more, and that it was very difficult to get work, I do not hesitate to say that two-thirds of them would have gladly returned to the Service. Having in view this indisposition on the part of the men who have left the Army, I wish to offer a few observations to the Committee. At the present time a recruit enters the Line for seven years; but at the end of three years he can re-engage, and make up his term of service to 12 years. Now, what I propose is this—that at the end of seven years men should be allowed to go away from the Service for a year, and that at the end of that period, if they found it would be an advantage to them to come back, they might re-enlist for 12 years, if they chose, and thus earn their pension. I believe that by adopting this plan we should get back all the very best men. As a matter of fact, we need only take back those men who bore good characters. We should get trained men into the ranks; we should have men of good age mixed up with the recruits, and that would be of immense advantage, and would be the means of preventing a great deal of the waste which now goes on in the Army. What has happened since 1870 has shown quite plainly that our young soldiers are bold enough, but that they are not strong enough. The consequence is that at the beginning of a campaign there is always very great waste. A short and stiff campaign they may be able to stand; but if the struggle continues for anything like six months, it is found that the young soldiers become sick and have to be sent home. The fact of the matter is that in six months one sees a tremendous change worked in the young men forming the Army. Why, the men of the Militia regiment under my command—unfortunately it has often been the case, and I am afraid I shall see a repetition of it this year—get into their clothes with great ease in the first few days of training; but when they have been a fortnight or three weeks in camp they are found to be very different men. They are better and stronger in every way. All I want is to get men who have left to rejoin the ranks. I believe we could get back voluntarily most of the men if we only give them the opportunity of returning when they have tasted the disagreeableness of being at home and of being unable to obtain subsistence, as many of them are. We need not take back any of those we do not require. I believe the change I propose would prove a great boon not only to the men, but to the country. Of course I would allow them when re-enlisting to enter any regiment they chose, and also to fall in at the bottom of their rank; if they went away as non-commissioned officers they might come in again as non-commissioned officers, but, of course, at the bottom of the list.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): Mr. Courtney, in the few remarks I propose to address to the Committee I wish to confine myself principally to those subjects taken up and dealt with so ably by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Lambeth (General Fraser) and the hon. and gallant Gentleman who opened the discussion (Mr. Tottenham), because it so happens that I have unfortunately been unable to bring on the Motion I have had on the Paper for several weeks with regard to the points upon which they touched. The ballot was on every occasion very unpropitious to me; and not being desirous on the first occasion the Army Estimates came on to stand between the Committee and the Statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), I felt it right to defer any remarks I had to make until a time like the present. Now, Sir, I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman, in the few remarks he has just made, and which appeared to me to be interjected exactly at the right moment, has dispelled the illusion which seems to prevail that he has been engaged in some active struggle with the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), and that it has only been with the greatest difficulty he has been able to present the present Estimates, which, I am pleased to see, promise much greater efficiency than those of the last few years. I should say there could be no greater illusion than to suppose that the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) or the Prime Minister (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has, in any degree, desired to see efficiency sacrificed to false economy. If I may be allowed to quote the Estimates of the present year as testimony to the contrary, I should say we have now, for the first time, some hope of the realization of those improvements which military reformers on both sides of the House have been impressing on successive Governments for the last 10 years. For instance, the hon. Gentlemen to whom I have alluded have dwelt in strong terms, though, I am bound to say, not in too strong terms, on the deplorable state of things which has been caused by the endeavour to feed battalions abroad from too small bases at home. Perhaps my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War will pardon me when I say that that is one point in his Estimates in regard to which I cannot entirely concur with him, because the evil that has been pointed out by my hon. and gallant Friends the Members for Lambeth and Winchester does not appear to be met by any remedy in the present Estimates. We, undoubtedly, do suffer from the fact that when the new scheme was set into operation in the year 1872 or 1873 there was a miscalculation made as to the number of battalions which it was likely would be sent abroad compared with the number of those which it was likely would be retained at home. Perhaps, as it is a matter of history, I may be allowed to recall to the recollection of the Committee what was the arrangement that was then come to with the common concurrence of both sides of the House. The Infantry of the British Army, exclusive of the seven battalions of Guards, is divided into 141 battalions. The 141 battalions were so divided as to be grouped into 70 abroad and 71 at home. It stands to reason that, with a margin of only one at home, there was little material with which to cope with any of those small Colonial or foreign wars of which we have had so many. Very nearly all the evils, and the extraordinary strain to which in successive years our system has been subjected, have sprung from this miscalculation. It does not appear to me that in the Estimates which we have now before us, excellent as I believe they are in many respects, that blot has been entirely removed, nor do I see any indication that a remedy is contemplated. Now, the idea of the new organization was, as I have said, that there should be 70 battalions abroad and 71 at home; but what has actually turned out to be the case? Beginning, I think, about 1876, we have down to the present day been engaged sometimes in a small Colonial war, sometimes in a considerable one—on one or two occasions we have had two Expeditions going on in different parts of the world at the same time; and the result has been that we have been endeavouring to carry on war or warlike operation, or whatever we choose to call it, upon a purely peace footing. As a consequence, the whole of that system, which was based on the idea that there would remain at home one or two battalions more than were abroad, has completely broken down, with the deplorable results which hon. Gentlemen opposite have so minutely described. It appears to me that there is not in the near or remote future any probability that the state of things with regard to the balance between the number of battalions serving abroad and the number of battalions serving at home is likely to be remedied. Furthermore, one of the points insisted upon to-night by the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill), and with whose remarks regarding the desirability of making the increase of the Army in India a real, and not a sham or delusive increase, I entirely agree, was that the Establishment in India should be permanently increased from 50,000 to 53,000. Then, Sir, we cannot suppose that any cause will arise which will diminish the number which are serving in the Colonies, in the Mediterranean, China, and so on; that will always remain at the fixed number of 25 battalions. 53,000 in India and 25,000 in the Colonies and China make a total of 78,000; and in addition to that we have, at the present moment, the disturbance of the arrangement seriously aggravated by the fact that we have no less than 17—I think 17½—battalions of Infantry in Egypt. I must confess I am not so sanguine as those hon. Members who have spoken of the probability of a very large and serious reduction being made this year in the number of battalions serving in

Egypt. Therefore, it follows that the present state of things will be more or less continued. Lord Airey's Committee has been spoken of, and perhaps the Committee will allow me to offer a few observations in regard to the proceedings of that Committee, having paid, as I did, considerable attention to the evidence given and to the Report which was published. Now, Lord Airey's Committee appear to have hit upon the idea that it was desirable that we should revert to the system which had been formerly extensively tried and abandoned—namely, the system of large depôts. I was struck with the fact that the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Mr. Tottenham) who opened the discussion this evening did not tell us why it was that the Report of Lord Airey's Committee in this particular was never acted upon. That this recommendation was not respected was the more singular because the Government who were in power at the time Lord Airey's Committee presented their Report continued in power for some considerable time afterwards. If the recommendation regarding the importance of large depôts had commended itself to the minds of the Government then in power, I think they would have taken some means, before quitting Office, of carrying it out. The Liberal Government came into power in 1880, and in the latter part of that year or of the following year there was a general concurrence of opinion amongst men of both political Parties that it would be undesirable to re-establish the system of large depôts as recommended by Lord Airey's Committee. But there was one recommendation simultaneously made which, I am sorry to say, has not been carried out; and as it is the one which bears more immediately on the question of the strain which at present exists, I trust the Committee will permit me to say a few words upon it. The recommendation to which I allude was that, whenever both the linked battalions of a regiment were abroad at the same time, a large depôt of some 600 men should be raised at home for the purpose of keeping the two battalions supplied. Perhaps the Committee are not aware that in no case has that recommendation been fully carried out. In only six cases has it been partially carried out; but I am happy to say that, from the Estimates now presented to us, there is reason to hope that, concurrently with some of the battalions being withdrawn home, that sound recommendation of Lord Airey's Committee will be carried out. The fact exists that, at this moment, there are no less than 13 regiments, consisting of two linked battalions each, which have both their battalions abroad, and in only six out of the 26 has this particularly sound and good recommendation of Lord Airey's Committee been adopted, and that only partially. I find that the strength of the depôts in the six instances of which I speak falls very far short of the 600 men which was recommended by Lord Airey's Committee; in no case does the number rise to over 520 men, and in some cases the number is only a few men over 400. Therefore, I am bound to say that it is no matter of surprise to me at all that the whole system during the last four years should have been perfectly disjointed, and that the state of things has existed which has been ruinous to the *esprit de corps* of the Army, and which has almost broken the hearts of some of the most able men in the Army. I repeat, Sir, that I consider it is one of the best features of the recommendations made in the Estimates which have been submitted to the Committee by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that this deplorable state of things is now likely to come to an end. But, Sir, this will not, even if carried out, entirely remove the evil, for we shall still have the fact that the number of battalions abroad will be very large indeed in comparison with the number at home; and as long as some means are not taken to adjust the balance between the two states of things I am afraid that, in a lesser or greater degree, the evil will still continue. At the risk of being supposed to recommend that which may incur additional expense, which is not, in the slightest degree, my intention, I do desire to put before the Committee the serious consideration as to whether it would not be desirable to face this Committee with what has been suggested, but which was only slightly touched upon by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Winchester (Mr. Tottenham), and that is a permanent increase in the number of units. For instance, if it should be decided after consideration—and it is a matter which only ought to be decided upon after full consideration, although I believe that already it has the weight of being recommended by the highest authority we have on such matters, Lord Wolseley—if it should be decided that the number of battalions should be increased from 141 to 160 it would always be possible, even in times of Colonial war, to have 80 battalions abroad and 80 at home; and, at the same time, there need not necessarily be a single man added to the number provided for in the Estimates of the present year. And this brings me to the point on which I venture to disagree with some of the recommendations which have been made as to the dead level of strength being 750 a battalion. Now, Sir, one of the principal defects that have existed since the year 1882, when the Expedition went to Egypt and fought the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, has been this—that whereas in 1876, when the system of linked battalions was agreed upon, it was fixed that there should always be kept in this country at the head of the list of the battalions which were first for foreign service 12 battalions of the strength of 950 or 1,000 men, the idea being that the 12 battalions, in conjunction with the nine battalions which are always kept in the Mediterranean, should form a *corps d'armée* ready at the shortest notice, the result has been that owing to the various Expeditions of which I have spoken, and which began in 1878, that arrangement—that salutary and good arrangement—has been entirely lost sight of. Not only was it the case a few months ago, but it is partially the case still, that we have 86 battalions abroad and 55 at home, not one of which comes within 250 or 300 of its strength; and if any complication had arisen, or were to arise elsewhere, calling for other troops, they could not have been provided without sending some portion of the Reserve, or else disjointing the whole Reserve system. I earnestly put it to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War whether he should not take into consideration, coincident with the question of the desirability of increasing the number of our units so as to preserve a balance between the number of battalions abroad and at home, the necessity of returning to that wholesome and salutary system of retaining at home a number of battalions, be it 12 or 14, of the prescribed strength, and ready to take the field? I cannot see that any harm would be done if we were to return to the principle of a graduated scale of strength; that instead of keeping all the battalions at home at 750 we should keep the 12 first on the list for foreign service at 950, and the battalions at the bottom of the list, those which were not likely to be called upon to go abroad for at least five, six, or seven years, at the reduced strength—that is to say 600—600 being, I believe, the number fixed upon by Lord Airey's Committee as likely to suffice to meet the annual waste. While I think we should return to the wholesome practice which existed in 1876 and 1878 of keeping a certain number of battalions always ready to be called upon, and at the proper strength to take the field without any addition from the Reserve, I am bound to say that the criticisms that have been made from the other side of the House have come at a somewhat unfortunate time, because it does so happen that the Estimates now presented to us are the very first which have given us an assurance that we should have an effective strength both at home and abroad. With regard to the question of the increase of the Army in India, I do not know at all on what the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) based his assumption. I think it was an entirely groundless assumption that there was any degree of disinclination on the part of the Secretary of State for War to effect the reinforcement of the Army in India as soon as possible. I do not think the previous history of the right hon. Gentleman in any of the Departments in which he has served so well shows that he will be guilty of delaying a step which is acknowledged to be necessary. Well, Sir, having said this much as to the defects which still seem to exist in our system, may I be permitted for one moment to congratulate the Committee and the country upon the real and substantial effects which have been produced in the last 12 years by the working of the short-service system. It is satisfactory to think that this year we have obtained something like 42,000 recruits for the Line, and that 40,000 men have voluntarily engaged for service in the Militia. Now, Sir, when I recall the forebodings which were uttered in this House and in the

Press all over the country some years ago as to the effectiveness of the short-service system—when I recollect how continually we were told that the short-service system would not only destroy the fighting line altogether, but would not give us the proper number of men, I am bound to say one word in commendation of those who, through thick and thin, supported the new system. Upon the result the country may be justly congratulated. Who would have thought some years ago such a result possible? In every way the men entering the Army nowadays are of a superior quality. Who would have supposed that we should have been able, under a voluntary system, to have in one year some 82,000 effective men entering the Military Service? In speaking of the degree in which the short-service system has commended itself to the minds of those classes of the population who enlist, I must not lose sight of the fact that, in addition to the 82,000 of whom I have spoken, 7,000 men had entered the Reserve. On the whole, however, I think that we may congratulate ourselves that the short-service system has worked well, and that none of those forebodings which the croakers gave utterance to some years ago have been realized. We were told that we should have large numbers of our men breaking down when it came to a strained campaign; but I do not know that in the recent war in Egypt, during the arduous march up the Nile, that foreboding with regard to our soldiers was carried out. I may mention one thing to show that the men enlisted under the short-service system are not inferior. A regiment in which I once had the honour to serve performed the extraordinary feat of marching towards Gubat, in the Expedition up the Nile, 120 miles on foot in six days—an average of 20 miles a-day on foot under, perhaps, the most trying climate in the world, and over a route, it must be recollected, which was thought so impracticable that it was traversed before only by men carried on camels. All the men marched 120 miles, and not a single one of them gave way on the journey. I think that, having regard to these facts, we must be satisfied that the short-service system has not led to the deterioration of our soldiers. Then I come to another point—namely, the recruiting for the Army; and I cannot give a better illustration of the successful way in which that is done than by referring to the present condition of the Brigade of Guards. They have had a good turn during the last three years, for out of seven battalions they have had six battalions in the field. Now, Sir, what has resulted from that state of things? Have those battalions been so depleted that they could not turn out now? On the contrary, we find that the Brigade is not only up to its full strength, but it has 300 men beyond its establishment; and instead of the *physique* falling off, I think it is the opinion of everybody who has any acquaintance with matter that a more magnificent body of men it would be impossible to find. That shows that all the predictions of evil have fallen to the ground. The condition of the Guards is owing to the admirable manner in which they carry out the short-service system; and the only difference between it and any other service is that the term of service is shorter in the Guards than in any other Corps. Men are enlisted only for three years, with nine years further service if they like; and the results which are obtained by the system show how wise it is that recruits should have it in their power to choose their length of service at the beginning. When I returned to the Service from India I found a marked and very great improvement in the conduct of the men; but that was not to be wondered at, seeing the better and more extended system of education which was given to the youth of the country by the Liberal Party in 1871. The young soldiers we get now perform their duty admirably, and it is almost impossible to make too great a demand upon their zeal. I thank the Committee very much for the kindness with which they have listened to me, and I beg to commend the suggestions which I have made to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War. With those exceptions which I have mentioned, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon having given the country something in the nature of value for their money, and of having delivered one of the most interesting Army Statements that has been delivered in this House for the last 20 years.

SIR FREDERICK FITZ-WYGRAM (Hants, Farnham): Mr. Courtney, Sir, in the face of the very large Estimates which have been presented to this House I shall not venture to ask for them to be very considerably increased; but I hope to make some suggestions, which, if acted upon, will very considerably improve the Service without very greatly increasing the Estimates for the year. I will deal first with the Infantry, because, first of all, I think it is the most important portion of the Army; and, secondly, because it is less organized than any other part of the Army. No Infantry regiment can move out of camp without an escort of Cavalry, without transport, without a Commissariat Corps, without an Ambulance Corps borrowed from the Army Hospital Corps, and without Royal Engineers for the purpose of throwing up trenches, making bridges, and such-like duties. I think such an organization as this is incomplete, and I think that it would be advantageous, if possible, to make every regiment almost complete within itself, so as to be independent, to a large extent, of these auxiliaries. I should like to see a large percentage of men in every regiment trained to some useful military trade, such as carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, &c., and so on, as they might be in times of peace. Probably 10 per cent of the men, or 80 out of 800, might be so trained; and then I should like to see them formed into an Industrial Company, call it a Pioneer Company; they would be able to pay for the training they obtained by doing barrack work. Then I should like to see these men employed upon barrack repairs, and such like, which could be done with advantage to themselves. Infantry soldiers might even be employed in the building of their own barracks, and thus useful employment would be found for thousands of men who now idle about in the afternoon, and in whom an industrious spirit might be developed if they were encouraged to devote themselves to useful work for which at present civilians have to be employed. I live near a town—Portsmouth—where there are a large number of convicts who are trained to do useful work; and I am sure that if convicts can be so trained it ought to be easy to teach our soldiers to do repairs about the barracks. I think that every soldier in the Army ought to be made as useful as he can possibly be; and if it can be done without seriously increasing the Estimates, I shall ask the Secretary of State for War to take the suggestion into his very serious consideration. I believe that if an industrial training can be introduced into the Army it will make the soldier more happy and contented, and will greatly tend to the efficiency of the Service. The next point I wish to refer to is the question of transport. An Infantry regiment cannot move without transport borrowed from the Commissariat and Transport Corps. In fact, we require two kinds of transport—a general transport by a special corps, and also a regimental transport. The existing Commissariat and Transport Corps do their work very well, but they are insufficient for carrying on the whole transport of the Army; and I believe it would be a great advantage to them if they were relieved of the regimental transport by training Infantry regiments to undertake transport duties for themselves. If the Government would supply each regiment with 12 horses and 6 carts that would do very well to instruct the men in transport duties. There might be 75 men in each regiment so trained in transport duties, such as the care of horses, saddling and driving, and the loading of carts, which are duties not to be learned in a day or a week, or a month. This would give the men a knowledge of horses which is always useful to the soldier. As it is at present, when emergencies arise—as in the case of the Egyptian War—men were sent in batches of 30 to spend the ridiculously short term of three days in being trained to these duties. Of course, I am aware that there will be some expense connected with this change; but I do not think it need be a large one. The horses might be provided from those which are unfit to carry heavy weights, and are therefore cast by the Cavalry, but which would be sufficient for harness work. And I would also remind the Secretary of State for War that at present there is very considerable expense in hired transport at different regimental stations. The third point on which I think our regimental organization is incomplete is in regard to the ambulance. It is at present very successfully carried on, and with great skill, by the Army Hospital Corps. By the present system an Ambulance detachment is sent with each regiment and acts quite well as far as it goes; but a regiment is often broken up into wings and companies, and my contention is that each company ought to have a certain number of men trained to ambulance duties. I would go a step farther, and would ask the Government to provide each company with two mules; and I think it would be a very good thing indeed to tell off a certain number of men in each regiment to take care of the mules and be trained in fitting them with ambulance saddles, which require careful adjustment. It is exceedingly necessary to train men in the care of mules, because if a mule is ill-treated it becomes vicious and kicks a great deal, and that may increase the sufferings of any wounded man who was placed on such an animal. There is another matter on which I think the Infantry are singularly inefficient, and that is in regard to scouting. Our regiments are deficient in the means of doing their own scouting, and they cannot move without an escort of Cavalry. Scouting cannot be done by men on foot, for the quickest running would be too slow to give the necessary security. It will probably be in the recollection of the Committee that an Infantry regiment was taken by surprise at Pretoria by the Boers, and that this was the commencement of all our troubles in the Transvaal. That difficulty would never have occurred if that regiment had had mounted scouts with them. Of course reconnoissances, when large bodies of troops are pushed forward considerable distances, can only be made by Cavalry; but minor scouting duty—that is, the care of the immediate front and flank of a marching column—can be very well done by Mounted Infantry; and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to give 12 horses to each regiment for this purpose, and to see that these men are told off to look after them, and trained to this work. This is a matter which concerns the safety of the immediate front and flank, and I think it ought to be undertaken by Infantry scouts. In this way you will get rid of a great difficulty in regard to the movement of Infantry—that is, if you supply them with scouts, with their own Commissariat arrangements, and with an Ambulance Corps. I do not see why Infantry soldiers, especially in the present day—intelligent as they are—should not be as well trained as the Royal Engineers. No men in the Service are more useful than the Royal Engineers; and if the men were trained to useful trades there is no reason why a regiment might not dispense with the section of Royal Engineers which is now almost essential. For my part, I want to see every portion of the British Army trained and made as competent as it can be. There is another point connected with regiments of Infantry to which I desire to refer—and that is the art of shoeing. The breakdown in all our Transport Departments of late years is due, in a great measure, to the difficulty of getting horses and mules shod. The iron trade has been active for many years past, and the result is that there has been very little inducement to workers in iron to enter the Army, and the Cavalry have to train their own farriers. Now, Sir, the farriers' art is not to be learnt in a day. There are two branches of the trade—one is that of the farrier who can make shoes, which takes a couple of years to learn, and I do not suggest that this art should be taught; but there is the trade of the shoeing smith—that is, nailing on ready-made shoes, which are always supplied on service—and that can be learnt with comparative ease in a few weeks. I believe that if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will give 12 horses for transport, 12 for scouting, and six mules, there will be no difficulty in training 30 men per year in this very useful art of nailing on and taking off shoes; and by adopting the principle which I suggest you will have 90 men in the course of three years in each regiment, well qualified in a most useful way, the want of which qualification has caused more losses in our transport than I care to name. Of course, there is the question of expense. Well, as regards the Industrial Company, which I spoke of first, of 80 men to undertake barrack repairs, new buildings, and the repair of fortifications, there would be no cost at all, because the saving to the country of civilian labour would be greater than the cost of military labour. The cost of 25 men for instruction in transport, 25 for mules, 25 for scouting, and 25 for shoeing, at 2*d.* a-day, would be about 16*s.* a-day, or, say, £300 a-year. I multiply this by 60, the number of regiments at home, and I find the cost of thorough industrial training would be about £18,000 a-year; but I have to add to that the cost of forage for 30 horses for 60 regiments. There would be 1,800 horses on the average, and that, I admit, would represent a large sum—say from £65,000 to £80,000 a-year. Adding the same establishment for the 15,000 men in the fortresses, and at Gibraltar and Malta, I take the whole cost to amount to £100,000, and I am able to say that the State would gain considerably more by this expenditure than it would lose. It would make the Army far more efficient than it is at present; and it would be a great advantage to the soldiers on enlisting, who would know that they could employ their spare time in the ranks, and that they would learn in the Army a trade against the time when they would join the Reserve. We have a large portion of our Army in India, and this matter is, of course, one for the consideration of the Indian Government; but I believe that the Indian Government would be ready to adopt any scheme which would abridge the many idle hours which the soldier has when serving in a tropical climate, and which he cannot use himself. But there is an argument against this; and I shall be told that the Infantry soldier has no time for this sort of industrial training. But the Cavalry, the Royal Horse Artillery, the Military Engineers, and the Transport Corps have time for these duties. They spend some six hours a-day in industrial employment; like the Infantry, they are on short service, and what they do I am satisfied the other branch of the Service can do as well. I shall be told that the Infantry take general fatigue duty, and that the other branches do not; but general fatigue duty may be an hour's or half-an-hour's work. Suppose that six hours were spent in industrial duty —strike off one hour for general fatigue duty—and you will have five hours a-day in which this useful training may be carried on, as I believe, without the least detriment to the drill of an Infantry regiment. Then I may be told that drill occupies a long time, and must do so. Well, but there is drill in the Cavalry as well as in the Infantry, the only difference being that the one learns two sets of drills, and the other only one set. When I look at an Infantry soldier in the streets, I do not think that he looks any better or smarter than his brother who joins a Cavalry regiment. I believe that the Infantry soldier, employed as I have indicated, would be far more efficient than he is at present. But I wish to advocate the scheme for training the Infantry soldier not merely on the ground of what is good for the Army, but what is good for the Reserve man. At the present time we take a young man in the prime of life, and we keep him in almost complete idleness for six years; if he has learnt a trade he has no chance of exercising it, and he loses his handiness, and the consequence is that when he re-enters civil life he finds himself strange to it; and, besides, not having been kept at work, he has an indisposition to work, and the result is that many Infantry Reserve men are to be seen loafing about the streets. I attribute the large number of loafers in the streets to the fact that the men have got out of the habit of work. Nearly all the loafers I see come from the Infantry regiments. I have commanded a Cavalry regiment myself, and not once in a year have I had an application from a man of that regiment to find him employment; the men are kept at work steadily; they have learnt a trade, and in consequence they are very easily absorbed into the industries of the country. Another point I am very keen about is that of Mounted Infantry. That is growing into importance every day. The last Nile Campaign was carried on almost entirely by Mounted Infantry. If you are to have Mounted Infantry you must take care that the men have a knowledge of horses, and know how to sit steadily on the horses, or else they will very soon have sore backs. Now, I do not want to put the Secretary of State for War to any expense for horses for the Mounted Infantry. I think the training could be done without any fresh horses being added. We have 15 Cavalry regiments at home, exclusive of the Household Cavalry; and I should like to see detachments of 30 Infantry soldiers sent to the Cavalry regiments during the winter season, to remain with them, and be thoroughly trained in mounted duties during two months and a-half, and I should at the end of that time like them to be exchanged for another similar detachment. I am satisfied that there would be no opposition on the part of the Cavalry regiments to this arrangement. The Cavalry have always in the winter more horses than they want. The state of the country renders it impossible to have field days, and the men are generally allowed freely to be absent on leave; and, therefore, I say there would be no opposition whatever, nor would there be any jealousy on the part of the Cavalry regiments towards the Mounted Infantry men, because the two classes of duties are totally different. The Cavalry fight on horseback; their weapon is the sword; and their secondary, or, perhaps, their primary duty, in the present day, is that of scouting and reconnoisance, which can only be performed by highly-trained Cavalry soldiers. But the Mounted Infantry man fights on foot, with a long rifle. He only uses his horse as a means of transport, by which he is enabled to made longer and quicker journeys than on foot; but he fights on foot; he remains to the end of the day essentially and primarily an Infantry soldier, and I think it will be admitted that this work does not interfere with any Cavalry duties properly so-called. I suggest this scheme because it can be carried out without any expense to the country, and because the Infantry soldiers will like it very much. There are always a certain number of men in a regiment fond of horses, and who, as they would take kindly to it, are very easily trained. In a Cavalry regiment we are obliged to train every man, whether he is a horseman or not; and that difficulty which we have to contend with would not arise where you had to select 80 men out of, say, 850 Infantry. There would be no difficulty in getting men ready to be trained. If you were to send 60 men every year to each of the 15 Cavalry regiments, you would have 1,280 men trained every year to perform these duties, and that, at the end of three years, would give 3,700 available for the duties of Mounted Infantry, which year by year are becoming more important and absolutely necessary. But I must remind the Committee that the men must be thoroughly trained to manage horses, and the necessary knowledge can only be gained by sending batches of Infantry soldiers to be instructed in Cavalry regiments. I have not much to say about industrial employment for Cavalry; but I do hope the Secretary of State for War will see the great importance of giving earnest consideration to the duties specially belonging to Cavalry of mounted signalmen and mounted pioneers. Signallers are men who should know not only the alphabet of signalling, but men who can use their brains as well as their eyes; they should be men who, when pushed forward to collect information, will collect reliable information, for it is upon the information transmitted by signals that the safety of the army and, perhaps, the success of the campaign depends. The theatre of war has been very much extended in the present day. The facilities afforded by steamers and other means for the conveyance of troops make it absolutely necessary to transmit information to a great distance in districts where we cannot lay down our electric wire. By means of the heliograph in Afghanistan messages were transmitted to a distance of 40 miles, and in most countries in which we have to carry on war there is the advantage of the sunlight, which can be made use of for heliograph signalling. We have in these days mounted pioneers, who are a very great and prominent feature in war; they carry dynamite, and when such a body of men are pushed forward in a country it is impossible to say how much mischief they may do. I should like to see men appointed in every regiment as signallers and pioneers—that is to say, 32 men to be instructed in each capacity. If these men are to be really effective they must be kept in practice every day in pioneer duty. They may learn at Chatham things thoroughly; but unless they are kept in practice every day their training will be soon lost, and it is for that reason that I ask that a regularly established corps of signallers and pioneers may be kept up in every regiment. These men would need some little extra pay. I wish to say a few words about our Cavalry regiments. Are they too weak? There is not the least doubt in the world that they are. Every Cavalry regiment ought to have, I was going to say, five squadrons. We want four squadrons in the field and one at home, the latter not merely as a reserve, but because there are a number of recruits and unfit men in each of the squadrons. Now, I am not going to ask for this squadron, because I know that in the present state of the Estimates it cannot be given; but I believe that the Cavalry regiments, as they are now, are inefficient for the purposes of war. Skeleton regiments may be valuable in the Infantry where they can be filled up with trained men; but you cannot train up a dragoon in a year; and, therefore, I say you ought to keep up your Cavalry regiments to the war strength at all times, but I cannot ask for that now, and if I were to do so I know that I should not get this squadron. But in the interests of efficiency I would rather see the number of regiments reduced. By reducing the three junior regiments you will gain 12 squadrons, and by that reduction you would probably be able to furnish a fifth squadron to each of the regiments at home. I say that an additional squadron for each regiment is absolutely essential to their efficiency. The Cavalry regiments in India will require no further increase, as the Indian Government have just added an extra squadron. There is a common opinion with regard to Cavalry regiments that the horse is a more valuable article than the man, and accordingly the idea is that the regiments should be kept as strong in horses as possible. But I think that if you ask the opinion of anyone competent to speak on the subject of Cavalry regiments, you will find that there is a concurrence of opinion that the largest number of men should be kept at drill on the smallest number of horses, that is to say, that the man is the essential part of the Cavalry regiment, and that the horse is not so. If you give to 500 trained horsemen 500 horses untrained, I think I can guarantee that, so far as military duties are concerned, the men will quickly obtain command of the horses. That was proved to be the case recently, when the 15th Hussars was ordered from Bombay to Natal without horses. On arrival they were supplied with horses which had never seen a dragoon. They were very soon under the control of the men, and in a few days were sent to the front. General Sir Evelyn Wood told me himself that they did their work capitally in the field. Therefore, I think it should be our endeavour to keep the largest number of men who can be kept efficient on the smallest number of horses. The Cavalry regiments first for foreign service are 600 men and 400 horses. I should like to see the number of horses reduced to 350 and the number of men increased to 700; and in regard to regiments of lesser strength I should wish to see the 300 horses reduced to 250, and the number of the men increased from 400 to 500. I am satisfied that in that way you will get a more efficient body of Cavalry than you have now; and in making this statement I believe I shall carry with me the opinion of every Cavalry man in the Army. Three field days a-week are enough to keep men in drill. Thus 350 horses will keep 700 men in training. I would remind the Committee that when you speak of 700 men you are not speaking of 700 trained men, because you must remember that the Cavalry are short-service men as well as the Infantry; and as it would take more than a year to train a man, you generally have about 100 who are not fit for service in each regiment, so that the 700 men are practically reduced to 600, which could supply four squadrons of 150 men each for service in the field, and I think you would then have, without any extra expense, a thoroughly effective force for the service of the country in time of war. Then there is another subject on which I wish to make some remarks. The late Secretary of State for War (Mr. W. H. Smith) has furnished some information on crimes and punishments in a Return which is of a very remarkable character. There exists a greater discrepancy in the behaviour of regiments than can, I think, be well explained, seeing that they are serving under the same Mutiny Act, and formed from the same class of men. It appears, according to the Return I have alluded to, that the best-behaved men in the Army are the Household Cavalry. Each regiment has an average of eight courts martial in the year, and about 200 minor offences. Considering that these regiments are quartered in London and at Windsor, and that they are exposed to all the temptations of this great Metropolis, I think this state of things is highly creditable to them. The average number of courts martial in each battalion of Foots Guards is about 50, and of minor offences 1,400. Well, Sir, I do not think this is very unfavourable, although it is certainly not so good as the Household Cavalry. But, considering that the Devil finds works for idle hands, I think it compares fairly. The lowest number of courts martial in the Cavalry regiments for last year was 18, as compared with 74 the highest. This is higher than it should be; but when I come to the Infantry regiments of the Line I find a far greater discrepancy. I find that in one regiment there were 110 courts martial, and 4,437 minor offences; in another, 107 courts martial and 3,500 minor offences. Then I contrast the case of a regiment in which there were 11 courts martial and 450 minor offences, and another of 15 courts martial and 450 minor offences. Now, Sir, I want to know what is the cause of this? I shall not believe that it is due altogether to the locality in which one regiment is raised as compared with another, or to the difference between the localities in which they are quartered. I admit that there is a great deal in those points. No doubt regiments abroad, especially those in India, are under far less temptations than those at home; but I take an instance, shown in this Return, in which two battalions of the same regiment, raised in the same part of the country, and both of them abroad, presented a very different Return, there being in one case 21 courts martial, and in the other 109. I ask why is this? The command of a regiment is the most important post in the Army. There has been a tendency of late years to give undue prominence to Staff employment. My opinion is—and I think the Army will go with me—that the command of regiments are the most important posts in the Army. Too much prominence and too much reward cannot be given to men who have successfully commanded your regiments. Regiments are the backbone of an Army, not the Staff, and the Commanding Officers are the backbone of the regiments; and in the selection of officers to command regiments too much care cannot be taken. I admit that with every care mistakes may be made—that, with the most favourable antecedents, it is possible that a Commanding Officer may turn out to be not what could be wished. I think the burden of the selection of Commanding Officers is too great to be laid on the Commander-in-Chief or the Military Secretary. I think that the arrangements touching all promotion should be placed in the hands of a Military Board. Such a Board should be formed at the Horse Guards, and should have upon it the Adjutant General, the Military Secretary, the Quartermaster General, the Deputy Adjutant General (Royal Artillery), the Deputy Adjutant General (Royal Engineers), and the Inspector General of Cavalry. I do not say that that Board would act with greater impartiality than the Commander-in-Chief has acted hitherto. I have not a word to say against His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, or the Military Secretary, under whose advice he acts; but I cannot help thinking that a Board such as I suggest would speak with much more firmness. It is a very painful thing for any single individual to feel that he has upon his own shoulders the responsibility for all the promotion of the Army. Individuals who think themselves hardly treated can complain, and quarrel with him; but were these promotions the work of a Board it would be another affair altogether. Supposing a Board were appointed, and an officer came to complain that his merits had not been duly recognized, the reply would probably be—"Well, Sir, the Board have carefully considered your case, and do not view your merits in the same light that you do yourself." There is one thing I wish to say as to confidential Reports. These Reports contain a number of very stringent questions, which are answered very fairly and honourably by the officers commanding regiments—although sometimes it is a very disagreeable duty. But there is one question that, for some reason or other, has been omitted from these confidential Reports, and it is—"Is this officer strictly sober?" Why that extremely important and pertinent question should be omitted I do not know. I think it is a great pity that it is omitted. Where a number of stringent questions are asked, and no information is sought to be obtained upon a particular point, there will be a tendency on the part of the signing Commanding Officer to avoid reference to the subject about which he has not been questioned. I think the question of sobriety is one that is essential to the discipline of the Army, and ought to be dealt with in the confidential Report. I should be glad if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would take a suggestion from so humble a Member as myself on another matter. In the present day it not unfrequently happens that officers are reported upon unfavourably either as "Idlers," "Stupid," "Drones," "A Bad Example," or something else of that kind; a Report goes up to the Horse Guards, and there comes down a serious lecture from the Commander-in-Chief, these officers being informed that if they do not mend their manners something will be done. But nothing is done, and things go on like that for years, the officers who are complained of remaining in the Army, though an evil, and, as drones and idle men, setting a bad example to other officers. I do not wish to raise a cry; but I do say most emphatically that it would be a great advantage to the Army if, in cases where officers have been unfavourably reported upon for three years in succession, Her Majesty should be advised to accept their resignation. I do not think there would be any unfairness in that, though it might be said that there would be. It might be argued that an officer might have his character taken away by a senior with whom he had quarrelled; but at each annual inspection an inquiry is made into the complaint by the Inspecting General, and he gives his opinion as to the justice of the complaint to the Commander-in-Chief. I thank the Committee for having listened to me, the more because I am fully aware that the details into which I have entered are hardly suitable for the consideration of a non-military Assembly.

Viscount WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): I do not propose to stand for more than a couple of minutes between the Committee and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); but I should like to ask the Secretary of State for War to look into one or two details connected with the Militia. The points I would bring under his notice have this extraordinary merit—that they would cost no money; on the contrary, if the right hon. Gentleman will pay attention to the points I shall raise he will, I think, be able to save a considerable sum. It is in connection with the absenteeism of Militia recruits that I would speak. Before the year 1881 every Militia recruit on enlistment received the sum of 10*s.*; he then went about his business, and very often was not seen again, though he ought to have come up at the time of training. Now, in the last year of that system there were 3,358 absentees. After 1880 every Militia recruit was drilled on enlistment; and the result of that was that last year—1885—there were 4,429 Militiamen who, having been drilled as recruits, did not appear again when the regiment was called up for training. As a matter of fact, the percentage of absenteeism has slightly decreased. It was 12 per cent in 1880, whereas it is only 10 per cent now; but the difference in the cost to the State is enormous. In the case of the 3,358 absentees in 1880 the State only lost 10*s.* per man; but in the case of the 4,429 men who did not appear last year every one of them cost the State, at the lowest computation, £8, and that is not including any charge for wear and tear of arms and other military stores, or for ammunition, travelling expenses, or fees to civilian medical practitioners, nor is any allowance made in the calculation for the cost of the permanent Staff employed in instructing the recruits. The whole difference arises from the fact, as you will see, that the men now go through a training of 56 days on enlistment and before the annual training; whereas, under the old system, no cost was incurred, except the 10*s.* bounty prior to that annual training. I have made a calculation, and I find that in the last five years previous to 1880 the Militia absenteeism cost the State, roughly speaking, £16,000; whereas during the past five years it has cost something over £100,000. If the right hon. Gentleman can see his way in any manner to deal with this question he will save a great deal of money; and if he will allow me I will respectfully make one or two suggestions to him. The first is this—I do not think any adequate step is ever taken to bring these men to justice. It is within my experience—an experience of seven years—that in connection with that part of the Militia of which I have knowledge no single man has ever been apprehended and brought to justice for absenteeism who did not give himself up voluntarily. In the second place, I would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should make inquiry into the reason why some regiments have no absenteeism, whilst others number absentees by hundreds. If he were to send out some competent officer to make inquiries, I think he would frequently find that this absenteeism is due to the carelessness of the recruiting officer. In the case of a regiment about which I happen to know something, out of 123 absentees 63 were known to have given as their address common lodging houses in a poor street of a neighbouring town. Most of these men were simply tramps, whose profession it was to go round from depôt to depôt enlisting. If the recruiting officer had gone into the question of their residence, he would have found that they were not suitable men to enlist. The present system of training men for the Militia has not been a good thing for that branch of the Service, although it has been excellent for the Army. The men are by no means as well drilled at the depôts as they used to be during the preliminary drill. They do not get trained in musketry at all. I find that recruits, when they come up now to a regiment have none of them been put through a course of musketry in the depôt, and I need not say that a Militiaman who does not know the use of the rifle is utterly useless. I have no doubt, as I have said, that the present system of training Militia recruits is good for the Army; it has done much to widen and strengthen the foundation of the territorial system. There is only one other point with which I will trouble the right hon. Gentleman —only one other matter of detail upon which I would respectfully make a suggestion, and that is with regard to a question of morality. You are aware that many regiments do not go into camp or barracks, but are put into billets. It is the invariable practice to put at least two men into one bed; and any hon. Gentleman who can form an opinion as to the condition of things in low public-houses will see that this is the worst possible moral training that can be given to these young lads. If the right hon. Gentleman will give that his best attention I think it will be a considerable benefit to the Militia Service.

MR. NORTHCOTE (Exeter): Though this discussion has travelled over considerable ground, there are one or two questions I should like to put to the right hon. Gentleman; but before doing so I should like to make just one comment upon the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South-East Durham (Sir Henry Havelock-Allan), whom I am glad to see in the House. I wish to correct him, if I may venture to do so, upon a matter of fact on which I think he was mistaken. The hon. and gallant Gentleman said, speaking of the Report of Lord Airey's Committee, that it was made some time prior to the period at which the Conservative Government left Office in 1880.

SIR HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): I think I said some months.

MR. NORTHCOTE: But the hon. and gallant Member is mistaken, for, as a matter of fact, that Report was only placed in the hands of the Earl of Beaconsfield's Government the day the Dissolution was announced. It was, therefore, impossible to take action on that Report. There was another point in the hon. and gallant Member's speech to which I should like to direct his attention, because he referred on no less than three occasions, in terms of the strongest possible eulogy, to the Estimates the right hon. Gentleman has presented to the House. I do not know whether the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), whom we shall soon have the privilege of hearing, will join with the hon. and gallant Member in those terms of unqualified eulogy of the Estimates that are now before us; but I would point out to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that, at all events, whatever credit or discredit may be due to Ministers for their Estimates, it must be shared between the two political Parties. It must not be forgotten that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) is to a considerable extent responsible for these Estimates. They were in a large degree framed before he left Office, though they had not formally come before him. At all events, I do not think the present Secretary of State for War will be inclined to claim any credit for having made any increase in the Estimates in the shape in which we now find them. Therefore, when the hon. and gallant Gentleman says that these are the first satisfactory Estimates that have been presented to the House of Commons for a considerable number of years, I am rather sorry that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) is not here to appreciate the compliment. I will not weary the Committee by travelling over some of the points upon which I had wished to say a few words, but which have already been touched on by hon. Members of greater experience than myself; but I would like to point out, with reference to some remarks that were made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Salis-Schwabe), that he complained of the total of the Estimates, and I should not be surprised if the hon. Member for Northampton followed his example. I should rather like to ask any hon. Gentleman below the Gangway who may feel disposed to rise and propose a reduction in these Estimates if he can point out, with somewhat more accuracy than we have hitherto seen, where the reductions are to come from, and also how he can expect, with so many burning questions coming before the War Office, that there is any hope at all of seeing anything like a reduction for many years to come? I would just quote, for the benefit of the hon. Gentleman, some of the principal questions that were under the consideration of the War Office during the short time I was connected with it—questions which still remain unsettled, but which will, no doubt, receive attention from Ministers. There is the question of barrack accommodation. I do not think there is anyone who is acquainted with the condition, or, I would rather say, the extent, of the accommodation we have at our barracks, or who knows anything about the condition of the huts at Aldershot, who does not see that before long considerable expenditure will have to be incurred for enlarging our barracks and rehousing our troops at Aldershot. Then there is the great question of our military and commercial ports, the expenditure on which is hung up at present, but in regard to which it is believed by both sides of the House that considerable expenditure will have to take place before long. There is also the question of increasing the Artillery, and of the production of new small arms. I do not suppose that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will deny that new small arms will have to be provided in considerable quantities. Again, there is the question, which was discussed in this House a few nights ago, of the Capitation Grants to Volunteers. I venture to hope that the result of inquiries will be to secure an increase in those grants. Another question is that of the purchase of horses, and a great many hon. and gallant Members in this House take an interest in the question of an increase in the amount of rations supplied to the troops. I commend these five or six questions to the attention of economists below the Gangway such as the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) and the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); and I ask if, when there are these questions, the importance of which has, I think, been pretty fully admitted by responsible Ministers on either side of the House, before us, is there any great probability that we shall see very much lower Estimates for some time to come in connection with the War Office? I do not think, myself, that there is any such chance, I must honestly say. To refer again to the great question of military and commercial ports, I must confess that I was very sorry to hear the arguments which the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) used the other night, because I thought they pointed too much to the undue prolongation of the time within which works for the defence of our commercial ports should be undertaken. I do think hon. Gentlemen and the country generally should remember that in the 15 or 16 great commercial ports of this country property exists that I believe is valued at £1,500,000,000 or £1,600,000,000. It is a serious question how far we are wise in delaying an expenditure which I admit is serious, but yet which is a trifle compared with the value of these ports. The wisdom of expending money on this object is questioned on two grounds—first, because expense cannot be properly undertaken now; and, secondly, because it cannot be properly undertaken at all, for the reason that works of defence are improving and increasing from day to day, and in a short time what is done now will be of little value. It is, of course, quite true that weapons of offence and defence are constantly improving; but that is no reason for putting off necessary works of defence. If we wait for finality either in weapons of offence or defence these ports will never be defended at all; therefore, I feel sorry to hear proposals for serious delay in the construction of these works. No doubt it is possible that we may not be able to erect the very best defensive works; but I cannot agree that science has not reached a point at which we can put up defensive works which will not only be better than none at all, but which will come high up in the second class of any improved defensive works which it is possible to conceive at present. I will not mention the question of small arms and artillery, because it has already been sufficiently discussed. But as to the question of the Capitation Grants, I do hope that if the inquiry the Secretary of State makes should result in his coming to the opinion that an increase in the grants is desirable and proper, he will accompany his proposal with an increase in the qualification for efficiency in shooting. The conditions on which the Volunteers attain to this efficiency are unsatisfactory I think; and if we are about, as I hope is the case, to improve their condition, we should accompany the pecuniary improvement we grant with a more stringent test of proficiency in this special work of shooting. As to the Volunteers, I should like to ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, or the Secretary of State, whether I am correct in supposing that there has this year been no increase made in the numbers of any of the Rifle Volunteer Corps? because I think I notice that there is a sum of £5,500 less taken for the Volunteers than was contemplated when I had the honour to hold Office. I am inclined to assume—and I should like to ask if that is so—that that decrease may be due to the fact that no increase has been sanctioned as regards Rifle Volunteer Corps as distinct from Artillery and Engineer Volunteer Corps? Then, as to the purchase of horses, I am rather sorry to see that so small a provision is made for the acquisition of an increased number of horses. I think Sub-head M gives the figure £10,000. I had the honour of serving upon a Committee which made some inquiry into the subject of horse purchase whilst I was in Office—the Committee which went into the question of the organization of the Artillery. It became our duty incidentally to make some inquiry into the question of the horse supply for the year. I should like to ask the Secretary of State whether it is intended that the Report of the Committee shall be published, and whether he has had it under his consideration, and whether any decision has been arrived at in reference to it? At all events, in the course of our inquiry we had to make some examination into the question of the supply of horses which are so valuable for Artillery purposes; and I regret to say that although the basis on which we were appointed to act was to ascertain how far the supply of horses was equivalent to the demands of two Army Corps in the field we found that the supply of horses was barely sufficient to meet the demands of one Army Corps. I think that some active steps should be taken by the Government to increase the number of horses, and to develop the field from which horses may be obtained in the future, and I should say, notably, our Colonial Possessions. Another subject which has been referred to in the Navy Estimates is the question as to the manufacture of stores by the Army Department for the benefit of the Navy; and I think it seemed to be the general opinion of the Committee, when the discussion on the Navy Estimates was taken, that it would be desirable to make the Navy responsible for their own Estimates, and the manufacture of their own guns. I know there are grave difficulties in the way of carrying out such a proposal.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR: No, no; no difficulty at all!

Mr. NORTHCOTE: The hon. and gallant Member says—"No difficulty at all;" but I believe that it would be somewhat difficult to distinguish at Woolwich and elsewhere between the stores for the Army and for the Navy, and to say which materials were intended for naval guns and which for Army guns. I feel sure that some difficulty would be experienced in regard to the interchangeability of military and naval stores for Malta and other places; but, on the other hand, I do think the principle is a sound one, and one the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State should do his utmost to carry out and enforce. The result of the present system is that the Navy tries to get as much as possible of their demands stuck into these Estimates, whilst, on the other hand, the Army is always trying to cut out that item of expenditure under the belief that the Navy can afford to do without guns, and the result is a very unsatisfactory state of things. There is another matter to which I should like to draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention, and which I do not know whether he has had brought before his notice—I allude to the financial position of the Surveyor General of the Ordnance. I must say that I think the Surveyor General of the Ordnance is placed in a very hard position indeed, because he is specially and primarily responsible for what I may call the most contentious Votes—namely, those from 9 to 13, which include stores, clothing, transport, and in fact all those Votes which hon. Members are specially apt to take exception to, and to move the reduction of, and upon which it is considered that a great saving might be effected, and which are invariably more keenly debated than any other Army Votes with the possible exception of Vote 1. The Surveyor General of the Ordnance has no special financial adviser. The Financial Secretary—and I am sure in this he will bear me out—has every day to be indebted to the great ability of Mr. Knox, the Accountant General, whose services I am convinced every Minister will always speak of in terms of the highest praise. But with regard to these particularly difficult Votes the Surveyor General has not the same direct and immediate assistance as the Financial Secretary possesses, and he has to depend to a great extent on the Inspector General of Fortifications, the Director General of Artillery and others, who hold their appointments only for a term of years and who, being officers of the highest ability, yet are officers with whom I may say, with all respect, I do not think economy is always the first consideration. I do not know that it is natural to expect that it should be, and I do not for a moment mean to say that they are intentionally or wilfully extravagant, but they are officers who have to consider what is called efficiency in the first place and economy in the second; and I do think that when you consider these Votes from 9 to 13, which amount this year to something like £8,163,000, it would be a wise and economical proceeding if some special financial adviser to the Surveyor General were appointed who would be a permanent official and able to keep on the track of the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Director General of the Artillery, and make economical financial transactions his very first consideration. Before I sit down I should like to say one word in reference to the remarks of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Salis-Schwabe). The hon. and gallant Gentleman made one or two suggestions with regard to a more economical working of the War Office; but he prefaced his suggestions by one remark I think it right to contradict, because it was an unfair one. He taxed my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) with having suggested that work should be found at Enfield and at Woolwich for the unemployed. My right hon. Friend said precisely the reverse—I appeal to any hon. Gentleman who was in the House if that is not the case. My right hon. Friend said he did not wish that work should be purposely found for the unemployed; but if there was any work which the War Office wanted to have done this was a good time to do it, there being so many people unemployed. I have ventured to suggest one or two points upon which I hope the Secretary of State for War or one or other of the Gentlemen who officially represent the War Office in the House will kindly say a few words. I thank the Committee for the patient hearing they have accorded me.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Sir, I have given Notice of a Motion for the reduction of this Vote; but before I speak to that Motion I should like to say a few words in regard to the question which I put to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) at the beginning of the sitting as to the three years' enlistment system. I am very sorry my right hon. Friend could not see his way to give me a more sympathetic answer to the Question. He promised to consider it. Now it has been long before the War Office; not only has it been long before the War Office, but it was specially considered and dealt with by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) when Secretary of State for War. Only very recently the noble Marquess expressed a particularly favourable view of the system of three years' enlistment, and I think a great many leading men, men much more qualified to form a just opinion than myself, have expressed a favourable opinion of the system. I do hope that still we shall have a more sympathetic utterance from my right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) on the subject than that he gave us earlier in the evening. I have long held the opinion, as many very experienced men do, that the present system amounts to neither long or short service. The result of the system now adopted is that the man who wants to merely pass through the ranks and qualify as an efficient soldier is unable to do so, because the chances are he will be sent to India, and possibly deprived of any opportunity of obtaining any civil employment when he leaves the Army. On the other hand, the system now prevailing spoils the long service. It does seem to me that as we have a voluntary Army system, it is very much better for all parties—for Reserves and for men going foreign service—that men should be allowed to choose between really short service and really long service. The system which the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) commenced with every promise of success was to allow men to enlist for three years with the Colours in the first instance. The men who enlisted for this term were practically not liable to be sent to India; they knew that all they had to do was to qualify as soldiers, that when their term was up they might join the Reserve, follow their civil pursuits, and be, in fact, armed and trained civilians, which I venture to think are the best men the country can have. On the other hand, if after their experience of the Army the men were willing to accept long service, and our officers thought they were fit to be retained for long service, they would have the opportunity of enlisting for the longer term. It seems to me that is really the best system for all parties. The noble Marquess will bear me out in saying that he has expressed a very favourable opinion of the system. I do earnestly hope my right hon. Friend (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) will favourably consider the subject. Now, I come to the Motion of which I have given Notice, and I hear my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) say he will oppose it.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I said that I should oppose it if the hon. Gentleman does not carry it a little further, and ask for a greater reduction.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I propose to move a reduction of the money which is to be devoted to the service of the Army in Egypt. If my hon. Friend wishes to move a larger reduction than that I propose, £17,500, I will give way and allow him to take my place. I brought this subject before the House the other day; but I was not able to take a division upon it. I hope I may be able to do so now. I confess that on the former occasion to which I allude, I was very seriously disappointed at the tone in which the introduction of the subject was met by those who represented the Government. I did hope that we should, on that occasion, have had a more sympathetic reception of the proposal, and that measures would be taken to withdraw our Army from Egypt at the very earliest period. We know that when the late Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. Gladstone) was in power, they expressed their desire to withdraw the Army as early as possible. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), in perfect good faith, told us several years ago, very soon after the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, that they hoped to withdraw our troops from Egypt in about six months. We know that continually, year after year, and in statement after statement, we were given to understand that the late Liberal Government hoped to withdraw the Army from Egypt at the very earliest opportunity. I was very much disappointed the other night to find that in the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) there was not one word in regard to the probability that the troops would be withdrawn from Egypt. I know that it is a very unpopular thing to talk of this withdrawal. I know there are many people who are very much interested in keeping our Forces in Egypt, and who are continually telling us that the worst thing we could do would be to withdraw. If you are not going to withdraw, if your object is to stay in Egypt, I admit it does do a great deal of harm to talk of withdrawing. But if you wish to withdraw, you had better say so frankly and honestly. I do not believe you will be able to withdraw unless you convince the people of Egypt and the financial advisers of the Egyptian Government that you mean to withdraw in a given time. As I have said, I was very much disappointed with the speech of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. It is very sad to see how a Radical, when he accepts Office, gets into the official groove. Formerly there was no man who was more robust in his sympathy with people struggling to be free than the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He had particular sympathy with oppressed nationalities, and with people who, as I say, were struggling to be free; but when I heard the speech he made the other night, I could not help exclaiming —" *Et tu Brutus;* are you the man to use the old official arguments; are you the man to pay the bondholders in full, because then you will satisfy the great financial Powers of Europe." Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) far from telling us, as the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) used to do, that he hoped to withdraw the troops from Egypt at the very earliest period, only told us that whereas we have at present something like 28,000 troops in the country, he hoped to reduce the number by one half by the end of the year. If he could not reduce them to the extent he hoped to be able to do, he would bring in a Supplementary Estimate. It appears to me that that was a very disappointing statement. As regards the financial part of the business, my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told us, what no doubt was the view of the Government, that we could not allow the whole expense of the Army to be thrown upon Egypt. An arrangement was made a few years ago which certainly was not disadvantageous to Egypt, and that was, that this country should pay the whole of the ordinary expenses of the troops in Egypt, and that the Egyptian Exchequer should bear the extraordinary expense of the Army. A compromise was arrived at by which the extraordinary expense was fixed at about £48 per head per man. If that bargain, for a bargain it was, and a bargain which I maintain was not disadvantageous to the people of this country, had been carried out, we should be receiving from Egypt a subsidy of £1,000,000 per annum. Even with the number of men reduced to the point to which the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) hopes to bring the Army before the end of the year, the subsidy would be about £450,000 per annum. But because you could not pay the bondholders in full at the same time as you did justice to the taxpayers of this country, an agreement was made last year whereby the subsidy of £450,000 was reduced to not more than £200,000. That £200,000 has been again reduced this year, because you find the Egyptian Exchequer is not able to pay the bondholders in full, and to pay for its own troops. Furthermore, you have engaged to pay the expenses of three Egyptian regiments employed to do Egyptian service. It seems to me quite clear that in this matter the taxpayer of this country is not being treated very fairly; he is the beast of burden who has to bear all these financial burdens. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs seemed to suppose that the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and myself answered each other. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dillon) and myself are entirely in accord in this—that those who derive profit from Egypt are bound to keep the concern going; in point of equity that seems to be the right course, and indeed the only course. I know that the answer is that the Powers will not allow us to stay in Egypt unless we put on the British taxpayer the whole of the burden. For my part, I should prefer to withdraw, and I believe if Her Majesty's Government made up their minds to withdraw, sent for Arabi Pasha, and put him at the head of the Egyptian Army, they would find that the evacuation of the country was easy of accomplishment. The reduction I propose to make is an entirely practical reduction. The number of men has been passed, and the money has been voted; but we learn from the Papers submitted to the House by the War Office that in the matter of transport, clothing, &c., for the troops in Egypt, it is proposed to incur an additional expense over the expense of last year of no less than £416,000. Now, Sir, I know very well that we cannot withdraw our troops in a day. We require some months to make our arrangements to get Arabi back, to drill the Egyptian troops. I allow Her Majesty's Government six months in which to make their arrangements to get out of Egypt. I find that for transport, clothing, &c., of the troops in Egypt £35,000 is taken. I do not propose to disallow the whole amount; but only half of it—namely, £17,500. I hope the Committee will think this is a very reasonable proposition. It involves the principle that Her Majesty's Government should withdraw our troops from Egypt, not immediately, but within a reasonable time, or in some way or other put the expenses of the troops upon the revenues of Egypt, instead of upon the taxes of this country. I beg to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £17,500.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £849,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for the Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn): Mr. Courtney, before replying to the hon. Member (Sir George Campbell), who has just spoken, I should like to express how much pain I felt to-night at hearing the utterances of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) on the question of compulsory retirement. The other night the right hon. Gentleman spoke on this subject with deep sympathy, I think under the stimulus of his better instincts, for the taxpayer and the unemployed officers; but I think I can guess what has happened. I fear that since then he has been, metaphorically, plunged into a cold bath by the permanent officials of the War Office. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman not to allow the permanent officials to entrammel him with red tape. I am sure his own are a great deal better than the opinions which are being foisted upon him. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to throw off the yoke it is sought to impose upon him, were it only for the sake of consistency with the other Members of the Cabinet. It will be in the recollection of the Committee that the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) recommended the suspension of the Sinking Fund, in order that with the money we would thus obtain we might make our Navy effective. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) rose with holy horror, with every particular hair on his head standing on end, and asserted that what the noble and gallant Lord suggested would be pernicious finance; it would be a dangerous precedent for others. What is the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) doing if he continues the policy of compulsory retirement? While he is apparently allowing the Sinking Fund to be paid off, he is building up a non-effective Army and creating fresh debt. About the year 1900, if any institutions are left in England, even the institution of the taxpayer, any hon. Gentleman will find, if he looks at the Budget for the year, that perhaps a certain smaller amount of interest will have to be paid; but there will be an enormous amount of accumulated pensions. Surely that is a form of finance which cannot commend itself to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This question of compulsory retirement is a very serious one. I have seen in this Parliament the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) raise his daring hand against the pensions of Dukes. What would happen if the daring hand of another Member for Northampton were to be raised against the pensions of half-pay captains? Their chance of successful resistance would be but small. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War compared the Army to a bottle, and said that the difficulty lay with the neck. But he put the neck in the middle of the bottle, where the field officers' rank begins. He is making a vacuum in the bottle by this system of compulsory retirement. To fill the vacuum we have officers from the Reserve and Militia doing duty which ought to be done by officers of the Regular Army. We have shortened the terms at our military schools for the education of officers; we find ourselves going into highways and byeways to get men through the neck of the bottle to which the right hon. Gentleman refers. That is an unwise method, and a very costly method, of filling up the vacuum which is being created. Besides, it is understood that when a man is placed on the Retired List he immediately, like all annuitants, gets a new lease of life. I do appeal to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell - Bannerman), who is respected by the whole House for his straightforward utterances, to throw off the permanent officials, and to trust himself, and himself alone. And now I will turn to what has fallen from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) with regard to Egypt. As I have said before in this House, many of us are perfectly at one in our anxiety to get out of Egypt; but we differ very much as to the means. Why we ever went there is one of those puzzles which, like the origin of evil, I have long given up trying to explain. But we are there; and I consider that the way to get out of the country is not by fixing the date of our withdrawal in months, as the hon. Member (Sir George Campbell) would do, but by telling the Egyptian people that they must throw themselves as thoroughly as they can into the reforms we consider necessary for the country, and that the moment they are in a fit state for self-government we will leave them. The idea of bringing Arabi — that shallow charlatan — back again and putting him at the head of the Army, as suggested by the hon. Member, is simply preposterous. It is proposals of this kind which keep Egypt in a continual state of unrest. For 18 months in Cairo the voice of England never spoke properly; it only stammered, and the people did not understand it. Over and over again Sheikhs came to me utterly bewildered. They wished to stand by us as long as they could; but changes of policy were bewildering to them, and made them lose all confidence in us. Allusion has been made by the hon. Member to the utterances of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), when Member of the Government, as to our withdrawal from Egypt in six months. That utterance reached us in Egypt, when we were in the flush of our reforms, when we had the people heart and soul with us, and when the Representatives of other countries were perfectly silent, and allowed us to do exactly as we wished. But after that message arose symptoms of hostility from the Natives; the Representatives of Foreign Governments pricked up their ears, and the mists of intrigue settled down on Cairo. It is such messages as these which do more to keep us in Cairo than anything else. I do not wish to interfere with the amusement of the hon. Member (Sir George Campbell), and his Colleagues below the Gangway opposite, in worrying the Government they profess to follow; but I do trust the Government will act wisely. Let them resolve upon leaving Egypt when Egypt is ready to be left; not upon a certain day, or in any particular month. I am in constant communication with Egypt, and I hear much of the state of feeling amongst the people. To hear the hon. Member talk one would think the people of Egypt are delighted to throw on the taxpayers of England the burden of the occupation of Egypt. They would pay twice as much to get rid of us; but as we chose—I do not know why—to demolish their Government, to wipe out their Army, we are bound in honour to put them in a position to govern themselves. There are some luxuries for which we have to pay bitterly, and mistakes may be included in them. But mistakes having been committed, let us endeavour to remedy them in the wisest manner, instead of occupying the time of the Committee by the consideration of such utterly impractical Resolutions as that which has been submitted to us by the hon. Member (Sir George Campbell). As I have already said, we are at one in our desire to get out of Egypt; but we differ as to the means of getting out. I have the experience of residence there for three years, and of knowing the people; the hon. Member has not. I appeal to him to withdraw this Motion in the interest of the taxpayers of England, and in the interest of the Egyptian people. We owe a great deal to the Egyptians for what we have done. The large increase in the Estimates for the men in Egypt is all owing to ourselves. We went where we had no business to go; we excited people who would have been perfectly quiet had we not been there at all; we made government there almost impossible; created there a feeling of hostility against all Europeans, and now we have to pay for it. We would do much better if we would trust the Government. I trust the Government in this respect—for they know now the situation exactly. If experience makes us wise, their bitter experience in Egypt should have made them Solomons. Let us get out of Egypt honourably; let our troops be withdrawn when we have restored the Egyptians to the position in which they were before we entered their country. When I spoke before on this point, I said there was one thing necessary. The mistakes which we have committed in Egypt have been numerous; but none of them, perhaps, was greater than that we should have coerced Cherif Pasha, whose patriotism was certainly beyond question, to withdraw from the Soudan. The first step for us to take now is to subsidize someone whom we can trust, of the same religion as the Egyptians, at Dongola, and place him in command of that Province, so as to make a buffer between Egypt Proper and the wilds of the Soudan. Then the next thing is to place Egyptians in the garrisons along the Nile and at Suakin, and then will be the time for us to leave, but not before. With Egypt to protect and Ireland to protect we have too much on our hands. We cannot afford to stay in Egypt; but I venture to think that the way of getting out which I have suggested is more dignified than that proposed by the hon. Member (Sir George Campbell).

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Most of the hon. Members who have addressed the Committee to-night have been either connected with the Army or have been ex-officials, and all the speakers except two have suggested an increase of the Estimates. Every military man who has spoken this evening has suggested that the Army Estimates should be increased, and in this they were backed up by the ex-officials. The noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India (Lord Randolph Churchill) was in the height of elation when he heard that the Army was to be increased. Then we have had the hon. Gentleman the Member for Exeter (Mr. Northcote) who spoke just now. He said he did not see how it was possible—how anybody could ask for a reduction in the Estimates—considering the number of burning questions at the War Office.

MR. NORTHCOTE (Exeter): What I said was that the reduction was not likely to be made—not that it was not likely to be suggested.

MR. LABOUCHERE: No one who understands the House of Commons believes that a reduction is likely to be made, even if it is suggested; but why are there these burning questions? Because we have an Army which is far too large for defence, and is therefore kept up for offensive objects. If we had not had a large Army should we have annexed Burmah? and what has been the consequence of annexing Burmah? Why, it is that we are now asked for an increase of 10,000 men. We were told that it was to cost us nothing; that it was, in fact, to be valuable to us; but the first thing that is done is that we are asked to burden ourselves with an increase of 10,000 men in India. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) said we ought not to leave Egypt too early. Early! how long have we been there? No confidence can be placed in anyone sitting on the Ministerial Bench on this question. Again and again Ministers have deplored our being there. We were coming away after Arabi was suppressed; but then there was the cholera, if I remember rightly, which kept us there. And then there were these ridiculous Expeditions to Suakin, and no one knows now why we are to defend Suakin. We have 17,000 men in Egypt; no one precisely knows what they are doing. Sometimes we are told that they are defending the frontier; sometimes they are preserving order; but no one knows precisely. All we know is that we are paying for them. Of course, they ought to be paid; but, surely they should be paid by the Egyptians themselves. Who ever heard of one country sending an army of 17,000 men to another country to maintain order and to pay for the men themselves? We all know that the Egyptians can pay. ["No."] Oh yes; we do know that they can pay. The reason we are told that Egypt cannot pay is that if she did so she would not be able to pay the enormous interest on her Debt. The first charge upon every country ought to be the cost of its administration and defence. It is obvious that if we are to put this after the Debt, Egypt cannot pay it; but it ought to be paid before the interest on the Debt. Why are we there? We are not there for the benefit of the English taxpayer; it is not for the honour and glory of England; it is not for the fellahs of Egypt; it is because we went there with the deliberate object of forcing the Egyptians to pay the interest on a debt which was most unfairly incurred. We are assuming these large liabilities because, if we do not, the interest on the Debt will not be paid to the bondholders. It was a bondholders' war that sent us there, and it is the bondholders who are keeping us there now. Until we realize this fact, and say we will not have an Army in Egypt unless the Egyptians desire it, and not if they do desire it unless they are ready to pay for it, we may depend upon it that we shall have to remain there for the bondholders. Why, Sir, did not the Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) say that he repented, almost in dust and ashes, the course that he had taken in this matter? and did he not promise that if he were returned to Office he would clear out of Egypt at once? Well, why did he not? Why are we called upon to pay this amount? I shall be obliged to vote against my hon. Friend, who seems inclined to make two or three bites at this cherry. I do not know how he makes up the amount by which he desires to reduce the Vote, and I would ask him to withdraw his Amendment and substitute another with a much larger scope. My objection is to the number of our soldiers being increased, and another objection is that any of our soldiers are in Egypt at all. Now, let me call attention to the Return which we received this morning of Public Income and Expenditure—a very excellent Return, moved for by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler). From that Return it appears that the cost of the Army last year was £15,960,000. In no previous year has it been larger, and yet we are now asked to increase that expenditure by £482,000. There is a very strong feeling in the country that our military expenditure is too large. We do not think that there ought to be an Army for offensive purposes such as the country has at present. ["Oh!"] Yes, we do not consider that we should have an Army for offensive purposes, but we should have one for defensive purposes alone. I, and those who think with me, do not consider that the Expeditions to South Africa, up the Nile, and to Burmah were necessary, and the main reasons why such expeditions are undertaken is because the country has too many soldiers. But if we have the soldiers, why, we must employ them; and I consider that an Army sufficient to maintain our position in Europe and Asia, without making any attack upon our neighbours, would be ample to uphold the honour and glory of this country. What I would suggest to my hon. Friend is that he should withdraw this Amendment and move the reduction of the Vote by £50,000, for the reason that the increased number of men that we are asked to provide for is 9,600, and the clothing for these men will come to a trifle over £50,000. If my hon. Friend accepts my suggestion he will be killing two birds with one stone. He will register his protest against our continued occupation of Egypt, and, at the same time, register the protest which is felt by a great many hon. Members against an increased number of soldiers being voted. The Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) said the other day that the main business of the House is to reduce the Estimates and not to increase them. Well, the right hon. Gentleman is unwell, and I am sure that nothing would be more gratifying to him to-morrow morning, when he rose refreshed and well again, to hear that the Committee have so well occupied the evening that they have reduced the Vote by £50,000.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Although I am quite willing to admit that the knowledge of Egypt possessed by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) may be good, I cannot say as much for the logic of his speech. How can an hon. Member stand up in this House and ask the House to repose the most implicit confidence in the Government, when he goes on to say that many of the misfortunes which have overtaken the English in Egypt have been brought about by the blundering of Sir Evelyn Baring? Why did he not go on to say what is the truth, that it has now become a public scandal that Sir Evelyn Baring should be left in the administration of Egypt any longer? If the Government desire to restore public confidence, the first step they ought to take is to recall Sir Evelyn Baring and those who have acted with him and have been responsible for the government of Egypt for the last three or four years. I quite agree with the hon. Member in saying that on the subject of Egypt the House ought not to repose any confidence in the Members of the present Government. I have over and over again seen every kind of excuse, some of which were perfectly laughable, put forward at the last moment to prevent our leaving Egypt. The Radical Members of the House have themselves to blame for the prolongation of the occupation of Egypt by this country. They have not done their duty in this matter. They have reposed confidence in the Government instead of applying a wholesome pressure, and I have no doubt the Government would now be glad if some pressure had been applied. My object is to appeal to the Radical Members not to continue the line which they have taken up with regard to the Egyptian Question. When anyone had called the attention of the Radicals of the House to this matter the answer has always been—"We admit that up to now everything has gone wrong; but we trust the Government will now get out of it as cheaply as possible." But matters have gone on from bad to worse, and I would ask that they should now take the trouble to look up the question. Let them realize the grave responsibility of the English people; let them not treat it as they do the question of Indian Finance; and let them make up their minds to put pressure on the Government. Let them insist upon the matter being at once cleared up; and the first step necessary is the immediate—and there ought to be no delay about this at all—withdrawal of Sir Evelyn Baring. We know perfectly well that the interests of these officials in Egypt is to be lording it over the Egyptian people. We know that until they take that step no Radical Member ought to believe the Government. The first step they ought to take is to bring away Sir Evelyn Baring and those who serve under him. One thing that makes me think that the Government do not intend to immediately withdraw from Egypt is the extraordinary charge they have made for the garrison of Egypt. We know that there will be no trade there upon that coast while they stay there, because the tribes are hostile; and yet we are to hold the place, knowing that it will be utterly worthless as long as we remain there. And what is the use of our sending out fresh troops at a cost of £50,000 to maintain Suakin if we have the intention of leaving it? The best thing for the Government to do would be to enter into negotiations with Osman Digna and allow the Arab traders to come back, so that trade might be again opened up. I hope that if Radical Members honestly believe that the English occupation of Egypt is a disgrace to this country they will not sit silent, but will bring some pressure to bear upon the Government to take the first step of bringing away Sir Evelyn Baring.

Sir W. GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central): I rise, as a new Member, to ask the forbearance of the Committee for a few moments. I am going to speak from personal observation. I have had the pleasure and honour of serving in Egypt for some few months in 1883, and during that time I had opportunities of gleaning information which have fallen to the lot of few. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) has suggested that we should leave Egypt in the course of a few months; but the question is, to whom the government of the country should be handed over in case we do leave? I yield to no Member in my desire to see Egypt governed by the Egyptians; but are the Egyptians fit to govern themselves? The history of Egypt shows that for years it has been governed by foreigners; and it must be governed by foreigners, until such time as the Egyptian people can be educated to carry on the Government of their country for themselves. I should like to see that time; but I am afraid the period is far distant when the education of the people will have attained that length. When in Egypt, Cherif Pasha, the then Premier, requested me to draw up a scheme for the re-organization of the Sanitary and Medical Service. In doing so I was anxious to fill as many of the Administrative and Executive posts as possible by Egyptians; but, on turning my attention to this point, I was at once arrested by the fact that the number fitted to undertake duties of the kind might be counted on the fingers of one hand. That is a matter of great regret to me; but I think the more this question is considered the greater will the difficulties be found in the way of handing over the Government to them. Until a system of education is organized in Egypt we shall never be able to hand over the country to the Egyptians. With these few words I beg to oppose the Amendment.

Major General GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): I shall not take up the time of the Committee at any length; but there are some points in connection with our Army organization on which I desire to make some observations. [*Continued interruption.*]

Mr. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): I rise to Order. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) is continuously and persistently interrupting the hon. and gallant Member for Hammersmith. I wish to know whether he is in Order in so doing?

The CHAIRMAN: It is not in Order constantly and persistently to interrupt a speaker.

Major General GOLDSWORTHY: I wish to say that, in my opinion, the organization which permits of there being a large number of General Officers and colonels on the Active List, who have not the slightest chance of employment, is defective. I think you ought not to promote officers to the rank of General unless you intend to employ them. If you look over the Army List you will see that there are very many of those officers who have no employment whatever; and the same may be said with regard to Colonels, many of whom are on half-pay. I think it would be a considerate act on the part of the Military Authorities to notify officers at once whether they are likely to be employed; so that, in the event of its not being the intention of the authorities to employ them, the officers might look for some other occupation and means of living. [*Great interruption.*]

MR. BRODRICK: Sir, I rise to Order. I wish to call attention to the fact that the hon. Member for Northampton has disregarded your ruling. [*Interruption.*] I beg to move that you report Progress.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not in Order to interrupt a speaker for the purpose of moving Progress.

MR. BRODRICK: I rose on a point of Order. I asked whether the hon. Gentleman the junior Member for Northampton had not disregarded your ruling by constant and most audible interruptions of the speaker?

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already said that it is disorderly to interrupt any hon. Member constantly and persistently. I am not aware that any particular hon. Member has done so.

MAJOR GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY: It is my intention to speak, even if I am interrupted. Having spoken of General Officers and those of the rank of Colonel, I wish to say that we should give our best attention to the improvement of the condition of the private soldier and non-commissioned officer. You should raise them by giving them some privilege or distinction which the people will recognize; and I am convinced that as soon as the people see that the private soldier is respected by the country, you will have no difficulty in recruiting your Army. I remember when I was once in an omnibus a corporal of Engineers came up, but was refused admission inside, the conductor saying it was "not the place for common soldiers." I say that as long as we have civilians looking at private soldiers in that light we shall have a difficulty in getting good recruits.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and gallant Member that he is not in Order in discussing the conduct of conductors.

MAJOR GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY: I was showing that a non-commissioned officer was not allowed to take his seat in the omnibus; and it was only through the intervention of an officer that this man was placed in a position of equality with the other civilian passengers. Well, Sir, I contend that that is an anomalous position for a soldier to occupy. As an officer, I say I am proud of our soldiers, and shall always do what I can to place them in the position which their behaviour gives them the right to demand. Then, I desire to call attention to the education of our officers, and to the desirability of more officers attending the Staff College. I believe that, as a rule, they should be there for only one-half of the time they are at present. Then it is undesirable that there should be so many changes of uniform. If an officer leaves a regiment, or goes to the Staff, he has to provide a new uniform; and, in addition to that, he has to spend a great deal of money in changing from one place to another. Again, an officer, when he changes his quarters, has to carry about with him an immense amount of furniture and baggage; whereas I say that his quarters ought to be furnished for him. I am not one of those officers who, as an hon. Member opposite says, are desirous of increasing the cost of the Army; but, as military men, we sit here to point out to politicians what our experience tells us is necessary for the efficiency of the Army. I hope before long to see our Army in a more efficient state by the introduction of salutary changes; and, so far as the cost of the operation is concerned, you may save the money necessary to carry out all the changes advocated here by reducing the number of officers retired, and by the other means that have been suggested. I want to see a better rate of pay and less punishment than you have at the present moment; and my opinion is that an improvement of the material condition of the soldier will tend to bring in a better class of recruits, the result of which will be fewer desertions and less necessity for punishment than there have been in the past. There is one observation I wish to make with reference to a remark which fell from an hon. and gallant Baronet on this side (Sir Frederick FitzWygram) (about drunkenness of officers). The hon. and gallant Gentleman wished to know why a certain question was not put in the confidential Reports? I do not consider that question at all necessary. I have had much experience; and I must say that, in my opinion, Commanding Officers have commanded their regiments according to the best ideas as regards efficiency. My view is that if you have Commanding Officers whose management results in too large an amount of punishment in their regiments your only course is to remove them. I believe it is absolutely necessary to remove officers, especially Commanding Officers, if they have proved themselves to be inefficient. I hope this Committee will show its feeling that the Army should be efficient, no matter at what cost; but I am sure that this can be brought about without spending any more money than we do at the present time.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN) (Stirling, &c.): I venture to make an appeal to the Committee. The Government gave up the night for a prolonged debate on general questions affecting the Army. We had a full night's discussion on Monday last, and we have now been discussing this question since 6 o'clock. I am aware that there are one or two hon. Members wishing to take part in the debate, and there are some remarks which I myself should like to make; but the Committee is aware that we were to suspend this part of the Business at 11.30 in order to bring on another subject—an arrangement which was made to suit the convenience not only of Members in favour of the Bill of the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld), but of those who have on the Paper Amendments in opposition to it. Therefore, I suggest that we should now divide on the Motion which has been made, and that then the Vote should be allowed to be taken. I trust that this suggestion will be in accordance with the wishes of the Committee.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 66; Noes 290: Majority 224.—(Div. List, No. 44.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: At this late hour I beg to move that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS REPEAL (No. 2) BILL.—[BILL 147.]

(*Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. James Stuart, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Burt, Mr. Henry Wilson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Stansfeld.*)

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven): I wish to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to proceed with this Bill to-night, for if they do I will venture to say a more extensive breach of faith I never knew to be committed in this House? Two or three days ago I communicated with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax, and told him that I should be very glad indeed to confine my objection to the Bill to one speech, if he would arrange with Her Majesty's Government to bring the measure on at some hour in the evening when it would be possible for a Member to address the House. He then told me that he would communicate at once with the Prime Minister on the subject. The Prime Minister was communicated with, and a message was delivered to me, in the first place, yesterday morning.

MR. SPEAKER: I must inform the right hon. Gentleman that if he speaks now at any length, he exhausts his right to speak on the Main Question.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: I rose, Sir, to catch your eye on a matter of Order before the Question was put from the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: It was my duty to put the Question, the Order having been read. No question of Order arose.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: I have been a good many years in this House, and have always understood that when the Order of the Day is called on Questions can be addressed to the Government as to whether at that time the Order should be proceeded with. I have on many such occasions heard questions of this kind addressed to the

Government. If, however, I am out of Order, Mr. Speaker, I humbly bow to your decision. I only wish to remind you that on many occasions I have seen that practice followed; and hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench will agree with that view, I think. I place myself at great disadvantage by rising to address myself to the Chair on the Order for the second reading being called. I do not know whether it is possible for you, Sir, to indicate any mode by which Her Majesty's Government can state their view as to the undertaking they gave myself and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld).

MR. SPEAKER: The course to be taken is perfectly plain. The Motion was made that the Bill be read a second time. The right hon. Gentleman, by speaking now, has exhausted his right to speak, unless he continues his speech on the Motion that the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: Then, Sir, I shall address myself to the question, under the strongest protest that it is possible for a Member of the House to make. I say again that there was a distinct understanding conveyed to me that this question would not be brought on after half-past 11 o'clock. It was given to me directly from the Prime Minister, in the first instance by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), confirmed afterwards by the hon. Member for Nottingham (Mr. Arnold Morley), and subsequently, again, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax. All I can say is, that there has been a very great change in this House, and one very much for the worse. If these honourable undertakings are not to be maintained, I think this House will very soon lose its character of being an Assembly of Gentlemen. On the last occasion when this question was discussed, it was not competent for us, having regard to the hour of the evening, to state our objections to the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts; and I, as well as my right hon. and learned Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan), were very anxious to vindicate our position as Members of the Committee that sat during four years and investigated this question with great diligence, and showed that, after all, the only result to which we had arrived was precisely in accordance with the views upon which the Governments on both sides of this House had acted in previous years. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) addressed the House the other night, I was very much struck with an observation which he made as to the Prime Minister. I regret very much that the Prime Minister is not now in his place. I regret also exceedingly the cause of his absence. But, notwithstanding his absence, I am obliged to refer very particularly to him, and to remarks which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax made with regard to his views on this question. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax declared that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had said on several occasions that he did not know how these Acts were passed. He said he had not the slightest idea how they had ever been introduced, and how they had been passed here and carried through Parliament. A more extraordinary statement than that it was never my fortune to listen to, because the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1864, when the first Act was passed on this subject, and he must necessarily have had all the Estimates put before him. But in 1866 the Act of 1864 was repealed, and a new Act altogether was brought into the House, which we may well term the principal Act which has governed the action of the Government hitherto on these matters. And then, on the second reading of that Bill, which was brought in by the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary—and I suppose he knew something about it, because his name was on the back of the Bill—the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister actually addressed the House, and supported the second reading. He said the object of the Government was to have all the assistance which the intelligence and impartial judgment of Parliament could afford. He wished the matter to be examined free from prejudice of any kind; and then, on the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he then was, the question was referred to a Select Committee, and subsequently the Act was passed. Then, again, in 1869, a supplementary Act was passed when the right hon. Gentleman was Prime Minister. He was responsible for it, and the whole question, it is clear, must have been before the Cabinet. In 1870 the matter was referred to a Royal Commission, and in 1872 a Bill was brought in—known by the name of Bruce's (Lord Aberdare's) Bill — which especially expressed the policy of the Cabinet; and, finally, in 1883, after the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax was passed suspending the Acts, the right hon. Gentleman brought in his Bill dealing with the hospitals. How in the world, then, is it possible for any Member of the House, especially for the Prime Minister, to say he is not responsible for these Acts surpasses my comprehension and that of every reasonable being. We now come to the real question before the House. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen who cheer that statement must remember that this point was raised, not by me, but by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax; and the House, I think, will admit that it is only right and proper in me to demonstrate that, in connection with what has been the long-established policy of the House, the attitude of the Government now is another instance of what has been properly described by a Member of their own Party as a "shirk and surrender" policy. In 1867 Lord Aberdare, speaking of these Acts, said there was no one who knew the Acts who would not bear him out that they had worked in a most satisfactory manner. That was the question brought before our Committee. By a very large majority the Committee declared and reported that the Acts had worked in a satisfactory manner. We heard every possible kind of evidence which could be adduced. Our decision was by no means arrived at in a hurry, but after great deliberation, and the Report decided upon was that of the majority. I venture to say that that Report has never been impeached since that time. What the Committee found was that the Acts had worked in a satisfactory manner; and they further went on to say that if the Acts were interfered with in any way, suspended or limited in their operation, certain things would happen. They said there would be a great increase of disease in the Army and Navy; they said, also, that amongst the unfortunate women to whom the Acts apply there would be a great increase of disease and increase in the intensity of suffering, and, moreover, that there would be a great increase in general immorality. Well, Sir, all these things have come about. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stansfeld) has saved me the trouble of proving the case for the Services—he did it on Tuesday. He abandoned that part of the case; he said, "I give up the hygienic part of the question—I shall not attempt to argue it;" and it was wise on his part to take up that position and abandon the hygienic argument, for he knew that if he did not the facts would be all against him. The right hon. Gentleman, in fact, proved the case. He brought figures before the House which I can confirm, and which show that there has been an increase of 80 per cent in the amount of disease in the Army since the suspension of the Acts, and an increase of from 80 to 100 per cent in the Navy. I will not trouble the House with any further remarks on that point. ["Hear, hear!"] I know that hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway do not like to hear the truth. But we now come to the side of the question which is most interesting to me, and on which I shall be able to state a case to the House—a case which I have not only stated before the Committee, but which I have stated whenever I have had an opportunity of addressing the House on the subject of the operation of these Acts. When the measure was first introduced, I took the opportunity of saying here that I brought on this matter in the interests of the Army and Navy; but that I had also in view the object of endeavouring, if possible, to relieve the sufferings of that unfortunate class who must excite the pity and commiseration of every humane man. Well, the Acts were suspended, and, unfortunately, the anticipations shadowed forth by the Committee have been realized only too surely. There is a diminution in the number of women relieved under this Act from 3,300 to about 1,300, though I am glad to say that during last year the number who presented themselves for relief has been considerably increased. The intensity of disease has increased most terribly—in fact, the figures are appalling. I have access only to the actual statistics of two of the hospitals—namely, the London Lock Hospital, where there are "Government" patients treated, and the Chatham Hospital. In the London Hospital, before the suspension of the Acts, in the year ending June 30, 1882, there were 464 women relieved; in the year ending June 30, 1884, the number was 207; and in the year ending June 30, 1885, it was 110; and up to the 10th of March of the present year it was 155. The percentage of cases of the worst class has increased from 33 in 1882 to 55 in 1884, and 78·7 last year. As a result of the suspension of the Acts, of the unfortunate women treated in the London Lock Hospital 78·7 out of every 100 are suffering from the worst form of disease. The duration of treatment has increased from 23 days to 61 days, showing how grave the cases are. The Committee said, founding their opinion upon the evidence brought before them, that the effect of doing away with the Acts would be to increase juvenile immorality. Well, from the 1st of October, 1885, to the 10th of March this year, out of 80 women 44 have been under 20 years of age, and there are some in hospital now as young as 13 and 15. The statistics from the Lock Hospital at Chatham giving the ages of patients admitted during the months of January and February of the present year show the same results. There are a large proportion of cases of secondary disease, and the symptoms in many of them are described as very severe, as is also the case in regard to many of the primary ones. Out of 53 women admitted there during the past two months no less than 25 are under the age of 20. Nor is that all. Formerly, these hospitals were happily instrumental in affecting a large number of reclamations; but there is a great decrease now, and naturally, because up to the end of last year the young women did not commence to come in. During the past two months the number who have entered the hospitals in both these places has been very considerable; and it has proved beyond a doubt the increase of immorality amongst juveniles. Of course, when we know that it is only the juveniles who take advantage of these hospitals, it is obvious to everyone who can put two and two together that the prostitution of these towns is very much increased. The question, then, obviously arises, How is it possible to do without compulsion? The only chance of getting these women really relieved is by keeping them in the hospital until they are cured. I understand the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax to maintain that we should give up the question of compulsion. Well, of all the people in the world to argue against compulsion I think the right hon. Gentleman should be the very last, seeing that during his last tenure of Office he was President of what is now called the Local Government Board, at the time when the Act of 1867 was in force, under which all the women who entered the hospitals afflicted with this unfortunate disease remained in them until they were cured. I do not wish to bring any charge against the right hon. Gentleman; but I must say it seems to me that when he is on the Treasury Bench he is of one opinion and when he sits below the Gangway he is of another. If he goes back to the Treasury Bench—and I, for one, should be glad to see him there—he will perhaps revert to his original opinion. I do not desire to go into the merits of this part of the case, because I think the case entirely established. There have been no arguments against the Acts except the sentimental arguments used by the right hon. Gentleman. In the matter of statistics the Minister for War entirely concurred in all the statistics brought before the House in the Papers. We have a right to ask why there is this change on the part of the Government? There is no change in the opinion of the country; there is no change, so far as I know, in the opinion of the clergy of the country on the subject. I have a letter written to me by a dignatary of the Church of England, who allows me to use his name—the Rev. G. E. Jelf, rector of Chatham. Writing from Rochester, under date March 16, he says—

> "Since the suspension of the Acts, it has been observed by persons well qualified to judge—(1.) That there has been a great increase of juvenile prostitution. During the present year (1886) there have been admitted into our Lock Hospital 53 patients, of whom 12 were 19 years old, five were 18, four were 17, one was 16, one 15, one 14, and one 13. Last January I had to visit there a young parishioner of mine, a child of 12, who had sinned with four different persons. (2.) That more illegitimate children than before have been born within the last two years. (3.) That physical disease *in the worst*

form has greatly increased. (4.) That solicitation by women is much more frequent. (5.) That many of the more respectable girls are not deterred from evil or from dangerous ground as there were formerly. We, in Chatham, are working in the thorough conviction that *men* are often the greatest offenders; and it is not forgotten that the sentence of Divine retribution falls even upon the human body. But we ought surely to remember also the physical sufferings of the victims of the cowardly and selfish wickedness of men, and to keep open, with large subsidies from Government, the hospitals which, with the help of female doctors and other Christian women, may now tend to the bodily cure and moral reformation of our poor fallen sisters."

Thereupon he asks that the Acts shall not be modified or repealed. I will go further, and will ask, have any of the Roman Catholic clergy changed their opinion? The Roman Catholic clergy who attended the hospitals in Cork gave very strong evidence in favour of the Acts, and I have not heard that they have ever changed their opinions—I do not believe that they have done so. I should very much like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) whether he has changed his opinions on this subject? I should like him to rise in his place and say that he has done so; and, if so, on what grounds? Then I see the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers), who has gone almost all the rounds of Cabinet Offices in Her Majesty Government, and who, although opposed to compulsory examination, on April 20, 1883—not three years ago—delivered himself in these terms—

"He thought the Acts had resulted in a diminution of disease . . . . and in reducing the element of juvenile prostitution that was the curse of certain towns. . . . . . Looking at the benefits which had resulted . . . . . he should regard it as the greatest of all misfortunes if they were to go back from it."—(3 *Hansard*, [278] 852.)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): The right hon. Gentleman has read only a detached fragment of the speech. He has only taken one sentence, and has not read the context.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK: I should like the right hon. Gentleman to rise in his place and say what he did say. Does he still think that there has been a benefit? Then there is another Minister whom I regret not to see in his place, and that is the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council on Education (Sir Lyon Playfair). Now, no man spoke more strongly in favour of these Acts in this House. In 1882 he made a most convincing speech on this subject. He is not here to-night. I should have liked him to have got up in his place to-night and have said what he thinks. I know very well that he has not changed his opinions; but the right hon. Gentleman represents an University constituency in Scotland, in a county where so much fanaticism and superstition prevails that he is obliged to give up his advocacy of these Acts. I refer to him as a scientific man who has studied this question, and if the right hon. Gentleman will get up in his place and say that he has altered his opinion on this matter—that he is not in favour of the Acts—then I also will abandon my opposition to their repeal. Then, again, there is the noble Marquess the late Leader of the Liberal Party (the Marquess of Hartington). I am sorry to say that he has gone, too; but no Member has ever spoken more strongly in favour of these Acts than the noble Marquess. He, also, stuck to them, and he parted with them with the greatest pain, as he informed us. I regret exceedingly that none of these right hon. Gentlemen are in the House. I do not refer to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan), because I know he is persuaded; but I hope he will have an opportunity of rising in his place. Is it not clear from what I have said that it is not from conviction, but from political exigency, that right hon. Gentlemen opposite have changed their opinions. I can explain the reasons for this, because I have had personal experience on the subject. In the first place, it is from superstition; secondly, from ignorance; and, thirdly, from falsehood. The superstition is this. A large number of Nonconformist Ministers think that these diseases are a punishment for wicked men; and I may add that the late Mr. Henley, and the hon. Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler), shared that opinion. There is one hon. Member, and I do not know if he is in the House, because I do not know him by sight. I mean the hon. Member for the Holmfirth—or something of that sort—Division of Yorkshire (Mr.

pamphlet giving a selection of cases illustrating the working of the Contagious Diseases Acts, no less than 14 of these cases are enumerated; and I say with deliberation, as a Member of this House, without hesitation, and without the fear of contradiction, that every one of those 14 cases was absolutely false. There was only one of them brought before the Committee. That was the first case that was investigated by the Committee, and the judgment of the Committee against it is to be found in the Report. When it was found that the first case would not hold water, the other 13 were not brought before the Committee; and yet the Working Men's League, upon the Council of which there are three Members of Parliament, continue to publish this scandalous publication, which is a disgrace to anyone of common honesty and propriety. I do not see the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) in his place; but if he were I should make an appeal to him, either to withdraw from the Society or to withdraw the circulation of this pamphlet, or, at all events, if he will not do that, that he will give up his place in the Government. If the Members of Her Majesty's Government are to mix themselves up in these matters, it seems to me to be a very bad day for us, and they ought at least to be careful that nothing is circulated in their names. I wish to show how these things are done. I had the honour to be selected by these Societies as the one candidate they wished especially to put out of Parliament; I was fixed upon as the victim, because of the honest and independent support that I have given to these Acts. Accordingly these Societies spent a large portion of the £8,000 they had collected from the public in trying to turn me out of my seat. They sent down six lecturers to my constituency, who remained there six months; there were three males and three females. I will give you the names. There was Mrs. Ormiston Chant, Mrs. Stewart, and Miss Whitehead; and the males were Mr. Marshall—the notorious Mr. Marshall—Mr. Wynn, and Mr. W. Morkey, and they endeavoured by the circulation of these false publications to poison the minds of the labouring classes against me. I do not know how much money they spent in contravention of the spirit of the Corrupt Practices Act; but they plastered the walls with expensive posters, and made a house to house canvass, and distributed many of these publications in order to influence the opinion of the electors. But I held meetings also, and stated facts, and the result was that they had to retire in shame, while I was returned by a majority nearly double that which I had the honour to receive at the previous election. So it would be everywhere if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had only had the courage to stick up for these Acts; but they will not meet this question as it ought to be met, and they prefer to gain the votes of a small, fanatical, and superstitious, but very active section of society who opposed these Acts. These people are very active, and are continually presenting Petitions to Parliament; but the average elector does not take the trouble to inquire into the benefits of the Acts. It seems to me that if we are going to argue this question from sentiments of sentimentality, the very first thing that we ought to do is to get at the truth. These misrepresentations ought not to be made, and if a man made them he ought to be repudiated by his fellowmen in whatever position in this House he sits. The system, of which this legislation forms the basis, presents the only means by which to effect the relief of a certain portion of suffering humanity. I do not believe these unfortunate women can be relieved in any other way. I was surprised by the contention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman). I know his difficulties, because he is a Scotch Member, and he has to undergo what they call "heckling;" but I was surprised that he could have got up in this House and suggested that the hospital work hitherto provided for out of the public funds might be continued by local effort. The suggestion was worthless, for the experiment has been tried and has failed. There are only two hospitals which are retained by the Government—Chatham and Colchester—the others are all subsidized; but how can you throw on Chatham the expense of a hospital which receives women from Dover, Sheerness, and many other places. Does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that

H. J. Wilson), who stated at a meeting in February last, and at which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) was present, that these Acts were the works of the devil, and added that he did not want any substitute for the devil. He went on to say—

> "How long halt ye between two opinions. If you are determined that this thing is necessary, and is to go on, why don't you call the devil to your help and exert yourselves actively and spread it throughout the country and the entire world."

Well, Sir, I am not acquainted with this person, nor do I know where he is to be found. All I know is this, that there are good devils and bad devils, and if a good devil were to relieve these unfortunate women and to induce them to lead a better life, I should say he was much better company than the hon. Member for Holmfirth. Then, as regards ignorance, I once asked an hon. Member whether he had ever read these Acts, and he said, "Oh, I dare not; I could not allow myself to do anything so wicked." Then we come to the question of falsehood. There are certain Societies which subscribe large sums of money, and circulate a paper, to influence public opinion against these Acts. They have collected £8,000, which has been spent in a printing office in Paternoster Row, which circulated leaflets, &c., containing the grossest misrepresentations. It is deplorable that this should be done, and I shall make that clear to the House in a minute that it is so. Now, Sir, there are a great many of these Societies. I shall only refer to two of them. There is the Society called the "City of London Society," for the repeal of these Acts. I do not think my hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) has fallen so low as to belong to it; but it is presided over by Mr. Samuel Morley. I am only sorry for Mr. Samuel Morley's reputation in presiding over this Society. In a pamphlet issued by this Society called *Seven Reasons for the Repeal of these Acts*, on page 5, is to be found this paragraph—

> "Who can wonder that women, driven to desperation, should have again and again terminated their lives when confronted with such a tribunal, and that maidens, innocent of a knowledge of the very terms used for their entanglement, have been placed on the registers of infamy, deprived of their natural liberty and subjected to the outrage perpetrated under the Acts."

And the word "maidens" is in italics. Now, I called the attention of Mr. Samuel Morley to that statement some years ago, and asked him in a letter why he gave the sanction of his name to a statement which was absolutely false? ["No!"] I say absolutely false. It was proved to be false. I appeal to my right hon. Friend whether that is not so; whether it was not, because there was no evidence given before the Committee in support of these allegations. I wrote to Mr. Morley on this matter, and pointed out that his reputation depended upon his inquiry into it; but he wrote me a letter to say that he had not time to attend to me. Although my letter was written in 1883, Mr. Morley has never withdrawn that statement, and it is now published and sold in this paper—in fact, I bought this copy only a few days ago. Well, I say that this is a most misleading statement, and is published and circulated throughout the constituencies, and the minds of the electors, who do not take the trouble to investigate matters, are thereby influenced. On the Committee connected with the publication of this statement there are the names of a number of eminent men. I am not going to read them; but there are Queen's Counsel, Members of Parliament, Aldermen of the City of London, and others, and it is perfectly scandalous that those who are responsible for these things, by allowing the use of their names, do not take the trouble to see that the statements sent out are true. Then I will take another Society. It is called the Working Men's National League, and it has a National Council, upon which appears the name of the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst). The names of the hon. Member for West Norfolk (Mr. Joseph Arch), and the hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Durham (Mr. William Crawford), also appear upon the Council. Of course, I have no objection to Members of Parliament and others forming themselves into these Societies if they will only stick to the truth in what they publish; but they ought not to publish false and scandalous publications which are wholly devoid of truth. The Working Men's League have published a the Local Government Board, or anybody else, could throw the burden of these people coming from a distance on to a particular locality? The only Institution we have in this great Metropolis can hardly make both ends meet, and it is merely kept on its legs by the grant it gets from the Government. To show the good moral effect of the system which the right hon. Gentleman now proposes to bring to an end, I may mention that the large hospital at Chatham alone in 14 years has reclaimed 835 women; and yet this humane Government, which is under the thumb of the Radical Party below the Gangway, are going to do away with the means by which such good results have been brought about, in order to catch a few votes at the elections. I shall move now, Sir, that this Bill be read a second time upon this day six months; I do so not only in consideration of what I have advanced—I do so because I am not shaken in my faith; and I, for one, am not influenced by the mere fact of the health of the Army and Navy, but for the welfare of these unfortunate women.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): I beg to second the Amendment. I do not desire to put the House to the trouble of a division, and I do not desire to detain the House at this late hour. What I want to ask the Government is whether they will get some thoroughly reliable evidence as to the state of these hospitals? In my constituency they are in a state of consternation. In consequence of the conflicting statements which have been made in regard to the intentions of the Government, they are in a state of chaos, and there is a state of things existing there at present such as has never been known before. Their streets have changed entirely, and it is due to the country that we should know what is going to happen. It is impossible to believe that right hon. Gentlemen who, a few months ago, expressed themselves so strongly in favour of these beneficial Acts—it is impossible to believe that in so short a time there has been anything to change their opinion. On the contrary, we had from the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) the most startling evidence in support of these Acts, and we had previously the support of the noble Marquess the late Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. No one could have been more eloquent than hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite in favour of the maintenance of these Acts, and nothing could have been stronger in their support than the Report of the Committee which for years took such pains to thresh out this matter. But the Acts have been suspended, and I care not very much whether this Bill is carried or not, because the Acts are practically a dead letter; and therefore it is hardly worth while —it would be absurd—to trouble the House with anything like a long debate and a division on the matter. The Acts are to be repealed, by yielding to the clamour of a maudlin sentimentality. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld) and his Friends have very little knowledge of the way in which these Acts are worked in garrison towns. In places like Devonport and Portsmouth, the result of the beneficent working of these Acts has been exceedingly good, not only from a hygienic point of view, but in preventing juvenile prostitution, and in making the towns decent to live in; and surely the almost universal opinion of the population of these places should have some weight. Surely we are entitled to the same credit for sincerity as we are willing to give to those who oppose us; but, instead of this, leaflets are circulated of the most scandalous kind by the hon. Member for Shoreditch (Mr. James Stuart) and some other Members and their clients who know absolutely nothing whatever about the matter. I wish to say—in reference to the Societies which publish these statements and the publications which they issue—that, in my opinion, no more honourable man ever sat in this House, and I am sure that no one would more sincerely regret any inaccurate statement, than Mr. Samuel Morley, and I regret the remarks just made by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) in reference to that gentleman. Before sitting down, I wish to appeal to the Government to give us some assurance that will satisfy the people of the districts, such as the one I represent, to avoid the cruelty which will arise from the policy which has been advocated here in regard to the hospitals, and that they will save us from that by dealing with the matter in the spirit of the

Amendment which the hon. Baronet (Sir John Kennaway) moved the other day. It simply called for the maintenance of the hospitals, not only in the interests of the Service, but in the interests of the garrison towns, the military, and the younger members of those districts—the young women particularly—and I think the Government ought to state plainly what they mean to do in regard to those local hospitals.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT) (Derby): I do not rise for the purpose of prolonging this debate. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has practically admitted that this matter is already decided, and he said that he did not think it worth while to divide the House. I rise principally to make an explanation to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) as to the time at which this Bill has been brought on. I entirely concur with him that it would be exceedingly discreditable if engagements entered into in this House were not properly carried out. Well, the Government did all they could to adhere to the understanding that was entered into. The engagement was that we should adjourn the other debate at 11 o'clock, or thereabouts, and we have honourably fulfilled that engagement as far as we are able. Everybody knows that the Government cannot control the Business of the House when an hon. Member is speaking; and it will be in the recollection of the House that at 11 o'clock an hon. and gallant Member was speaking, and his speech was prolonged by circumstances over which we had no control. After he had finished, we took a division, and then this Bill was immediately brought on. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will be satisfied that we did all in our power. Now, the right hon. Gentleman was very severe on the attitude which the Government have adopted in reference to this Bill. I think he will admit, as well as the hon. Member who has just spoken has admitted, that this matter has been settled by the previous action of the House, and by the strong opinion entertained upon it, not only on this side of the House, but on the other side also. This, I think, is clearly shown by the conspicuous absence of every Member of the late Cabinet from the Front Bench opposite. I do not see a single Member of the late Cabinet in his place to oppose the repeal of these Acts. Well, I have, therefore, no hesitation in stating in a single sentence what are the grounds on which I think the repeal of these Acts is necessary. Two years ago, or three years ago, by an overwhelming majority in this House—which no attempt has been made to reverse in either this or the late Parliament—the practical operation of these Acts was suspended. Well, Sir, it is a bad thing, and I think everyone will be of that opinion, to keep alive Statutes which you do not intend, and which, in point of fact, you cannot bring into operation. That is the reason why these Acts are to be repealed, almost without opposition. There is one question which my right hon. Friend (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck) desired me to allude to—that is with regard to the hospitals. If he will examine the Estimates for the present year, he will see that the Government have considered what was best to be done in the circumstances by allowing the Votes to remain in the Estimates until the matter has been further considered. I think that is a sufficient answer to the right hon. Gentleman's question.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGES BILL.

(*Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

[BILL 120.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Compensation to persons for damage by riot).

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to move to leave out all the words after the word "mentioned," in order to insert—

"For such injury, stealing, or destruction, shall be paid out of the Metropolitan Police Rate and the City of London Police Rate conjointly in such proportions as the annual values of the property liable and subject to those rates respectively bear to each other."

By the courtesy of the City Remembrancer, I have received to-day a communication which informs me that this matter has been brought before the Court of Common Council, and that they admit the justice of my Amendment. He also informs me that the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London (Sir Robert Fowler) will be prepared to make a statement of that kind. As the City admits the justice of the claim, I think I may simply confine myself to moving the Amendment of which I have given Notice.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): The hon. Member has rather anticipated what I was going to say to the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Childers) was good enough to speak to me upon the subject yesterday, so I brought it before the Court of Common Council to-day, and pressed it upon them. The argument I used to them was this. In one sense we had no connection with the riots, as we pay the cost of our own police; but I thought that this was a calamity upon one part of the Metropolis, and the damage done ought to be borne by the whole of London. I do not think that the richest part of the Metropolis should refuse to pay its share towards the damage; and, therefore, I urged upon them that we ought to consent to this Amendment, and I am glad to say that with great unanimity they concurred with my view. Under these circumstances, I have great pleasure in saying, on behalf of the Corporation, that we heartily concur in this Amendment.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. CHILDERS) (Edinburgh, S.): I think that great credit is due to the Corporation of London, and especially to the hon. Baronet the Member for the City, for the way in which they have met this Amendment.

MR. BAGGALLAY (Lambeth, Brixton): I should like to say a few words on behalf of South London. It is felt that the whole Metropolis should bear the rate; but I was in hopes that the right hon. Gentleman would have seen his way to have relieved South London to some extent in this matter. But I understand that he is unable to do so. Considering, however, that all the damage was done in the West End, and that the people who did it undoubtedly came from the East End, and considering the geographical line provided by the Thames separating these parts of London from the South, I think I am entitled to renew my protest on behalf of South London.

MR. CHILDERS: I am afraid I cannot consent to what the hon. Member suggests, and I cannot admit his contention that all the rioters came from the East End alone.

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. CHILDERS: At the end of the clause, I beg to move the following Amendment:—

"Where it is shown, in manner provided by this Act, that such person received, by way of insurance or otherwise, any sum to recoup him for such injury, stealing, or destruction, the compensation otherwise payable to him under this Act shall, if exceeding such sum, be reduced by the amount thereof, and in any other case shall not be paid, and the payer of such sum shall be entitled to compensation under this Act in respect of the sum so paid as if he had suffered the said injury, stealing, or destruction, and any policy of insurance given by such payer shall continue in force as if he had made no such payment."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 3 *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Appeal as to award or refusal of compensation).

On Motion of Mr. CHILDERS, the following Amendments made:—Page 2, line 12, leave out "one hundred and thirty;" lines 17 and 18, leave out "shall include all costs," and insert—

"May, if the appeal succeeds, be increased by such reasonable sum for costs as the arbitrator thinks just."

Line 29, at end, add—

"And in case of such arbitrator dying or becoming incapable to act before he has made an award upon all appeals under this Act, another arbitrator shall be appointed in manner aforesaid, and the appeals shall be determined in the same manner as if he had been the arbitrator originally appointed, and so on as often as occasion requires."

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): There are on the Estimates sums amounting to

£6,800 for the salaries of gentlemen who are appointed to perform the duties of Referees or Arbitrators under the existing law. I point out that an Arbitrator is a Judge, and that the Court of an Arbitrator is a Legal Court, and competent to deal with cases for which another Court is proposed to be erected by this clause. The proposal I have to make is that one of the four Referees constituted by the Judicature Act of 1873 as permanent officials attached to the High Court of Justice for trying questions of fact should be Arbitrator. I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, after the word "receiver," leave out to end of Clause, and insert "he may in the prescribed time and manner require his claim to be referred. When the prescribed time shall have elapsed, all such cases shall be brought by the police receiver before a Judge of the High Court of Justice sitting in Chambers, who thereupon shall as of course make an order referring such cases to one of the Official Referees or one of the Masters of the said Court, who shall hear and dispose of the same; and such reference shall have all such incidents and consequences as if each case included in such order were a cause or matter referred to him under the provisions of the Judicature Act, 1873, in which such aggrieved person was plaintiff and the said police receiver defendant."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Charles Russell) (Hackney, S.): I am obliged to say that Her Majesty's Government cannot assent to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wandsworth. I understand that the hon. Member introduces this Amendment in the interests of economy; but I think that a little consideration will show that it would not prove to be so in effect. The object of the clause is to enable a claimant, if he is dissatisfied with the decision of the Police Receiver, to appeal to the Arbitrator, who will have power to deal with the whole of the subject-matter. The Arbitrator will be selected by the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and he will be presumably a man of business. I do not wish to say anything in disparagement of the Official Referees; but I think it would be proper, nevertheless, to say that they have not received the very highest amount of commendation. Each attendance before the Referee would not only involve expense, but the parties, if they chose, could insist on going into the Court of Referees with solicitors and counsel, and, in short, conduct the matter in the most expensive and litigious way. The hon. Member will see that the clause provides that the Arbitrator shall have it in his power to determine the manner in which the case shall be heard; and, if he is a prudent business man, I think he will say—"Let me have a statement of the claim, and the answer of the Police Authorities to it." I think the Amendment of the hon. Member would lead to great expense, and possibly prolonged litigation.

Mr. KIMBER: I do not think the Attorney General understands my point. My suggestion is that the officers already appointed would have precisely the same functions as are given to the Arbitrator by this Bill. It seems to me a waste of means, and an unnecessary burden on the Metropolis, to set up this Arbitrators' Court, when we have already four Tribunals who can deal with these matters.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Sir ROBERT PEEL (Blackburn): Of course, this Bill refers to the riot of the 8th of February, and the Arbitrator to be appointed under it is merely to deal with cases arising out of that particular riot?

Mr. CHILDERS: It has only reference to that riot.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Payment of compensation and expenses, and raising of money).

On Motion of Mr. Childers, the following Amendments made:—Page 2, line 30, after "out of," insert "moneys in his hands on account of;" line 31, leave out "fund;" line 35, leave out from "raised," to the end of line 39, and insert—

"As part of the Metropolitan Police Rate and as an addition to the limit otherwise authorised for such rate, and no portion of the said amount shall be contributed by the Treasury;"

line 41, leave out from "shall," to the end of the line.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Sir ROBERT PEEL: I have one question to ask the Home Secretary with regard to this clause. Has the Police Receiver to go to the houses where damage has been done to ascertain the damage, and then report to the Arbitrator?

Mr. CHILDERS? No, Sir; that is not the construction. The clause provides that those who think they are entitled to compensation for damage shall state it; and if there is no contest about the facts, I do not expect there will be any difficulty.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: But, in the case of the recent riot, the police have been round to the shopkeepers to ask them to assess their damages. Are we to understand that the rich as well as the poor are to be paid money they say they have lost on account of this riot?

Mr. CHILDERS: They will be entitled to receive what they claim, if the police are satisfied that their claims are right. The right hon. Baronet speaks of the poor who have sustained loss, and asks if the rich are also to be compensated? We make no such distinction; but I do hope that claims will not be set up for broken windows.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: The police have to ask individuals what they have lost on each occasion. If the tradesmen in Lambeth return their loss, say, at £5, £10, or £15, we maintain that, although they have lost a very small sum, they are equally entitled to be indemnified for their loss as claimants who live in South Audley Street.

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL: I think the question of the right hon. Baronet has been satisfactorily answered. I point out that this Bill is to meet cases of injury received from persons taking part in a riot; and that there has not, in the opinion of the Home Secretary, been any such riot on the other side of Westminster Bridge, and that, therefore, there can be no claim.

The CHAIRMAN: That question cannot be argued on this clause. Clause 2 has been passed, which says what compensation and under what circumstances compensation may be given.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: I am speaking of the Police Receiver.

The CHAIRMAN: The question of compensation cannot be raised on this clause at all.

Sir ROBERT PEEL: I only want to draw the attention of the Government to the line—

"The police receiver shall pay out of the Metropolitan Police Fund all compensation payable under this Act. . . . ."

Mr. CHILDERS: This clause does not refer to the question of compensation.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 6 *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Definitions).

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 14, to leave out from the word "police," to the end of the Clause, and add "rate means the rate authorised to be levied for raising that proportion of the sum required for defraying the expenses of the Metropolitan Police Force which can be raised by a rate. An empty house or shop shall be deemed for the purposes of this Act to have been occupied by the owner."—(*Mr. Childers.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

An hon. Member: I wish to move that the words referring to the empty houses be omitted.

Mr. CHILDERS: We could not agree to that alteration of the Amendment. If these words were omitted, who would be responsible for damage done to houses that were empty?

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[Bill 10.]

(*Mr. Mayne, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. William O'Brien, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Sheehy.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

Mr. SEXTON, in rising to move, in page 1, after Clause 2, to insert the following New Clause:—

(Definition of demesne, demesne lands, and home farm.)

"The expression 'demesne' or 'demesne lands' in the said Acts and in this Act shall, for all the purposes of the said Acts and of this Act, be held to mean land immediately surrounding and ordinarily occupied with the mansion or other dwelling-house in which the owner usually resides; and the expression 'home farm' shall not be held to apply to more than one farm occupied by the same owner within the area of any sanitary district,"

said: By the Acts of 1883 and 1885, demesne lands were excluded from the operation of those Acts. Cases have arisen in which the landlord has successfully resisted the claim to build cottages on portions of his land by declaring them to be "demesne lands." I am under the impression that when Parliament legislated on this question in 1883, it had no idea that the Act would be so worked as to enable landlords to throw out every claim made upon them. I am willing that any interpretation should be given to the term "demesne;" but, Sir, I know of a case in Ireland where, when a proposal was made to build a cottage on land in the occupation of the landlord, he called the land "home farm," and when a proposal was made to build on another portion of the land, he called that "home farm" also. I am under the impression that there can be only one home farm, and I think that the term should not be held to apply to more than one. There are 160 sanitary districts and 32 counties in Ireland, and therefore it will be seen that the authorities could not build on more than one property owned by the same owner. I beg to move the clause in my name.

New Clause,—(*Mr. Sexton,*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.): I have no wish whatever to prevent the carrying out of the intentions which, I presume, underlie this clause, although I think they are unfortunately chosen. I happen to know many instances in which demesne lands are said to be lands immediately surrounding and occupied with the house. But I know two cases in my own county in which the landlord has a house on one side of the street, town, or village in which he resides, and where the demesne lies on the opposite side. Under the clause of the hon. Member that detached portion would not be held to be demesne land. I cannot think that that was the intention with which the clause was framed. On the question of home farm, I think a similar objection would lie. I am sure that none of us wish that any door should be left open for such action as the hon. Member for Sligo has decribed; but I know that my own home farm has a detached field, which lies between it and the demesne, and I think it would be a great hardship if that should be held not to be demesne land. I think, therefore, it would not be desirable to add this clause to the Bill, as it at present stands, for the reason that it would produce an effect not contemplated by the House.

An hon. MEMBER: The putting of these two stipulations together may often lead to difficulty, because it will frequently happen that a mansion is surrounded by demesne lands which are let away. I would, therefore, propose that the words "ordinarily occupied" should be left out, and the words "immediately surrounding" should be left standing. I know a case where the mansion is surrounded by a garden fence, the land being let away.

MR. SPEAKER: I would point out to the two hon. Members, that if they do not object to the principle they should allow the clause to be read a second time, and then should move Amendments to it.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause read a second time.

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford): The hon. and gallant Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) has shown most conclusively that great hardship would be done, against the intention of the clause, if the words "immediately surrounding" were left in. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has shown equally conclusively that the words "ordinarily occupied," in cases where the demesne has been let for grazing purposes, will operate in a manner which is not desired. If, therefore, the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) presses his clause in this form, injustice and hardship will be done that I am sure is not contemplated by the House—injustice and hardship that were guarded against in the last Acts by no definition of this kind being inserted. I would venture to remind the hon. Gentleman that the cases he has spoken of, of landlords taking advantage of these provisions to defeat the objects of the Act, were not brought before the Select Committee, which went exhaustively into this part of the subject. In the same way as to "home farm," though landlords might take advantage of having several farms in their hands, the phrase "sanitary district" is a very wide one. I hope the hon. Member will not press the clause.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I wish to point out a few errors into which hon.

Gentlemen have just fallen. In the first place, land that is not "ordinarily occupied" would not come under the definition of demesne land. One hon. Gentleman pointed out that it would be a hard thing to deprive the landlord of a part of a home farm, because it might not be immediately beside the dwelling-house. A home farm may be a couple of miles from the dwelling-house. Not a single site has been taken from landlords, and not a single piece of land has been taken from property in their own occupation up to the present; and if any clause can give protection against that in the future, it is this clause that hon. Members are now contesting. The hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Brodrick) pointed out that a landlord may have a number of unoccupied farms in his possession. Every farm from which a tenant has been evicted does not become a home farm for that reason. They are distinctly not home farms for that reason. [MR. BRODRICK: Who said they were?] The hon. Gentleman pointed to the difficulty that would arise from the landlord having a number of home farms, and said that he might take one or two, or more, farms temporarily. Those, distinctly, would not be home farms, and on that point I think the hon. Gentleman is slightly mistaken.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. JOHN MORLEY) (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I am not sure that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) is well-advised in endeavouring to define demesne land. There is no definition of it in the Land Acts, in the Acts of 1870 or 1881, or in the Labourers Acts. There have been various judgments and decisions on the point already in the Land Court, and I should have thought it would have been much better to leave the decision of the matter to that process, and to leave those things without definition. The more important part of the clause, from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, is, no doubt, that as to home farms; but I must say that, after having carefully examined that part of the subject, Her Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion that there is no objection to be taken to it on principle. There are some imperfections in the wording which may be remedied later on.

MR. GIBSON (Liverpool, Walton): I must admit I quite agree with some of the observations I have heard in regard to home farms. I think a hardship might be occasioned, and I will tell hon. Members why. The clause says—

> "The expression 'home farm' shall not be held to apply to more than one farm occupied by the same owner within the area of any sanitary district."

There might be two very small farms, or two farms of very different areas, and it is perfectly obvious that the interests of the landlord in them must be quite different. One landlord might have one large home farm, and that would be safe; whereas another might have two small ones of only a quarter the acreage, and they would be affected by this provision. I agree that the Amendment would be likely to cause a great deal of litigation. As I understand the hon. Member for Sligo, his objection to the word "demesne" arises from the fact that a number of sham demesnes have been started. But that is a question which can always be raised on appeal, and will always be easy to get rid of; and, on the other hand, there are cases where real demesnes have been decided not be demesnes at all. The very words which are used in this clause may have the effect, in many cases, of causing demesne lands to be treated as other than demesne lands. Then what is the meaning of the words "immediately surrounding?" Do they mean 50 acres, or 500 acres, or only a small garden? It behoves us, in view of possible litigation, to say what is the amount of land, and what the amount of contiguity. [MR. SEXTON: "Ordinarily occupied" gives the explanation.] I agree that "ordinarily occupied" forms part of the legal definition of demesne, for when a man ceases to ordinarily occupy land the land ceases to be his demesne. I only make these observations in a friendly spirit towards the Bill. The attitude of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on this Bench, I take it, should be to simplify the Bill and make it a fair and proper measure. I do not wish to offer opposition; but I see the possibility of great unfairness coming about unless some proper definition as to the extent of a home farm be given.

MR. BRODRICK: I beg to move to amend the clause, by leaving out the words—

"Expression 'demesne' or 'demesne lands' in the said Acts and in this Act shall, for all the purposes of the said Acts and of this Act, be held to mean land immediately surrounding and ordinarily occupied with the mansion or other dwelling-house in which the owner usually resides; and the."

Amendment proposed, to leave out all the words after the word "expression," to the words "home farm."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. SEXTON: I feel obliged to resist this Amendment. I have received representations from various parts of Ireland, which lead me to believe that the words the hon. Member wishes to leave out are necessary. I am told that on these two pretexts, that land is demesne land, or home farm land, landlords have been able to keep land out of the operation of the Act, and it has had to be taken from the tenants who pos- sess very small farms. I do not know any such case as that the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Gibson) put. Home farms are very substantial. They are conducted on the system of ground culture; and I am sure the clause would not be a hardship in connection with any legitimate home farms. The hon. and learned Gentleman says it would promote litigation; but so ingenious a lawyer as the hon. and learned Gentleman would no doubt be able to promote litigation on anything. I think, however, that these words "immediately surrounding" and "ordinarily occupied" would enable the Local Government Board, or anyone else, to decide what is demesne land and what is not. My impression, considering the present state of the land interest in Ireland, is that if the House agrees to these words, the landlords will be found to raise no objection, and the result will be to give a great impulse to the Act.

Mr. PLUNKET (Dublin University): I understand the position of the Government is, that they agree with the reasonableness of the view of my hon. and learned Friend who sits beside me (Mr. Gibson) as to the inadvisability of endeavouring to define demesne lands, but that they do not agree to the view held on this side of the House as to the second part of the clause, the object of which is to define home farms. As to the hon. Member for Sligo, his objection applies to the opposition raised to the second part of the clause. [Mr. Sexton: I object to the Amendment entirely.] The Amendment only deals with the proposal in this clause to attempt further to define what "demesne land" is; and I must say that, so far as my opinion goes, I entirely agree with what has fallen from my hon. and learned Friend beside me, that any attempt to pass a hasty definition of this kind to vary the law as it stands on existing decisions as to the meaning of "demesne land," is much more likely to lead to further confusion than to facilitate the operation of this Act. As I understand the object of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment, it is not to enable landlords to frustrate the working of the Act, but to prevent litigation by confirming the law on the subject of the definition of demesne lands. I hope, therefore, that the Government will support the hon. Gentleman in his Amendment. He only proposes to deal with the first part of the clause now inserted in the Bill, and, as I understood it, his view was the one we all adopted when we assented to the clause.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I agree that a difficulty arises on the second part of the clause, and is not affected by the Amendment of the hon. Member. The difficulties of the construction of a definition of demesnes in the clause are so great that I feel sure that litigation will be greatly increased, instead of being diminished, by allowing the clause to stand in its present form. I will not detain the House longer than to point out one instance. The clause might be construed as affecting the demesne of an officer on foreign service, on the ground that that officer had no residence there. I think, therefore, it will be the duty of Her Majesty's Government to support the Amendment to this part of the clause.

Mr. CHANCE: I would point out that the right hon. Gentleman is slightly at sea as to the legal meaning of the word "reside." Residence does not require a man to physically occupy a certain spot. The law is fully satisfied if the owner keeps an occupied house on the land on which he is said to reside, and keeps the land in his possession. If that is the right hon. Gentleman's objection to the acceptance of the first part of this clause, I would ask him to take legal advice on the matter and to reconsider his positon.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I should like to say a word in reference to the opposition to this Amendment. First of all, what strikes me as a strong argument is the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Liverpool (Mr. Gibson). He said, or led us to believe, that great uncertainty exists in Ireland as to what is demesne land. He says appeals have been made to the Court, and that in his own experience land had been declared not to be demesne land which really was demesne land, and that land had been declared to be demesne land which really was not so. Well, what we want is something that will be a guide to the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is a strong argument in favour of the proposed definition. His statement is that at present the definition is in a state of fog. It would seem, from his remarks, that no one knows what is demesne land and what is not. It must be remembered that we have Local Government Board Inspectors going about the country who have to make Reports; and I think it will be admitted that this clause would be a very plain and simple guidance to them, and I think the objection of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has been completely removed by my hon. Friend. We know that a person who ordinarily or usually resides at a certain place means the person who keeps up the residence or establishment in such a condition that if he chooses to come and reside there he can do so. In Ireland, as Irish Members are aware, there are large tracts of land which are continuous of the land which is really the demesne of the landlord, but which are not used for the purposes of demesnes, but are let out by public auction from year to year for the purposes of grazing. I cannot see why this House should desire to allow these men to set up a claim to such lands, and prevent their herds or agricultural labourers from having proper residences thereon.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I rise—because there is a strong desire on the part of hon. Gentlemen who represent Ireland to have a workable clause made out—to express an unbiassed opinion. I can imagine no words which could lead to greater difficulty than these—

> "The expression 'demesne' or 'demesne lands' in the said Acts and in this Act shall, for all the purposes of the said Acts and of this Act, be held to mean land immediately surrounding and ordinarily occupied with the mansion or other dwelling-house in which the owner usually resides."

No words would lead to greater uncertainty and dispute; and I am the more confirmed in that view from having heard the views of hon. Members who have spoken, and particularly those of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. What does he propose? Why, that the clause is not to include lands that are regularly held for the purposes of grazing. Whatever may be the case in Ireland, if such a thing were passed for England or Scotland, you would find cases where the grass up to the doors of the dwelling-house or mansion of the demesne is let annually for the purposes of grazing, and is let for that purpose though it is part of the demesne. A proprietor may not choose to work the grazing of his parks, and, therefore, lets it; but the parks are none the less parts of the demesne. The proprietor lets them because it is convenient for him to do so, and because, though he does not work it himself, he desires the grazing to be carried on. Every word of explanation that has been given by hon. Members in favour of this clause, and every one of the instances they have adduced, simply confirms me in the opinion that any attempt to define these demesnes will lead to greater difficulty than could be experienced without such definitions. That being the case, I would, acting on my own independent judgment in this matter, support Her Majesty's Government if they continue to support the Amendment. I am very certain that it would be much better to leave the thing as it stands than to attempt, in this rough-and-ready way, to give a definition of this matter that is so difficult to define. It seems to me that if we are to put into a clause of this kind words giving definitions based on individual cases from one part of Ireland or another part of Ireland, there will be no end to the thing, and you will never have a clear definition.

Mr. SEXTON: I desire to disabuse the mind of the right hon. and learned

Gentleman who has just spoken. The letter to which I referred, and to which he no doubt alludes when he speaks of individual cases, was written by a person who lives in Ireland. Well, no doubt, he is bound to live in some individual place; but this gentleman is one of wide experience. It is strange that words which are approved by lawyers at one time are objected to by lawyers at other times. These words that I propose were in the Act of 1883 as an alternative definition; but that fact does not seem to preclude Irish lawyers from raising a fog as to the meaning of the word "demesne." It is exceedingly strange that words drawn by the most eminent lawyers in Ireland should be exposed to the contempt of one of the most eminent lawyers from Scotland. As to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, I would ask him if he really has an objection to the first part of this clause? He spoke of officials on active service—the Governor General of Canada and the Viceroy of India, for instance—being liable to have their demesnes interfered with by reason of their not being physically resident in their mansions; but in order to overcome the difficulty, if any exists, we might say "the owner's mansion or dwelling-house," leaving out the words "in which the owner usually resides." All we want to provide is that the demesne lands shall be lands that can be fairly said to surround the dwelling-house, whether the owner lives there at the moment or not. This proposal, I think, would get rid of the difficulty as to the Governor ral of Canada and the Viceroy of India.

Mr. SHEEHY (Galway, S.): I hope the objection to the Amendment will not be pressed. The landlords seem to desire to press their interests in this case to an inordinate extent, for they not merely want to have demesne lands in possession of occupiers, but they want power to include in demesne lands any land to which they may choose to give the name "demesne land." ["No, no!"] Excuse me, but that is so. A landlord may have three or four demesne lands, and although he resides only upon one, he desires to stick by all the rest, and have them preserved to his interests as against the interests of the people at large. I would urge upon the Government that they should not stand by their objection to this clause, because the landlords, although before the new electorate they do not like to put themselves against the labourers, are really against them at heart. They are trying to do indirectly that which, if directly questioned upon it, they would altogether disclaim. They want to preserve their demesnes and properties to themselves in the future as they have done in the past. The landlord has a perfect right to the lands in his possession, no doubt; but he urges his claim over the border when he asks the House to say that all lands which he may choose to call in his own occupation, but which, as a matter of fact, he is drawing a rental from, may be exempted from the operation of this Bill, as though he were actually farming them himself.

Mr. PYNE (Waterford, W.): I rise on this occasion to say a few words as a tenant farmer. I must say that the last Labourers Act worked very badly, in so far as that in the Union in which I am a Guardian one of the largest landowners—namely, the Duke of Devonshire, or, rather, his agent—wrote to me to say that he objected to give any Board of Guardians half-an-acre in fee. I may say that I have found that the landlords all along the line have refused in every sort of way to grant this land, and have been encouraged by the Local Government Board to put all sorts of obstacles in the way of the working of the Labourers Act. Not only do they want to secure what they may call their demesne lands, but they also want to secure to themselves their home farms. A home farm, to them, is every bit of land from which they have power to evict a tenant. It seems to me that nothing save real demesnes should be excluded from this Bill.

Mr. GIBSON: I wish to correct a mistake into which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) has fallen. He says the words he proposes to insert are those wherein the Act of 1883 has an alternative definition for the word demesne; but if the hon. Member will refer to the Act, he will see that that is not the case.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.): What the hon. Member for Sligo objects to is that the landlords should have the right to claim a multiplicity of home farms.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 50; Noes 98: Majority 48.—(Div. List, No. 45.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the further proceeding on Consideration of the Bill, as amended, be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Johnston.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Charles Russell) (Hackney, S.): I hope the hon. Member will, at all events, allow us to finish this clause.

Mr. JOHNSTON: Then I will withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL: I would throw out this suggestion for the consideration of the hon. Gentleman opposite—whether it would not be well to leave the remaining part of the clause as it stands, so that it will read—

> "The expression 'home farm' shall not be held to apply to more than one farm occupied by the same owner within the area of any sanitary district;"

and then to add—

> "except in the case of two farms being occupied as aforesaid, neither of which exceeds [blank] acres."

Mr. SEXTON: I certainly must say that that is an extraordinary proposal. One landlord may have a very big home farm, and another landlord may have two very small ones, as has been suggested by an hon. Member below me, and that would enable the owner of the large one to escape. If one demesne will satisfy the hon. and learned Gentleman's purpose in one case, why not in this?

Mr. GIBSON: The clause will require some further amendment. The question is which farm is to be the home farm if a man has two larger than the stipulated limit. We should have words in the clause to specify that.

Sir CHARES RUSSELL: Both will be home farms if they do not exceed the stipulated area.

Mr. GIBSON: But suppose one does exceed it, and the other does not, from which is the land to be taken under this Bill? That will have to be provided for in the Amendment. It might not be a very pleasant thing to allow the Sanitary Authority an option in the matter.

Mr. SEXTON: The hon. and learned Gentleman's ingenuity would have more point if he had looked into the existing Acts. By the Act of last year it is provided that when a site is not acceptable to the landlord he can offer one somewhere else. If he has two farms and does not want to give a site in one he can give it in the other.

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL: I would propose to fill the blank with the figure "30" acres.

Mr. SEXTON: Take "25." The Inspectors of the Local Government Board said that the size of the farm should not exceed 20 acres.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. and learned Member substitute 25 acres?

Sir CHARLES RUSSELL: Yes.

Amendment proposed,

> At the end of the Clause, to add the words "except in the case of two farms being occupied as aforesaid neither of which exceeds twenty-five acres."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. BRODRICK: I should object to that limitation. In my opinion the limitation should not be less than 100 acres; but the Government have struck a mean between the two. I am intimately acquainted with cases where immediately one of two home farms would become available were the limit of 25 acres to be accepted. I hope the Government will stand firm to their determination, which is a fair compromise between the two parties.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: The hon. Member speaks as if we were inflicting some tremendous blow upon the landed interest in Ireland. All we are doing is giving landlords an opportunity of doing something for the interest of the whole community. The difference between 25 acres and 50 acres is not very considerable; 100 acres is clearly entirely out of the question.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *added.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the further proceeding on Consideration of the Bill, as amended, be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Johnston.*)

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I think we might almost get through with the Bill in a few minutes.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. MAYNE (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to move, in page 5, after Clause 12, to insert the following Clauses:—

(Compulsory purchase of land.)

> "The jurisdiction vested in the Irish Land Commission by 'The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1885,' in reference to the exercise of compulsory powers of taking land for a term of years shall be, and the same is hereby extended, so as to include the case of compulsory powers of taking land by purchase, and in any such case the sanitary authority, instead of pursuing the course provided in the Lands Clauses Acts, may apply to the Irish Land Commission to do anything which, under the said Acts, or any of them, may be done by an arbitrator, and any judgment delivered upon any such matter by the Irish Land Commission, as defined in section twenty-three of 'The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1885,' shall be in all respects as valid and effectual as the award of an arbitrator under the Acts aforesaid."

I do not think this clause will cause much delay. I propose to confer on the Irish Land Commission power to deal with compulsory purchase cases just as the Act of last year conferred on them power to deal with compulsory leasing cases.

New Clause,—(*Mr. Mayne,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I only want to say one or two words. We have no objection to the hon. Member's object; but grave difficulties may arise from the manner in which the clause is worded. I would propose that he should withdraw the clause, on my undertaking that when the measure reaches "another place," the Government will have a provision drawn up to effect the object he has in view. There are many different points in the clause which will require consideration.

MR. MAYNE: I will accept that assurance, and withdraw the clause.

MR. BRODRICK: I hope the hon. Gentleman will provide an appeal to the Land Commission, so that these matters may not be entirely settled by the Sub-Commission.

MR. SEXTON: Certainly.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. SPEAKER: Now the hon. Member (Mr. Sexton) can move his Amendment, on page 1, line 21—

> "The expression 'agricultural labourers' shall include hand-loom weavers and fishermen doing agricultural work as aforesaid, and shall also include herdsmen."

MR. SEXTON: I think that my clause as it stands on the Paper—namely,

> "The expression 'agricultural labourer' in the said Acts and this Act shall mean a man or woman who does agricultural work for hire, at any season of the year, on the land of some other person or persons, and shall include hand-loom weavers and fishermen doing agricultural work as aforesaid, and shall also include herdsmen,"

down to the word "persons" is already in the Bill. What is now to be done is to leave out all the words after the word "persons." I propose to leave out the words you recited.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the Clause (Definition of agricultural labourer) the words—

> "And shall include hand-loom weavers and fishermen doing agricultural work as aforesaid, and shall also include herdsmen."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. PLUNKET: It is difficult to know what is the effect of the clause, because it has been a good deal altered. As I understand it from the way you put it, Sir, the proposal is to omit the first three lines in the proposed new clause. If the Government thoroughly understand what is being done, well and good. I shall reserve any criticism on that for a clearer atmosphere.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: The difficulty arises from the form in which the clause appears on the Paper. The more convenient course would be to omit the clause as it stands, and substitute new words altogether.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. BRODRICK: As to this clause, at this late hour I shall deal with it as briefly as I can. If hon. Gentlemen will turn to Clause 9, Sub-section (*b*), I think they will see that this is very important, and has a considerable bearing on the rest of the Bill. I would make an appeal to the hon. Member for Sligo. The matter stands in this way at the present moment. By the Acts of 1883 and 1885, we have successively given to the Sanitary Authority power to build new cottages and attach allotments to them, to take old cottages and repair them, or to take old ones that do not need repair and put allotments to them. This sub-section goes further, and says that where no cottages are taken, and there is no connection with house accommodation, allotments shall be taken and given to the inhabitants of neighbouring villages or towns. I wish to make an appeal to the hon. Gentleman on this ground. I think this provision will greatly limit the action and usefulness of the Bill. Everyone who has studied the question at all knows that there is great difficulty in getting Sanitary Authorities to put these Acts in force. The difficulty lies in the enormous expenditure of putting up cottages and repairing them, and the consequence is we have been brought almost to a deadlock. The great object of this Bill, as I understand it, is to remove that deadlock; but, side by side with the provisions that will do that, they propose to put in provisions that will give the Sanitary Authorities a very easy means of doing nothing at all for the labourers. They have only to put their eye upon a piece of land, and take it for an allotment, by the simple process of buying it compulsorily, and then they may give up the other portions of the Bill and adopt the dilatory methods which have been described from these Benches. The hon. Member may say it is a foregone conclusion that the Bill will be put into operation advantageously to the labourers; but I submit it is nothing of the kind, and I have no doubt that if the tenant farmers could be appealed to at this moment, they would unanimously go against this sub-section. In my opinion, this is not a landlord's question at all—not in the least. We all know the land hunger that exists in Ireland. The desire to possess land is the strongest feeling of the tenant farmers of Ireland, and you propose to take from them a portion of their property and give it to the labourers. Her Majesty's Government must consider whether this is a fit subject for a new departure altogether, for I am strongly of opinion that if those who labour in the towns of Ireland and are not resident in the country are to have allotments given to them, there is every bit as good reason for the inhabitants of towns in the United Kingdom to have them. If that is to be so, I humbly submit that it is a subject which ought to be dealt with in a comprehensive measure for both countries, and that this is not the time or the opportunity for taking from the tenant farmers by piecemeal what the House spent many days of trouble in giving them in 1881. Although hon. Members may be justified in urging that the labourer has a right to some portion of the soil, they interfere with that right if they interfere with his ability to make his home comfortable. I would point out that this Bill is not yet eight nights old, and the previous Act has certainly not failed, because it has not yet had time to be properly tried. Seeing that the Party opposite are almost pledged to deal comprehensively with this great subject, and seeing also that we have for Ireland the Act of 1885, which gives them greater power than we have in England, I think we ought to stop there. It will be time enough to come here for extended powers when it is found that the Act already in existence has not worked properly. What is to happen to our Legislature if we are to come here, year after year, to amend Acts which have never had an opportunity of being tried? I hope that if the hon. Member adheres to this clause, the Government will give their most serious consideration to this matter, and will bear in mind that the Act of 1881, which has been so often quoted as being the full benefit that it was intended to confer upon the tenant, is interfered with by this Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 25, to leave out sub-section (*b.*)—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL: I think the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. Brodrick) was one which, if it was to have been delivered at all, ought to have been delivered long before. It savoured strongly of a second reading speech. He seems to have forgotten that this matter was discussed the other evening in Committee; but on that occasion, which would have been the proper one for him to deal with the subject, he did not lend his presence to the debate, although he eventually dropped in and moved to report Progress. That was his sole contribution to the debate. Up to the present, hon. Members both below and above the Gangway have discussed this matter in a business-like and harmonious way; and I hope that we shall go on discussing it in that manner throughout the future stages of the Bill. What is the hon. Member's objection? He objected to the compulsory power being given. But is it a very great advance to say that what this House has already admitted may be done voluntarily shall, under certain circumstances, be done compulsorily? The hon. Member in his speech attacked the whole Bill; and I should like to know what he meant by saying that this question ought to be put back until the Government were ready to deal with it in a comprehensive way. This matter has been already considered in Committee, and I think that it is one in which the Government ought not to interfere now. Therefore, I shall support the clause.

Mr. PLUNKET: I do not think that my hon. Friend who has opposed this Amendment laid himself open to the somewhat fiery answer of the hon. and learned Gentleman. It is a subject on which he has a very strong opinion, and although I know we all ought to be here always, we often find that that is impossible. I quite agree with my hon. Friend that this large subsection is a matter which ought to be dealt with in connection with the larger question of allotments, and not in a Labourers Bill. But under the present circumstances of the House, and as he cannot obtain the support of the Government, I will appeal to him not to go to a division.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I wish emphatically to repudiate the suggestion of the Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) that I and those who act with me have any intention of sitting in a Parliament in Ireland.

Mr. BRODRICK: After what has fallen from my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Plunket), I do not wish to take up the time of the House further; but I must dissent from the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General as to my absence on a previous occasion. My absence was due to the misfortune of the Government going out of Committee an hour sooner than they expected.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I rise to Order. The hon. Member has already spoken.

Mr. BRODRICK: I will not contest the matter; but I will point out that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) made two speeches a little while ago.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. SEXTON (Sligo, S.): I beg to move, after Clause 9, at end, to add the following sub-section:—"(*c.*) Any existing cottage." The object of this Amendment is to get over this difficulty. As the matter stands at present, if a cottage is in good repair the Guardians have no power to buy it; and the difficulty would therefore arise of the labourer having one landlord for his land and another landlord for his cottage, and that may lead to this further difficulty, that supposing the labourer displeases the landlord by taking a cottage from the Guardians, he might raise the rent for the land so as to make the house and land of no use whatever to him. What I want is to enable the Guardians to purchase any existing cottage, as as to obviate this difficulty.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 26, at the end of Clause 9, to insert the following sub-section:—"(*c.*) Any existing cottage."—(*Mr Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I am very sorry that, in spite of the ingenious argument of the hon. Member for Sligo, I am unable to support this Amendment, which would create a very great extension of the existing principle. The existing Act punishes the owner of a cottage out of repair by giving the Guardians compulsory powers of purchase; but I cannot see by what principle of equity you can give compulsory powers in the case of a cottage that is in good repair.

Mr. SEXTON: Because the permissive powers are null and void.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: The object of the Bill is to provide suitable dwellings for the labourers; but if they have them at present, then I say it is inconsistent with the spirit of the Act to introduce the compulsory principle.

Colonel NOLAN: The Chief Secretary has been so attentive to the wishes of Irish Members with regard to this Bill, that I am sorry he is not able to accept this Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman regards this matter from an English point of view, and not from the point of view of Ireland, where matters are very different. For my part, I know that this is one of those points which the people of Ireland consider most important, and if it is not accepted the person who will be punished will be the man who puts up a good cottage for himself. If he puts up a bad cottage, then you give him half-an-acre of land; but if he puts up a good one, then you deprive him of the benefits of this Bill.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I think the right hon. Gentleman is labouring under a mistake when he suggests that it would be a hardship to take a half-acre of land compulsorily. The owner will get a good price for it, and, therefore, I think the right hon. Gentleman has missed his point. The position will be this, that if the tenant builds a decent cottage and has no land, the Board of Guardians have no power to give him any. The cottage will not be a holding for which a fair rent can be fixed or perpetuity of tenure obtained under the Land Acts; but if the landlord's land is near by, and they give him some of that, the landlord may become so annoyed that he may put on a large rent on the cottage and drive the tenant out.

MR. SEXTON: I will not press the matter further at this hour of the night; but I feel very strongly that very serious results will happen in regard to the working of the Bill, if this provision is not inserted.

MR. BRODRICK: This Amendment would give the Guardians the power to take the whole cottage property of Ireland without any distinction whatever, and without reference to the question of sanitary condition. It is a most extraordinary principle, and I am glad the Government have not accepted it.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 48; Noes 66: Majority 18.—(Div. List, No. 46.)

Bill to be read the third time *To-morrow*.

CROFTERS (SCOTLAND) (NO. 2) [ADVANCES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to make advances, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, to the Fishery Board for Scotland, for the purposes of loans to persons engaged in the fishing industry, under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to amend the Law relating to the Tenure of Land by Crofters in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

CAPE RACE LIGHTHOUSE BILL.

On Motion of Mr. C. Acland, Bill to provide for the transfer to the Dominion of Canada of the Lighthouse at Cape Race, Newfoundland, and its appurtenances; and for other purposes connected therewith, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. C. Acland, Mr. Mundella, and Mr. Osborne Morgan.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 151.]

BURIAL GROUNDS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1855) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Preston Bruce, Bill to amend "The Burial Grounds (Scotland) Act, 1855," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Preston Bruce, Sir Herbert Maxwell, and Mr. Donald Crawford.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 152.]

House adjourned at half after Three o'clock.

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LONDON: CORNELIUS BUCK AND SON, 22, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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c. Resolutions in Committee *Mar* 22

Resolutions reported, and agreed to *Mar* 23, 1727

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 16th day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and then agreed to by the House, be now read; and the same was read, as followeth:

That 61,400 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services, for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, including 12,900 Royal Marines

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army; read 1° * [Bill 150]

Read 2° * *Mar* 25

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Volunteer Capitation Grant

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 22, To leave out from "That," add "for the thorough efficiency, maintenance, and development of the Volunteer Force, an immediate increase in the present capitation grant is absolutely and urgently necessary" (*Mr. Howard Vincent*) *v.*, 1506; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 187, N. 166; M. 21; Div. List, Ayes and Noes, 1534

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Arrears of Rent (Ireland) Act, 1882—*Mr. Henry M'Dougall, Agent of the Gormanstown Estate, Co. Meath*

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 12, To leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of the Government to institute a prosecution of Mr. Henry M'Dougall, agent of the Gormanstown estate in the county of Meath, Ireland, who recovered money under the Arrears Act in a case in which no arrears were due, either under the section of the Arrears Act which is concerned with such cases, or for perjury" (*Mr. Clancy*) *v.*, 713; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn

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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 17, 1057
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Dr. Cameron*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 179, N. 202; M. 23; D. L., A. and N, 1129; words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off for six months [Bill 6]

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c. Committee *—r.p. *Mar* 10 [Bill 92]
Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again" (*Sir Joseph Pease*); after short debate, Question put; A. 128, N. 69; M. 59 (D. L. 32)
Moved, "That the Committee have leave to sit again To-morrow" (*Sir R. Assheton Cross*), 914; Amendt. to leave out "To-morrow," insert "upon Wednesday, the 31st day of this instant March" (*Mr. Sexton*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn; main Question put, and agreed to
Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 16, 980

Coal Mines Regulation Act—Weights and Scales
Question, Mr. Forwood; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 18, 1158

Coal Statistics, 1885
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Commissioners Clauses Act (1847) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Warmington, Mr. Thomas Price, Mr. Winterbotham*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 10 [Bill 135]

Committee of Council on Education—Vice President (*see* Playfair, Right Hon. Sir Lyon)

Compensation for Damages Bill (*Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Broadhurst*)
c. Residents in North Lambeth, Question, General Fraser; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 15, 804
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Compton, Lord W. G., *Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon*
Trade and Commerce — British Commercial Interests Abroad — Instructions to H.M. Agents, 1801

Compulsory Purchase of Land Compensation Bill (*Mr. M'Laren, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Joseph Bolton, Mr. Jesse Collings*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 17 [Bill 145]
2R. deferred, after short debate *Mar* 24, 1771

Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
c. Resolution in Committee *Mar* 16
Resolution reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 17
Read 2° * *Mar* 18
Committee *; Report *Mar* 19
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Read 3° * *Mar* 23
l. Read 1ª * (*Earl Granville*) *Mar* 25

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
c. Resolutions in Committee *Mar* 18
Resolutions reported, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 19
Read 2° * *Mar* 22
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Read 3° * *Mar* 25

Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866-1869
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866-1869, ought to be repealed" (*Mr. Stansfeld*) *Mar* 16, 981
Amendt. at end, add "due provision at the same time being made for the continued maintenance of hospital accommodation with adequate treatment of women voluntarily seeking admission and medical care" (*Sir John Kennaway*); Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after debate, Question put; A. 131, N. 245; M. 114 (D. L. 35); main Question put, and agreed to

Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal Bill (*Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Stansfeld, Sir Robert Fowler*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *Mar* 15 [Bill 33]

Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal (No. 2) Bill (*Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. James Stuart, Sir Robert Fowler, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Burt, Mr. Henry Wilson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 18 [Bill 147]
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 25, 1908
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Cavendish Bentinck*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
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Cooke, Mr. C. W. R., *Newington, W.*
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(*Mr. Charles James, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Mel r*)
c. Committee*—R.P. *Mar* 23 [Bill 26]

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Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Minimum of Attendance at Yeomanry Cavalry Troop Drills, 1468

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Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh ; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 25, 1781

Corrupt Practices Act—Political Associations
Question, Mr. Puleston ; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) *Mar* 22, 1483

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(*Mr. Trevelyan, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 8, 125
Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "it is requisite that any measure intended for the improvement of the condition of the population of the Islands on the West Coast of Scotland should make provision for assisting the voluntary emigration of families from congested districts" (*Mr. Ramsay*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
Questions, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 15, 826; Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 18, 1184

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c. Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *Mar* 11, 600
Res. reported *Mar* 12

Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2) [Advances]
c. Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *Mar* 25, 1950
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Dixon-Hartland, Mr. F. D., *Middlesex, Uxbridge*
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  Public Health Acts (Improvement Expenses), 2R. 367

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  Metropolis, Disturbances in the, Res. 752

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l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *Mar* 22, 1455
  Moved, "That the Second Reading of this Bill, and of any other Bill containing provisions for payment of interest out of capital during construction of works, be postponed until the 12th day of April next" (*The Lord Houghton*); after short debate, Motion agreed to

Douglas, Mr. A. Akers-, *Kent, St. Augustine's*
  Drowned Persons (Discovery and Interment), 2R. 1773
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Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill
(*Mr. Leveson Gower, Mr. John Morley*)
c. Read 2° * *Mar* 8 [Bill 119]
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l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Sudeley*) *Mar* 19 (No. 38)

Drill Grounds Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Sandhurst*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *Mar* 5, 1 (No. 24)
  Committee * ; Report *Mar* 8
  Read 3ª * *Mar* 9
c. Read 1° * *Mar* 16 [Bill 143]
  Read 2° * *Mar* 22
  Committee * ; Report ; read 3° *Mar* 25

Drowned Persons (Discovery and Interment) Bill (*Colonel Hughes, Mr. Boord, Mr. Baggallay, Mr. Norris, Colonel Duncan*)
c. Read 2°, after long debate *Mar* 24, 1772 [Bill 123]

Duckham, Mr. T., *Herefordshire, Leominster*
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Durham—Eviction of Pitmen
  Questions, Mr. A. E. Pease, Mr. John Wilson (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring), Mr. Arthur O'Connor ; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 458

Dyke, Right Hon. Sir W. H., *Kent, Dartford*
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Eastern Roumelia—Customs Cordon
  Question, Mr. Bourke ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 8, 116

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  Board Schools — Infant School Attendance, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 11, 445
  Religious Instruction in Board Schools, Question, Admiral Field ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 15, 818
  School Board Elections, Question, Mr. T. Fry ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 12, 624
  Pupil Teachers' Scholarship Examinations—Publication of Results, Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 15, 790
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Dan-y-Graig School, Swansea, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 8, 105
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The Garrisons in the Soudan, Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) *Mar* 22, 1490

Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Viscount Bury*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Mar* 19 (No. 40)

ELGIN, Earl of
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Emigration—Certified Industrial Schools and Voluntary Training Homes — Assisted Emigration of Children
Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) *Mar* 19, 1354

Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Dr. Commins, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Jesse Collings*)
c. Referred to a Select Committee *Mar* 11
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Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2) Bill
(*Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Joicey, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Lockwood*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate, and committed to the Select Committee on Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment Bill [Bill 76]

Employers' Liability Act, 1880 — *The London and North-Western Railway Company*
Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 19, 1359; Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 22, 1496

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GRIMTHORPE, Lord
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Moved "That no system of taxation can be equitable unless a direct assessment be imposed on the owners of Ground Rents, and on the owners of increased values imparted to land by building operations, or other improvements, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes" (*Mr. Saunders*) *Mar* 16, 999
Amendt. to leave out from "That" to the first word "on," in line 2, insert "the question of imposing a direct assessment" (*Mr. Lawson*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, and negatived
Question proposed, "That the words, 'That the question of imposing,' &c." be there inserted," 1048; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Amendt. to leave out from "improvements," to end, add "be referred to the Select Committee on Town Holdings" (*Mr. Lawson*) *v.*; Question, "That the words, &c.," put, and negatived; words added; main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to

GURDON, Mr. R. T., *Norfolk, Mid*
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HALL, Mr. A. W., *Oxford*
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Metropolis, Disturbances in the—Duties of Soldiers, 1618
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Liabilities of Harbour Commissions, Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. C. T. D. Acland) *Mar* 19, 1350

Harbours of Refuge
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 12, To leave out from "That," add "in view of the existing depression of trade, and the large number of persons out of employment, this House is of opinion that the present is a favourable time for the Government to carry out certain valuable and necessary public works, more especially the formation of Harbours of Refuge, at various points upon the Coast" (*Mr. Dawson*) *v.*, 643; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Amendt. withdrawn

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- Parliament – Business of the House—Notices of Questions, Res. 713

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- Ireland—Bankruptcy Courts—Local Court at Belfast, 1177

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- Army Estimates—Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies, 1860, 1884
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- Harbour Commissioners, Liabilities of, 1350
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- *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 12

Highway Acts Amendment Bill (*Mr. Duckham, Mr. More, Mr. Thomas Blake*)
- *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 22 [Bill 149]

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Hooper, Mr. J., *Cork, S.E.*
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c. Select Committee to consist of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Two by the Committee of Selection *Mar* 8, 219

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INDIA (*Questions*)
Bengal—The Patwari Bill, Question, Sir Roper Lethbridge ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 12, 638

Railways
The Bengal Central Railway Company, Question, Sir George Campbell ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 23, 1633
The Scinde, Punjaub, and Delhi Railway, Question, Mr. E. R. Russell ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 11, 456

Railways and Public Works, Questions, Mr. Fell Pease, Mr. Jackson ; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 18, 1169
The Independent Native States—The Martini-Henry Rifle, Questions, Lord Randolph Churchill ; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) *Mar* 8, 107

India—Administration of Justice
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Return of the taxes and duties raised or levied on the administration of justice in India during the year 1885, whether by stamps, ad valorem duties, or otherwise, under the Act of the Governor General of India in Council in 1870, or any of the Acts referred to therein, or otherwise ; and that the subject of the taxation of justice in India be referred to the Select Committee on the operation of the Act for the better government of India (1858), and certain other Acts relating to India" (*The Lord FitzGerald*) *Mar* 23, 1612 ; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

India—Government of India
Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to join with a Committee of the Commons to inquire into the operation of the following Acts of Parliament :—
"Statute 21st and 22nd Vict. chap. 106. An Act for the better Government of India (1858), and the Acts of Parliament amending the same :
"Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 67. The Indian Councils Act (1861), together with the statutory provisions amending the same, and those relating to the Executive Councils of the Governors of Madras and Bombay :
"Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 104. (1861). An Act for establishing High Courts of Judicature in India :
"Statute 24th and 25th Vict. chap. 54. (1861). An Act to confirm certain appointments in India, and to amend the law concerning the civil service there :
"Statute 33rd Vict. chap. 3. (1870). An Act to make better provision for making laws and regulations in certain parts of India, and for certain other purposes relating thereto" (*The Earl of Kimberley*) *Mar* 11, 410 ;

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India—Government of India—cont.

after short debate, Motion agreed to; List of the Committee, 417

Place of Inquiry, Questions, Sir Roper Lethbridge, Dr. Clark, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 12, 637

The Constitution of the Committee, Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 15, 815; Questions, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 18, 1182; Question, Mr. Magniac; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 19, 1374; Question, Mr. Magniac; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 22, 1489

The Indian Army Acts, Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth) *Mar* 25, 1797

Infants Bill (*Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Secretary Childers, Mr. Bryce*)

c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Attorney General*) *Mar* 12, 739; Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 139]

IRELAND (*Questions*)

Arms Licences—Case of John Dunseath, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 9, 298;—*Case of Patrick M‘Ginn*, Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 18, 1156

Gun Licences—Irregular Issue, Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 25, 1805

Charitable Bequests—The Eaton Bequest, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 11, 448

Church of Ireland — Collection of the Tithe Rent-charge, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 8, 113

Commissioners of Irish Lights — Facilities for Lightkeepers attending Divine Service, Question, Mr. Johnston: Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 18, 1156

Contagious Diseases (Ireland) Act— Veterinary Portal Inspectors, Question, Mr. Cox; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 11, 452

England and Ireland — A Submarine Tunnel, Question, Colonel Blundell; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 8, 117

Government Loans for Irish Purposes, Questions, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Parnell, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 25, 1796

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Investments of English Capital, Question, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 22, 1478

Labourers (Ireland) Acts, 1883 *and* 1885 — *Appeals to Privy Council against Schemes*, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 11, 454;—*Labourers' Cottages in Inishowen*, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 23, 1636

Parliamentary Franchise (Dublin) — The Collector General of Rates, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 19, 1365

Paving Contracts—Dublin Corporation, Questions, Mr. Jones-Parry, Mr. Peter M‘Donald; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 18, 1158

Public Meetings — Speech of Mr. W. H. H. Lyons, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 11, 450

Secret Societies — Courts in Orange Lodges, Question, Mr. W. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley); Questions, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. J. O'Connor [no reply] *Mar* 8, 100

Seed Supply (Ireland) Act—Fourth Instalment of Seed Rate — Postponement of Payments, Questions, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 11, 439

Sunday Closing — Extension of Legislation, Question, Mr. T. Fry; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 25, 1779

The Belfast Corporation—Salary of the Town Clerk, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 18, 1163

The "House League," Question, Mr. De Cobain; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 16, 979

The Irish National League — Meeting of the Kilbride Branch, Questions, Mr. Macartney; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 19, 1364

The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—The Dean of the Chapel Royal, Question, Mr. W. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 8, 106

The Phœnix Park (Dublin) — Private Enclosures, Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 25, 1783

The Railway Clearing House, Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 22, 1477

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Trinity College (Dublin) — *Tenure of Lands*, Question, Sir James Corry; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 19, 1351

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Alleged Intimidation by Landlords, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 22, 1486

Grand Juries — Resolutions on Home Rule, Questions, Mr. De Cobain, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 15, 823

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Distress in Wicklow, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 22, 1476

Supply of Seed, Questions, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 8, 123

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„ *Land Law (Ireland) Act*, 1881 —*Irish Land Commission*
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Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into and report upon the tenure of lands under Trinity College, Dublin, and the Provost thereof in his corporate capacity; and on the working of the Trinity College, Dublin, Leasing and Perpetuity Act, 1851, with respect to the variation of rent, and its effect on the value of the interest respectively of the college, the perpetuity grantees, and the occupying perpetuity tenants of the lands" (*The Earl of Leitrim*) *Mar* 22, 1456; after debate, Motion withdrawn

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Bankruptcy—Estate of Dr. Forbes Winslow, Question, Mr. Brunner; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 11, 464
"Bryce v. Rusden"—Sir Arthur Gordon—Questions, Mr. Cobb; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) *Mar* 25, 1787
Cardiff County Court—Welsh Witnesses, Question, Mr. A. J. Williams; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 25, 1777
Case of William Brightwell (British Museum), Questions, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Serjeant Simon; Answers, Mr. Leveson Gower (a Lord of the Treasury) *Mar* 8, 119; Questions, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answers, Mr. Leveson Gower (a Lord of the Treasury) *Mar* 11, 473
County Courts—Imprisonment for Contempt of Court, Question, Mr. Thomas; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 5, 8
Criminal Prosecutions—The Public Prosecutor, Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 5, 17
Durham Quarter Sessions—Inequality of Sentences, Question, Mr. T. Fry; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 445
Establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal, Question, Mr. Shirley; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) *Mar* 22, 1477
High Court of Justice (Chancery Division), Question, Mr. Ince; Answer, The Attorney General (Mr. Charles Russell) *Mar* 8, 99
Circuit Arrangements, Question, Mr. Morgan Howard; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) *Mar* 19, 1368

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Prison Discipline—Treadmills, Question, Mr. Ruston; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers), 1802

Imprisonment of Robert Howe Ashton (Inland Revenue), Question, Mr. Houldsworth; Answer, The Attorney General (Sir Charles Russell) *Mar* 16, 970
The Foreshore of Teignmouth Harbour, Question, Mr. Seale-Hayne; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 8, 114

The Magistracy
The Worthing Magistrates, Sussex, Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 5, 8

Law and Police
Cost of the Police Force, Notice of Question, Mr. James Stuart; Question, Mr. Dwyer Gray; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 5, 18

Law of Evidence Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Bramwell*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *Mar* 9, 223 (No. 19)
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LAWRENCE, Mr. W. F., *Liverpool, Abercromby*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Durham), 2R. 1766

LAWSON, Mr. H. L. W., *St. Pancras, W.*
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LEAKE, Mr. R., *Lancashire, S.E., Radcliffe*
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LEICESTER, Mr. J., *West Ham, S.*
Navy—H.M.S. "Benbow," 460
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LEIGHTON, Mr. S., *Shropshire, Oswestry*
Church of England—Collection of Tithe Rent-charge, 113

LEITRIM, Earl of
Trinity College, Dublin, Motion for a Select Committee, 1456, 1464, 1466

LETHBRIDGE, Sir R., *Kensington, N.*
Committee on Indian Administration—Place of Inquiry, 637, 638
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LEWIS, Mr. C. E., *Londonderry*
Ireland—Peace Preservation Act, 1881—Renewal, 811

LEWISHAM, Right Hon. Viscount, *Lewisham*
Navy — Coaling Ports for H.M. Ships of War —Return of Defended and Undefended Ports, 295

Lighthouse Illuminants Committee—The Report
Question, Lord Claud Hamilton; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 11, 477

LIMERICK, Earl of
Ireland—Crime and Outrage — Murder of Patrick Finlay, Woodford, Co. Galway, 764, 769

Liquor Traffic (Local Veto) Ulster Bill
(*Mr. Johnston, Lord Arthur Hill, Mr. De Cobain*)
c. Considered in Committee; Resolution agreed to, and reported; Bill ordered; read 1^{o} * *Mar* 15 [Bill 142]

Literature, Science, and Art
Sculptures at the British Museum, Questions, Mr. Tomlinson; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 11, 461
Dismissal of William Brightwell, a Gardener at the British Museum, Questions, Mr. Cremer, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answers, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) *Mar* 11, 473
The National Gallery — Constable's "Hay Wain," Question, Mr. Ruston; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 16, 976
The National Portrait Gallery, Observations, Lord Lamington; debate thereon *Mar* 12, 601

LLEWELLYN, Mr. E. H., *Somerset, N.*
School Fees of Non-Paupers, 2R. 1721, 1724, 1726

LLOYD, Mr. W., *Wednesbury*
Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No 2), 2R. 599
Midland Railway, 2R. 289
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LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD — President (*see* CHAMBERLAIN, Right Hon. J.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—Secretary to (*see* COLLINGS, Mr. J.)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Fermoy) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord President*)
l. Presented; read 1^{a} *, and referred to the Examiners *Mar* 12 (No. 32)
Read 2^{a} * *Mar* 25

Local Taxation (Incidence)
Moved, "That the present system under which, in England and Wales, the first Incidence of Local Taxation (with some slight exceptions) falls on the occupier and not on the owner of lands and tenements is unjust; that such owners ought in equity to bear at least a moiety of those charges; that the system under which country mansions are rated is unfair; and that the owners of ground rents in towns are liable to no part of those charges, the outlay of which is essential in order that the property may possess any marketable value whatever" (*Mr. Thorold Rogers*) *Mar* 23, 1643
Amendt. To leave out from "That," add "while the apportionment of the payment of Rates between landlord and tenant may be desirable, as part of a complete scheme for remedying the admitted inequalities of the Incidence of Local Taxation, this House is of opinion that the financial injustice complained of can only be removed by a comprehensive measure, and that an equitable re-adjustment of Taxation, as between real and personal property, is urgently required" (*Sir Richard Paget*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 205, N. 186; M. 19; Div. List, Ayes and Noes, 1701
Main Question again proposed, 1704; after short debate, main Question put; A. 216, N. 176; M. 40 (D. L. 42)

LONDON, Bishop of
Union of Benefices, 2R. Amendt. 1605

London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill (by Order)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{o}" (*Sir Charles Forster*) *Mar* 16, 948; Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2^{o}
Moved, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill, to insert a Clause providing that the Company shall, at the expiration of their present agreements with the contractors for, or tenants of, the bookstalls upon the premises of the Company, put such bookstalls up to public competition among the newsvendors and others being bonâ fide residents in the borough, or, if outside a borough, in the county in which such stalls are situate, and that the Company shall be bound to enter into no agreement for the letting of any bookstall for any period longer than three years" (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*); after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Sexton*); Question put, and negatived
Original Question put, and negatived

Londonderry, Marquess of
Ireland—Crime and Outrage—Murder of Patrick Finlay, Woodford, Co. Galway, 771

London Hospitals
The Homerton Hospital, Questions, Mr. Gibb, Mr. James Stuart; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 12, 634
The Highgate Hospital, Question, Mr. Gibb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 12, 635

Long, Mr. W. H., *Wilts, Devizes*
Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment, 2R. 1750

Lord Advocate, The (*see* Balfour, Right Hon. J. B.)

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland — Chief Secretary to the (*see* Morley, Right Hon. J.)

Lord President of the Council (*see* Spencer, Earl)

Lubbock, Sir J., *London University*
Church of England in Wales, Res. 365

Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
l. Committee, after debate *Mar* 18, 1136 (No. 12)
Report; Bill re-committed *Mar* 19, 1349 (No. 37)

Lunacy (Vacating of Seats) Bill
(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Puleston, Mr. William Corbet*)
c. Committee*—R.P. *Mar* 9 [Bill 85]
Committee—R.P. *Mar* 15, 906
Committee; Report *Mar* 23, 1726
Read 3º* *Mar* 25
l. Read 1ª* (*Lord Balfour*) *Mar* 25 (No. 47)

Lyell, Mr. L., *Orkney and Shetland*
Shipwreck on the Coast of Norway—Case of Elizabeth Mouatt, 1164

McArthur, Mr. A., *Leicester*
Australian Colonies — Separation of North Queensland from Queensland, 810
Madagascar and France—Treaty of Peace, 1794

Macartney, Mr. J. W. E., *Antrim, S.*
Ireland—Questions
Arms Licences—Case of Patrick M'Ginn, 1156
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Irish National League—Meeting of the Kilbride Branch, 1364, 1365

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Macartney, Mr. J. W. E.—*cont.*
Post Office—Telegraph Office at Bundoran, 301
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Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 3, Amendt. 917; *cl.* 9, Amendt. 1429; *cl.* 12, Amendt. 1432, 1433, 1434, 1435; *add. cl.* 1438, 1439, 1444

McCalmont, Captain J., *Antrim, E.*
Ireland—Questions
Administration of Justice—Contempt of Court, 1793
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State of Ireland—Condition of Cork and Tipperary—Charges of the Judges of Assize, 1498
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Murder of Patrick Finlay at Woodford, Co. Galway, 19, 303
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M'Carthy, Mr. J., *Longford, N.*
Ireland—Questions
Government Loans for Irish Purposes, 1796
Law and Justice—Incapacity of Holders of Spirit Licences to serve as Jurors in Criminal Trials, 633
Law and Police—Death of Cornelius Cosgrave at Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford, 1778

McCulloch, Mr. J., *Glasgow, St. Rollox*
Ground Rents, Res. 1012

Macdonald, Right Hon. J. H. A., *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Volunteer Capitation Grant, Res. 1530
Church of Scotland, 2R. 1111, 1114, 1123
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), 2R. 139, 169, 206, 208
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Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1293, 1295, 1297, 1298, 1299, 1305, 1306
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Navy—Coastguard Station at Enniscrone, 640
Paving Contracts—Dublin Corporation, 1159
Post Office—Irish Mail Service, 641
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McDonald, Dr. R., *Ross and Cromarty*
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Macfarlane, Mr. D. H., *Argyll*
Committee on Indian Administration—Place of Inquiry, 638
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McGarel-Hogg, Sir J. M., *Middlesex, Hornsey*
Metropolis—Commons and Open Spaces—A Recreation Ground for Fulham, 458
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Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.), 2R. 85, 88

Mac Innes, Mr. M., *Northumberland, Hexham*
Church of England in Wales, Res. 330

McKenna, Sir J. N., *Monaghan, S.*
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Consid. *add. cl.* 1940
Parliament—Business of the House—Notices of Questions, Res. 710
Supply—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 500

Mackintosh, Mr. C. Fraser-, *Inverness-shire*
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), 2R. 180
Scotland—Highlands and Islands—Distress in the Hebrides, 1631
Portree Pier—Isle of Skye—Death of the Rev. Dr. Mackay, 789

McLaren, Mr. C. B. B., *Stafford*
Coal Statistics, 1885, 1171
Inland Revenue—Licence Duty on Public-Houses, 1168

Maclean, Mr. J. M., *Oldham*
Army (India) — Indian Military Establishments, 1480
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, 2R. 392, 395

Madagascar and France
Question, Mr. Johnston ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 12, 640
The Treaty of Peace, Question, Mr. M'Arthur ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 25, 1794

Magniac, Mr. C., *Bedford, N., Biggleswade*
Army Estimates — Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies, 1817
Government of India—Joint Committee, 1489
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Makins, Colonel W. T., *Essex, S.E.*
London Customs—Surveyors, 294
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, 2R. 1769

Manchester Ship Canal Bill (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" (*Sir Charles Forster*) *Mar* 9, 233
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Lord Claud Hamilton*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c. ;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to ; Bill read 2°
Moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Committee to be nominated by the Committee of Selection" (*Lord Claud Hamilton*) ; after short debate, Question put ; A. 61, N. 375 ; M. 314 ; Div. List, A. and N., 278
Moved, "That the Votes of the Right honourable David Plunket and Mr. Tipping be disallowed" (*Mr. Sexton*), 282 ; after short debate, Question put ; A. 81, N. 291 ; M. 210 (D. L. 22)
The Entry in the Votes, 284 ; Bill committed

Manchester Ship Canal, The
Questions, Mr. Baden-Powell ; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 11, 474

MANNERS, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R., *Leicestershire, E.*
Church of England in Wales, Res. 366

Marriages (Hours of Solemnization) Bill (*Mr. Carvell Williams, Mr. Richard, Mr. Ince*)
c. Read 2°, after debate *Mar* 19, 1448 [Bill 62]
Committee ; Report *Mar* 23, 1726

Marriages Validity Bill [H.L.] (*The Lord Bishop of Carlisle*)
l. Read 3ª * *Mar* 5 (No. 11)
c. Read 1° * (*The Lord Advocate*) *Mar* 10
Read 2° *Mar* 15, 906 [Bill 137]
Committee *; Report ; read 3° *Mar* 18

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill (*Mr. Heneage, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Puleston, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Burt, Mr. Arch*)
c. 2R. deferred, after debate *Mar* 24, 1769 [Bill 49]

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister—Legislation
Question, Mr. H. Gardner ; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 8, 122

Married Women (Maintenance in Case of Desertion) Bill (*Mr. Pulley, Mr. Thomas Blake, Mr. Winterbotham, Mr. Warmington*)
c. 2R., after short debate, Debate adjourned *Mar* 24, 1769 [Bill 111]

MARRIOTT, Right Hon. W. T., *Brighton*
London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, 2R. 953

MARUM, Mr. E. P. M., *Kilkenny, N.*
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MASKELYNE, Mr. M. H. N. STORY-, *Wilts, Cricklade*
Public Offices, The New — Plans for Rearrangement, 113

MASON, Mr. S., *Lanark, Mid*
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MAXWELL, Sir H. E., *Wigton*
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), 2R. 133

MAYNE, Mr. T., *Tipperary, Mid*
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Consid. *add. cl.* 1942, 1943

Medical Act, 1858—*Legislation*
Question, Dr. Foster ; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 16, 967

MENZIES, Mr. R. S., *Perthshire, E.*
Scotland—Education Department—The Code for 1886, 299

Merchant Shipping
Crimping in American Ports, Question, Captain Verney ; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 15, 816
Light at Portland Breakwater, Question, Observations, Lord Colville of Culross ; Reply ; The First Lord of the Admiralty (The Marquess of Ripon) *Mar* 12, 623
Loss of the "Oregon," Cunard Liner, Questions, Mr. Macfarlane ; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 22, 1493 ; Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. Forwood, Captain Price ; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 25, 1790
The Smack "Columbine" — Rescue of Mrs. Mouatt, Question Mr. Lyell ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 18, 1164
The Wreck of the "Leslie," Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor ; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 11, 444

Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald, Colonel Dawnay, Mr. Morgan Howard*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Mar* 17 [Bill 146]

Metropolis
Clerkenwell and Coldbath Fields Prisons, Question, Mr. Howard Spensley ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) *Mar* 9, 301
Commons and Open Spaces — A Recreation Ground for Fulham, Question, Mr. Fisher ; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) *Mar* 11, 458
Distress—The East End—Dwellings for the Poor, Question, Mr. Seton-Karr ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 8, 102
Public Meetings, Question, Sir Henry Tyler ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 5, 16
Disturbances in the Metropolis—The Duties of Soldiers, Observations, Lord de Ros ; short debate thereon *Mar* 23, 1617

Dwellings of the Working Classes
Inquiry at St. James and St. John, Clerkenwell, Question, Sir Robert Fowler ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 465
The Middlesex Houses of Detention and Correction—Sale of Sites, Question, Mr. Baumann ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 476

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Metropolis—*Dwellings of the Working Classes*—cont.

Houses of the Working Classes Act, 1865—Question, Mr. Ince; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. C. T. D. Acland) *Mar* 12, 627

The London Parks—Ground Rents and Revenues, Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 18, 1172

Metropolis, Disturbances in the
Moved to resolve, "That in the opinion of this House responsibility for the unfortunate occurrences of 8th February devolves on Her Majesty's Government collectively and not on any single branch of the executive" (*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*) *Mar* 15, 741; after debate, Motion withdrawn

Metropolitan Board of Works (Theatres, &c.) Bill (*Mr. Rider Cook, Sir James M'Garel-Hogg*)
c. 2R., further Proceedings adjourned *Mar* 17, 1132 [Bill 44]

Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.) Bill (*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Mr. Bryce, Sir George Russell, Colonel Hughes*) [Bill 34]
c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendt. proposed to Question [24th February], "That the Bill be now read 2°"
And which Amendt. was, to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Coope*); Question again proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" Debate resumed *Mar* 5, 81; after short debate, Question put; A. 76, N. 130; M. 54 (D. L. 20); words added
Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off for six months

Metropolitan Commons Provisional Order Bill (*Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Secretary Childers*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 5 [Bill 132]
Read 2° * *Mar* 24

Metropolitan Police, The—Pensions—Sir Edmund Henderson and Mr. Walker
Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 463

Metropolitan Police Courts — Fines and Penalties
Question, Mr. Kenyon; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 466

Midland Railway Bill (by Order)
c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendt. proposed to Question [2nd March], "That the Bill be now read 2°"

Midland Railway Bill—cont.
And which Amendt. was, To leave out from "That," add "this House, whilst not unwilling to consider favourably an application from the said Company, under proper conditions, for power to make arrangements with other Companies tending to economise the cost of transport to the Company, refuses to entertain the same as a mere incident in a Bill for miscellaneous objects, and unaccompanied by the offer of any compensating advantages to the public" (*Sir Bernhard Samuelson*) *v.*; Question again proposed, "That the words, &c.;" Debate resumed *Mar* 9, 285; after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
Main Question again proposed, "That the Bill be now read 2°;" after further short debate, main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°

Midleton, Viscount
Sunday (Opening of Museums, &c.), Res. Amendt. 1332

Mildmay, Mr. F. B., *Devon, Totnes*
Inland Revenue—Taxation of Dogs—Exemption of Life-Saving Dogs, 1370

Milltown, Earl of
Law of Evidence Amendment, 2R. 226; Comm. *cl.* 2, 1470; *add. cl.* 1472
Lunacy Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1149; *cl.* 70, Amendt. 1152
Union of Benefices, 2R. 1601, 1611

Milvain, Mr. T., *Durham*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Durham), 2R. Amendt. 1754, 1762

Mines Regulation Act
Question, Mr. John Redmond; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 25, 1798
The Bog Colliery Explosion, Question, Mr. Mason; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 5, 6

Mines, Royal Commission on Accidents in—The Report
Question, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Broadhurst) *Mar* 19, 1364

Molloy, Mr. B. C., *King's Co., Birr*
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 4, 921
Post Office, Submarine Telegraph Contract (St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa), Res. 78
Supply—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 1314

Monkswell, Lord
Law of Evidence Amendment, 2R. 225

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Montagu, Mr. S., *Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*
- Currency, &c.—The Appreciation of Gold, 460
- Post Office—Mails to the United States, 1475

More, Mr. R. J., *Shropshire, Ludlow*
- Local Taxation (Incidence), Res. 1656

Morgan, Right Hon. G. Osborne (Under Secretary of State for the Colonies), *Denbighshire, E.*
- Africa (South)—Questions
  - Affairs of Basutoland, 457
  - Boers and the Swazies, 1795
  - Transvaal Convention, 975
- Australian Colonies — Separation of North Queensland from Queensland, 810
- Criminal Law—Prosecution for Libel (Cape Colony), 1161
- Defences of the Empire—Colonial and Imperial Naval Forces, 1482
- Jamaica—Convict Officers, 637
- Law and Justice—"Bryce *v.* Rusden"—Sir Arthur Gordon, 1787, 1788
- Navy—Coaling Ports for H.M. Ships of War
  - —Return of Defended and Undefended Ports, 296
  - H.M.S. "Diamond," 803
- Retired Military and Naval Officers—Colonial Employment, 630
- Steamships between Vancouver and Japan—The Inter-Departmental Committee, 304
- Trade and Commerce—Annual Reports from the Colonies, 1803

Morgan, Mr. O. V., *Battersea*
- Diplomatic Service — British Legation at China, 970
- National Engagements, Res. 1410

Morley, Earl of (First Commissioner of Works)
- New Public Offices—National Portrait Gallery, 606, 608

Morley, Right Hon. J. (Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
- Coal Mines, Comm. 914, 915
- England and Ireland—A Submarine Tunnel, 118
- Ireland—Questions
  - Administration of Justice — Contempt of Court, 1793
  - Arms' Licences—Case of John Dunseath, 299;—Case of Patrick M'Ginn, 1157
  - Army — Casualty to a Soldier in Belfast, 1174, 1629, 1631
  - Bankruptcy Courts—Local Court at Belfast, 1177
  - Belfast Corporation—Salary of the Town Clerk, 1164
  - Charitable Bequests—The Eaton Bequest, 449
  - Church of Ireland — Collection of Tithe Rent Charge, 113
  - Contagious Diseases Act — Veterinary Portal Inspectors, 452

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Municipal Rates Bill (*Mr. Joseph Cowen, Mr. Dodds, Mr. David Smith*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Mar* 10 [Bill 134]

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, 2R. 408

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NAPIER OF MAGDALA, Lord
Metropolis, Disturbances in the — Duties of Soldiers, 1620

National Engagements
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 19, To leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, it is not just or expedient to embark in war, contract engagements involving grave responsibilities for the Nation, and add territories to the Empire without the knowledge and consent of Parliament" (*Mr. Richard*) *v.*, 1386 ; Question proposed,

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National Engagements—cont.
"That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put ; A. 108, N. 112 ; M. 4 (D. L. 38)
Words added ; main Question, as amended, put ; A. 109, N. 115 ; M. 6 ; D. L. A. & N. 1421

National Gallery, The — Constable's "Hay Wain"
Question, Mr. Ruston ; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 16, 976

National Gallery—Hours of Opening
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copy of a Memorandum drawn up and signed by the Director and Trustees of the National Gallery with reference to the risks and inconvenience attending the proposed opening of the Gallery on week days up to 10 p.m." (*The Viscount Sidmouth*) *Mar* 9, 230 ; after short debate, Address agreed to

National Museums, The—Evening Opening
Moved, "That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty will be pleased to direct that the National Gallery, the British Museum, and the Natural History Museum shall be open to the public weekly on three week-day evenings till 10 p.m., in order that Her Majesty's subjects whose occupations during the day prevent them from visiting these institutions may have the advantage and enjoyment of studying the national collections" (*The Earl of Harrowby*) *Mar* 12, 608 ; after debate, Previous Question moved (*The Lord President of the Council, Earl Spencer*) ; after further short debate, on Question ? Previous Question affirmed ; original Motion agreed to
Queen's Answer to Address reported *Mar* 22, 1455

National Museums—Opening on Sundays
Moved to resolve, "That it would be expedient that museums should be opened by daylight only, and should be closed during the time of afternoon Divine Service, on Sundays" (*The Lord Denman*) *Mar* 25, 1774 ; on Question, resolved in the negative
[See title *Sunday* (*Opening of Museums, &c.*)]

NAVY (*Questions*)
Coaling Ports for H.M. Ships of War—Return of Defended and Undefended Ports, Question, Viscount Lewisham ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) *Mar* 9, 295
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Coastguard Station at Enniscrone, Question, Mr. Peter M'Donald ; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 12, 640
Roche's Point Coastguard Station, Question, Dr. Tanner ; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 25, 1804

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Engine-Room Artificers, Question, Colonel Hughes-Hallett; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 23, 1639

H.M.S. "Albatross"—Bursting of a Nordenfelt Gun, Question, Mr. Ritchie; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 23, 1642

H.M.S. "Benbow," Question, Mr. Leicester; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) *Mar* 11, 460

H.M.S. "Diamond," Questions, Dr. Cameron, Mr. J. A. Blake; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan), The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 15, 802

H.M.SS. "Nile" and "Trafalgar," Question, Mr. C. H. Wilson; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) *Mar* 25, 1780

Naval Construction, Question, Viscount Sidmouth; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (The Marquess of Ripon) *Mar* 11, 417

Pensions for Widows of Seamen and Marines, Question, Captain Price; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 23, 1638

Armament, &c.

Guns and Ammunition, Question, Lord George Hamilton; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) *Mar* 12, 639

The Hotchkiss Gun, Question, Mr. Jackson; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) *Mar* 18, 1176

Ordnance—Return of Guns under Construction for new Ships of War, Question, Mr. Ruston; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 18, 1174

The Dockyards

Reduction of Dockyard Workmen and Labourers, Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) *Mar* 11, 478

Discharge of Men at Devonport Dockyard, Questions, Captain Price, Mr. Puleston; Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 15, 824; Questions, Mr. Puleston; Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 16, 977

Pembroke Dockyard, Question, Mr. H. G. Allen; Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. R. W. Duff) *Mar* 25, 1779

Navy (Efficiency)

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 15, To leave out from "That," add "now would be a suitable opportunity for the Sinking Fund to be suspended, or Terminable Annuities created, in order to put the Royal Navy in that state of efficiency which is necessary for the safety of the Empire, at the least possible expense to the Country, owing to the cheapness of material at the present time" (*Lord Charles Beresford*) *v.*, 827; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Question put; A. 206, N. 98; M. 108 (D. L. 31)

NELSON, Earl

Parish Churches, 2R. 939

NOLAN, Colonel J. P., *Galway, N.*

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Ireland—Seed Supply Act—Fourth Instalment of Seed Rate—Postponement of Payments, 439

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NORTHESK, Earl of

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North Sea Liquor Traffic—Conference at the Hague

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O'BRIEN, Mr. P. J., *Tipperary, N.*

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Post Office—Postal Facilities in Donegal, 813;—Telegraph, &c. Station at Tory Island, 467
Public Works—Convict Labour, 111
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O'Connor, Mr. J., *Tipperary, S.*
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Ordnance — Surveyor General (*see* **Woodall, Mr. W.**)

Paget, Sir R. H., *Somerset, Wells*
Local Taxation (Incidence), Res. Amendt. 1651, 1653, 1688, 1689
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Railway and Canal Traffic, Motion for Leave, 580, 1505
School Fees of Non-Paupers, 2R. 1725

Parish Churches Bill [H.L.] (No. 5)
(*The Lord Bishop of Peterborough*)
l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *Mar* 16, 923
Amendt. to leave out ("now") add ("this day six months") (*The Lord Grimthorpe*); after debate, on Question, That ("now") &c.; resolved in the affirmative; Bill read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee

[*cont.*

Parliament
LORDS—
Private Bills
Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Friday the 25th day of June next [and other Orders] *Mar* 23, 1601

COMMONS—
Commons, Select Committee appointed and nominated *Mar* 11; List of the Committee, 600

PRIVILEGE
Words not uttered in this House, Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 8, 123
Fictitious Signatures to Petitions, Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone); Observations, Sir Charles Forster *Mar* 15, 821; Questions, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Sir Charles Forster *Mar* 25, 1784

SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE
Ash Wednesday, Moved, "That this House will meet To-morrow at Two of the clock" (*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir William Harcourt*) *Mar* 9, 304; after short debate, Question put; A. 156, N. 82; M. 74 (D. L. 23)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS
Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 22, 1503;—*Standing Order No.* 485A—*The Navy Estimates*, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 15, 826;—*Arrangement of the Orders of the Day*, Questions, Mr. Raikes; Answers, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 19, 1373;—*Arrangement of Supply*, Observations, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Reply, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone); short debate thereon *Mar* 19, 1423; —*Crofters* (*Scotland*) (*No.* 2) *Bill*, Questions, Mr. Macfarlane, Mr. William Redmond; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), Mr. Speaker *Mar* 23, 1642

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER
The House of Commons—Accommodation for Members—Lockers, Questions, Mr. Pyne, Mr. Mitchell Henry; Answers, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) *Mar* 5, 13; Question, Mr. O'Hanlon; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) *Mar* 11, 454
Electric Communication in this House, Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) *Mar* 11, 450
Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, House of Commons—The Contract, Question, Mr. B. Kelly; Answer, Sir William Hart Dyke *Mar* 19, 1362

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PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Palace of Westminster*—cont.
Writing Room of the House of Commons, Question, Mr. Lalor; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) *Mar* 22, 1500
The Keeper of the Victoria Tower, Question, Mr. Radcliffe Cooke; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 11, 466
Westminster Hall (*Restoration*), Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 18, 1155

THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE
The Select Committee on Procedure—Divisions, Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 12, 642
Moved, "That the Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedure do consist of Thirty-three Members" *Mar* 12, 739; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; List of the Committee, 741
Alteration of the Rules of Debate (*Wednesdays*), Question, Mr. Allison; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 15, 825
Publication of the New Rules of Procedure, Question, Mr. Raikes; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 19, 1373

Rule 2—Adjournment of the House
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Captain Verney*) *Mar* 15, 827; But less than 40 Members rising in their places, the hon. Member could not proceed with his Motion

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
Controverted Elections
Aylesbury Election Mar 8, 96
Barrow in Furness Election Mar 25, 1775

Polling Arrangements, Question, Sir Henry Meysey Thompson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 476
Secrecy of the Ballot, Question, Mr. Everett; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 22, 1474
Patent Ballot Machine, Questions, Mr. Coote; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 22, 1492

Parliament — Business of the House— Notices of Questions
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 12, To leave out from "That," add "Notices of Questions be given by Members in writing to the Clerk at the Table, without reading them vivâ voce in the House, unless the consent of the Speaker to any particular Question has been previously obtained" (*Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson*) *v.*, 697: Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now ad-

[*cont.*

Parliament—Business of the House—Notices of Questions—cont.
journed" (*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 54, N. 235; M. 181 (D. L. 29); words added; original Question put, and negatived
The New Rule of Procedure at Question Time, Questions, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Cavendish Bentinck; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 22, 1503

Parliament — Representative Government —Hereditary Legislators
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 5, To leave out from "That," add "in the opinion of this House, it is inconsistent with the principles of Representative Government, that any Member of either House of the Legislature should derive his title to legislate by virtue of hereditary descent" (*Mr. Labouchere*) *v.*, 20; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 202, N. 166; M. 36 (D. L. A & N, 50

Parliament—Ventilation of the House
Question, Dr. Farquharson; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 18, 1183
Ordered "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the Ventilation of the House" *Mar* 23; List of the Committee 1727

Parliamentary Papers—Public Sale—The Quarterly Lists
Question, Mr. Arthur Acland; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 23, 1636

Parliamentary Register, the, for St. Pancras, Eastern Division—The Vestry Clerk
Questions, Mr. Baggallay; Answers, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings) *Mar* 25, 1783

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork*
Ireland—Government Loans for Irish Purposes, 1796
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 9, 1430; *cl.* 12, 1433; *add. cl.* 1441, 1444, 1447

Parochial Government—Right to Vote at Vestries
Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 15, 818

Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881—*Renewal*
Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) *Mar* 15, 811

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PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, Barnard Castle*
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PERCY, Lord A., *St. George's, Hanover Square*
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PICKERSGILL, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
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(*Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Burt, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. Henry Wilson*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 10 [Bill 136]

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  Education Department (England and Wales)—Questions
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PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
  Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 282
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Police (England and Wales)—Disturbance in Leeds
  Question, Mr. William Redmond; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 23, 1638

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)
  Aged Couples in Workhouses, Question, Mr. F. S. Stevenson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 11, 469
  Collection of Rates at Crewkerne, Question, Mr. H. R. Farquharson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 23, 1628
  Destitute Russians at Hull, Question, Mr. C. H. Wilson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 18, 1180
  Outbreak of Fever in St George's Schools, Ashford, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 12, 632
  Salaries of Poor Law Officials, Question, Mr. Cornwallis West; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 12, 635
  Voters, Disqualification of — The Labour Test, Question, Mr. Bigwood; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings) *Mar* 5, 16

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  Colonial Postal Arrangements—Pacific Mail Steamers — Vancouver and Hong Kong, Question, Observations, The Earl of Harrowby; Reply, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Earl Granville) *Mar* 8, 90
  Parcel Post to France and Italy, Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 12, 639
  Postage Stamps, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 19, 1353
  Provisional Appointments, Question, Mr. Radcliffe Cooke; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 11, 465
  Rural Postal Deliveries, Question, Sir Edward Birkbeck; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 16, 977
  Savings Bank, Question, Mr. De Cobain; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 11, 473: Question, Mr. Bartley; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 25, 1806
    Deposits at Village Post Offices, Question, Mr. Beadel; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 15, 801
  The Meteorological Society — Transmission of Meteorological Reports, Question, Sir Richard Paget; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 11, 434
  Transmission of Printed Matter at Elections, Question, Mr. W. H. James; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 11, 466

Mail Service
  Irish Mail Service, Question, Mr. Peter M'Donald; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 12, 641
  The American Mails, Question, Mr. Giles; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 9, 300
    Mails to the United States, Question, Mr. Samuel Montagu; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 22, 1475

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  Registered Telegraphic Addresses, Question, Mr. David Smith; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 23, 1637
    Abbreviated Telegraphic Addresses, Question, Mr. Seton-Karr; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 25, 1782; Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), 1797

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Incomplete Addresses, Question, Mr. Forwood; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 25, 1798
Rural Telegraphs—Position of the Gurantors, Question, Sir John Kennaway; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 19, 1352

Post Office Sites Bill
(*Mr. Spencer, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 18 [Bill 148]

Post Office, Submarine Telegraph Contract (St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa)
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [4th March], "That the Contract, dated the 19th day of January 1886, for the Construction of a Submarine Telegraph Line from the Island of St. Vincent to the West Coast of Africa be approved"
Question again proposed; Debate resumed *Mar* 5, 67
Amendt. to leave out "approved," insert "referred to a Select Committee" (*Mr. Henniker Heaton*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That 'approved,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 199, N. 34; M. 165 (D. L. 19); main Question put, and agreed to

POWELL, Mr. F. S., *Wigan*
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Inland Revenue—Land Tax Commission, 1494
Public Health Acts (Improvement Expenses), 2R. 370

POWER, Mr. P. J., *Waterford, E.*
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POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford*
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PRICE, Captain G. E., *Devonport*
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Navy Estimates—Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines, 1257, 1259, 1281

PRIME MINISTER (*see* GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E.)

Public Health Acts (Improvement Expenses) Bill (*Mr. Dodds, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Arnold Morley, Mr. William Cook, Mr. Bullard*)
c. Read 2°, after debate *Mar* 10, 367 [Bill 7]

Public Health—M. Pasteur's Treatment of Hydrophobia
Questions, Sir Henry Roscoe, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 11, 435

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PULESTON, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
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Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Consid. *add. cl.* 1915, 1944, 1947
Navy—Royal Dockyards—Discharge of Men at Devonport Dockyard, 824, 977, 978
Navy Estimates—Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines, 1230, 1231, 1234, 1237
Parliament—Business of the House—Notices of Questions, Res. 709
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PULLEY, Mr. J., *Hereford*
Married Women (Maintenance in Case of Desertion), 2R. 1770

PYNE, Mr. J. D. *Waterford, W.*
Excise—Home-Grown Tobacco, 115
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Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Consid. *add. cl.* 1940

QUILTER, Mr. W. C., *Suffolk, Sudbury*
Felixstowe Railway and Dock, 2R. 423

RAIKES, Right Hon. H. C., *Cambridge University*
Church of England in Wales, Res. 331, 364
Local Taxation (Incidence), Res. 1708
Parliament—Business of the House—Arrangement of the Orders of the Day, 1373, 1374
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Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment, 2R. 1741

Railway and Canal Companies—Statistical Returns
Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 15, 811

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill (*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Acland, Mr. Attorney General*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*) *Mar* 8, 219; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *Mar* 11, 553; after debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 138]
Question, Sir Joseph Pease; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 22, 1505

Railways—Allotments to Servants
Question, Observations, The Marquess of Huntly; Reply, The Lord President of the Council (Earl Spencer) *Mar* 9, 232

Ramsay, Mr. J., *Falkirk, &c.*
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), 2R. Amendt. 125, 152, 198, 218

Ramsden, Sir J. W., *York, W.R., Osgoldcross*
Compensation for Damages, Comm. 1322

Rathbone, Mr. W., *Carnarvonshire, Arfon*
Local Taxation (Incidence), Res. 1660

Redesdale, Earl of (Chairman of Committees)
Dore and Chinley Railway, 2R. 1456
Ireland—Crime and Outrage — Murder of Patrick Finlay, Woodford, Co. Galway, 787

Redmond, Mr. J. E., *Wexford, N.*
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Reformatory and Industrial Schools—Position of New Ross Industrial School, 1356; — Waterford Industrial School, 816
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Redmond, Mr. W. H. K., *Fermanagh, N.*
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Police (England and Wales)—Disturbance in Leeds, 1638, 1639

Reed, Sir E. J. (Lord of the Treasury), *Cardiff*
Navy (Efficiency), Res. 840, 862, 866, 867
Supply—New Harbour at Dover, 550, 551

Registration of Births, Marriages, &c.—6 & 7 Will. IV. c. 85, s. 17—Registrar of Marriages at Conway
Question, Mr. Kenyon; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Jesse Collings) *Mar* 25, 1788

Rendel, Mr. S., *Montgomeryshire*
Church of England in Wales, Res. 339

Richard, Mr. H., *Merthyr Tydvil*
Church of England in Wales, Res. 310
National Engagements, Res. 1386

Ripon, Marquess of (First Lord of the Admiralty)
Merchant Shipping—Light at Portland Breakwater, 623
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Ritchie, Mr. C. T., *Tower Hamlets, St. George's*
Bounties on Foreign Goods, 300
Navy—Accident on Board H.M.S. "Albatross," 1642
Navy (Efficiency), Res. 887, 888
Navy Estimates—Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines, 1215, 1216, 1262, 1268, 1269, 1273
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, 2R. 405
Trade and Commerce—Foreign Bounties on Sugar Productions — Retaliatory Duties, 1801

Rivers Purification Bill (*Mr. Hastings, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Lord Charles Beresford, Sir W. Guyer Hunter, General Sir William Crossman, Colonel Sandys*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 16, 1049
Amendt. to leave out "now," add "upon this day six months" (*Sir Henry Roscoe*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived; words added
Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to; 2R. put off for six months [Bill 101]

Robertson, Mr. E., *Dundee*
Literature, Science, and Art (Scotland)—Sir David Baxter's Bequest to Dundee, 1162

Robertson, Mr. H., *Merioneth*
Felixstowe Railway and Dock, 2R. 432

Robertson, Mr. J. P. B., *Bute*
Church of Scotland, 2R. 1126
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), 2R. 188, 190

Robinson, Mr. T., *Gloucester*
Vaccination Act—Repeal of Compulsory Vaccination, 1178

Rogers, Mr. J. E. Thorold, *Southwark, Bermondsey*
Local Taxation (Incidence), Res. 1643, 1645, 1646, 1653, 1697
Supply—Public Buildings, Great Britain, 534

Roscoe, Sir H. E., *Manchester, S.*
Public Health — M. Pasteur's Treatment of Hydrophobia, 435
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ROTHSCHILD, Baron, F. J. de, *Bucks, Aylesbury*
  Representative Government, Res. 40, 41

ROUND, Mr. J., *Essex, N.E., Harwich*
  Income Tax (Exemptions), 967

Royal Liver Society, The—Report of the Inspector
  Question, Dr. Clark ; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 5, 16 ; Question, Mr. Hutton ; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 18, 1178

RUSSELL, Sir C. (Attorney General), *Hackney, S.*
  Coal Mines, Comm. 912
  Compensation for Damages, Comm. 1323 ; *cl.* 4, 1927 ; *cl.* 5, 1929
  Corrupt Practices Act—Political Associations, 1483
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  High Court of Justice (Chancery Division), 99 ;—Irregular Attendance of Officers, 1482
  Infants, Motion for Leave, 739
  Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 12, 1434 ; *add. cl.* 1441 ; Consid. *add. cl.* 1941 ; Amendt. 1942, 1944, 1946
  Law and Justice (England and Wales) — Establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal, 1477 ;—Imprisonment of Robert Howe Ashton, 970
  Lunacy—Vacating of Seats, Comm. 907
  Mr. Bradlaugh, 442
  Trees (Ireland), 2R. 88

RUSSELL, Mr. E. R., *Glasgow, Bridgeton*
  Railways (India)—Scinde, Punjaub, and Delhi Railway, 456

RUSTON, Mr. J., *Lincoln*
  National Gallery — Constable's " Hay Wain," 976
  Navy (Ordnance)—Return of Guns under Construction for New Ships of War, 1174
  Ordnance Department, Res. 1717
  Prison Discipline—Treadmills, 1802

RYLANDS, Mr. P., *Burnley*
  National Engagements, Res. 1396
  Spending Departments of the State, 820
  Supply—New Harbour at Dover, Motion for reporting Progress, 552
    Public Buildings, Great Britain, 529
    Royal Palaces, 484
    Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 502

ST. ALBANS, Duke of
  Ireland — Crime and Outrage — Murder of Patrick Finlay, Woodford, Co. Galway, 761

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill (*Sir Joseph Pease, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Isaac Wilson*) [Bill 27]
c. Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2° " *Mar* 10, 376
  Amendt. to leave out " now," add " upon this day six months " (*Mr. Addison*) ; Question proposed, " That ' now,' &c. ; " after debate, Debate adjourned
  Question, Sir Joseph Pease ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 12, 640

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday (Durham) Bill (*Mr. Theodore Fry, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Dodds, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Gourley, Mr. Paulton*)
c. Moved, " That the Bill be now read 2° " *Mar* 24, 1750
  Amendt. to leave out " now," add " upon this day six months " (*Mr. Milvain*) ; Question proposed, " That ' now,' &c. ; " after debate, Moved, " That the Debate be now adjourned " (*Mr. Gent-Davis*) ; Question put, and negatived
  Original Question put ; A. 163, N. 82 ; M. 81 (D. L. 43) ; Bill read 2° [Bill 74]

SALIS-SCHWABE, Colonel G., *Lancashire, S.E., Middleton*
  Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Volunteer Capitation Grant, Res. 1516
  Army Estimates — Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies, 1835
  Railway and Canal Traffic, Motion for Leave, 580

Salmon Fisheries Amendment (Scotland) Bill [H.L.] (*The Marquess of Huntly*)
l. Presented ; read 1ª* *Mar* 11 (No. 30)

SAMUELSON, Sir B., *Oxfordshire, Banbury*
  Midland Railway, 2R. 285, 286, 291
  Railway and Canal Traffic, Motion for Leave, 583

SANDHURST, Lord (Under Secretary of State for War)
  Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Minimum Attendance at Yeomanry Cavalry Troop Drills, 1467
  Drill Grounds, 2R. 1
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SAUNDERS, Mr. W., *Hull, E.*
  Fishing Industries (England and Wales)—Institution of a Fishery Board, 62
  Ground Rents, Res. 999, 1047

SAUNDERSON, Major E., *Armagh, N.*
  Ireland—Crime and Outrage — " Boycotting " —Case of John Foran, Galley, Co. Kerry, 1492
    Law and Justice — Antrim Grand Jury, 1485
  Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 12, 1433
  Trees (Ireland), 2R. 89

School Fees of Non-Paupers Bill
(*Mr. Llewellyn, Sir Richard Paget, Mr. Hobhouse*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 23, 1721: Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Joseph Chamberlain*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Original Question put; Bill read 2° [Bill 114]

Scinde, Punjaub, and Delhi Railway Company Bill [*Annuities*]
c. Res. considered in Committee, and agreed to *Mar* 17, 1135
Res. reported *Mar* 22

SCLATER-BOOTH, Right Hon. G., *Hants, Basingstoke*
Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 273
Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment, 2R. 1745

SCOTLAND — Secretary for, &c. (*see* TREVELYAN, Right Hon. G. O.)

SCOTLAND (*Questions*)
Educational Endowments (*Scotland*) *Act*, 1882—*Miss Lucy Campbell's Bequest*, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 8, 108
Eviction of Crofters—Return of Cases, Question, Mr. Mark Stewart; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 15, 805
Fisheries — Registration of Fishing Boats, Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 18, 1163
Fishery Piers and Harbours—Girvan Harbour, Questions, Mr. Macfarlane; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 11, 474; *Mar* 16, 969; *Mar* 19, 1361
Highlands and Islands — Distress in the Hebrides, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 23, 1631
Literature, Science, and Art — Sir David Baxter's Bequest to Dundee, Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 18, 1162
Police — Dismissal of James Martin, Police Constable, Aberdeen, Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 19, 1366
Portree Pier, Isle of Skye—Death of Rev. Dr. Mackay, Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) *Mar* 15, 789
Prisons — Barlinine Prison, Question, Mr. Baird; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 12, 628
Public Health—Small-pox at Woodside, Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 16, 969
University of St. Andrew's—Appointment of Dr. Donaldson, Question, Mr. Boyd-Kinnear; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 22, 1495

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Education Department (*Scotland*)
Gaelic in Elementary Schools, Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 15, 814
School Grants in the Highlands, Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 22, 1475
The Code for 1886, Question, Mr. Menzies; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 9, 299; Question, Mr. Boyd-Kinnear; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 19, 1363
Voluntary Schools, Question, Sir Archibald Campbell; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 5, 11

Law and Justice (*Scotland*)
Administration of Justice—The Highlands and Islands, Question, Dr. R. M'Donald; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. Trevelyan) *Mar* 16, 968;—*in Kirkwall*, Question, Mr. Macdonald Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 1153
Mr. Crawford, Sheriff Clerk of Berwickshire, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) *Mar* 19, 1358
The Sheriff Clerk of Cromarty, Question, Dr. R. M'Donald; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B Balfour) *Mar* 16, 971
The Procurator Fiscal for Ross and Cromarty, Question, Dr. R. M'Donald; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) *Mar* 16, 971
The Rev. Matthew Armour (*Orkney Sheriff Court*), Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) *Mar* 16, 967

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Lunacy Acts Amendment, Comm. 1136, 1142; *cl.* 4, 1151
Parish Churches, 2R. 941, 942

SELLAR, Mr. A. C., *Lanarkshire, Partick*
Parliament—Business of the House — Notices of Questions, Res. 707, 708

SELWIN-IBBETSON, Right Hon. Sir H. J., *Essex, Epping*
Parliament—Business of the House—Notices of Questions, Res. 697

SETON-KARR, Mr. H., *St. Helen's*
Employers' Liability Act—The London and North-Western Railway Company, 1496
Metropolis, Distress in the East End—Dwellings for the Poor, 102
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SEXTON, Mr. T., *Sligo, S.*
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Employers' Liability Act, 1880—London and North-Western Railway Company, 1360

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  - Army—Casualty to a Soldier in Belfast, 1173, 1629, 1630
  - A Separate Parliament, 1808
  - Commissioners of National Education—The Listowel Schools, 455
  - Crime and Outrage—Kerry, State of, 979 ;—Woodford, Co. Galway, 796
  - Government Loans for Irish Purposes, 1796
  - Home Rule—Alleged Intimidation of Landlords, 1486
  - Law and Justice — Antrim Grand Jury, 1485 ;—The Summoning of Jurors, 1360
  - Law and Police—Death of Cornelius Cosgrave at Edgeworthstown, Co. Longford, 1779
  - Parliamentary Franchise (Dublin) — Collector General of Rates, 1365
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  - Public Meetings — Speech of Mr. W. H. H. Lyons, 450, 451
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- Ireland—Arrears of Rent Act, 1882—Mr. H. M'Dougall, Agent of the Gormanstown Estate, Co. Meath, Res. 724, 725
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- London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, Motion for Adjournment, 966
- Lunacy (Vacating of Seats), Comm. 907, 908, 1726
- Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 275, 282, 283
- Naval Construction, 417
- Parliament—Privilege—Forged Signatures to Petitions, 1785
  - Rules and Orders—Procedure at Question Time, 1504
- Parliament—Business of the House—Notices of Questions, Res. 705, 706, 712

SHEEHY, Mr. D., *Galway, S.*
- Ireland—Fishery Piers and Harbours—Ard and Mason Island Piers, Co. Galway, 471
  - Post Office—Mail Service between Athenry and Gort, 1786
- Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Consid. *add. cl.* 1939

SHIRLEY, Mr. W. S., *Yorkshire, W.R., Doncaster*
- Law and Justice—Establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal, 1477
- Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, 2R. 396

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- Egyptian War Medals, 622

SIMON, Mr. Serjeant J., *Dewsbury*
- Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Case of William Brightwell, a Gardener at the British Museum, 119

SMITH, Right Hon. W. H., *Strand, Westminster*
- Army Estimates, 824, 825
  - Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies, 1826
  - Land Forces at Home and Abroad, 1600
- Contagious Diseases Acts, 1866-1869, Res. 997
- Defences of the Empire — Coaling Stations, 1179, 1368, 1543
- Egypt—Garrisons in the Soudan, 1490, 1491
- Supply—Class I, Vote 3—Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, 791
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SMITH, Mr. D., *Brighton*
- Post Office—Registered Telegraphic Addresses 1637

Solicitors' Annual Certificate Duty Bill
(*Mr. O'Hea, Mr. Deasy, Mr. Dwyer Gray, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Sexton*)
c. Ordered ; read 1°* *Mar* 8 [Bill 133]

SPEAKER, The (Right Hon. ARTHUR WELLESLEY PEEL), *Warwick and Leamington*
- Church of England in Wales, Res. 364
- Church of Scotland, 2R. 1108
- Coal Mines, Comm. 914
- Compulsory Purchase of Land Compensation, 2R. 1771
- Contagious Diseases Acts Repeal (No. 2), 2R. 1908, 1909
- Egypt—Cost of the Army of Defence, 1540, 1541
- Felixstowe Railway and Dock, 2R. 421
- Harbours of Refuge, Res. 677
- Ireland—Questions
  - A Separate Parliament, 1808
  - " Boycotting "—Statements of the Clergymen of the Irish Church, 1502
  - Crime and Outrage—Kerry, State of, 973 ;—Woodford, Co. Galway, 795
  - Government Loans for Irish Purposes, 1796
  - Grand Juries—Resolutions on Home Rule, 823
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  - Lunatic Asylums—Omagh District Lunatic Asylum, 1786
- Japan—Treaties with European Powers, 97
- Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *add. cl.* 1446, 1447 ; Consid. *add cl.* 1932, 1942, 1943
- Local Taxation (Incidence), Res. 1707, 1708, 1709
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Spencer, Earl (Lord President of the Council)
Ireland — Crime and Outrage — Murder of Patrick Finlay, Woodford, Co. Galway, 766, 769
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Spensley, Mr. H., *Finsbury, Central*
Metropolis—Clerkenwell and Coldbath Fields Prisons, 301

Spicer, Mr. H., *Islington, S.*
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Sporting Lands Rating (Scotland) Bill
(*Dr. Cameron, Marquess of Stafford, Mr. Mackintosh, Dr. Farquharson*)
c. Committee*; Report *Mar* 15 [Bill 86]
Read 3° * *Mar* 17
l. Read 1ª * (*Earl of Elgin*) *Mar* 18 (No. 36)

Stack, Mr. J., *Kerry, N.*
Ireland—Commissioners of National Education—The Listowel Schools, 455

Stafford, Marquess of, *Sutherland*
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Stanley, Right Hon. Colonel Sir F. A., *Lancashire, N., Blackpool*
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Stanley of Alderley, Lord
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Stansfeld, Right Hon. J., *Halifax*
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Stevenson, Mr. F. S., *Suffolk, Eye*
Africa (East Coast)—Zanzibar Delimitation Commission, 468
Poor Law (England and Wales)—Aged Couples in Workhouses, 469

Stevenson, Mr. J. C., *South Shields*
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday, 2R. 379

Stewart, Mr. M. J., *Kirkcudbright*
Army (Auxiliary Forces) — Volunteer Artillery, 1564
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), 2R. 199
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Inland Revenue—Dog Licences, 442
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Stratheden and Campbell, Lord
Metropolis, Disturbances in the, Res. 741, 761
New Public Offices—National Portrait Gallery, 604

Stuart, Mr. J., *Shoreditch, Hoxton*
Law and Police—Cost of the Police Force, 18
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Metropolitan Board of Works (Water Supply, &c.), 2R. 88

Sudeley, Lord
National Gallery—Hours of Opening, Address for a Paper, 231
National Museums—Evening Opening, Motion for an Address, 614

Sullivan, Mr. D., *Westmeath, S.*
Ireland—Landlord and Tenant—Loan for Building—Case of John M'Namara, Brawney, Co. Westmeath, 472

Sunday (Opening of Museums, &c.)
Moved to resolve "That whereas for many years past Parliament has voted, without comment or protest, funds to provide for the Sunday opening of Hampton Court Picture Galleries, Kew Gardens, the Painted Hall of Greenwich Hospital, and the Dublin National Gallery; that whereas a majority of the Trustees of both the British Museum and of the National Gallery have expressed a desire to open those institutions on Sunday afternoons; that whereas for many years

[*cont.*

Sunday (*Opening of Museums, &c.*)—cont.
museums, libraries, and art galleries have been opened free to the people on Sundays in many large provincial towns, with results of a highly satisfactory character; and further, seeing that no legislative impediment is offered to the Sunday opening of the Zoological Gardens in London to the wealthy classes of society, notwithstanding the much larger proportion of Sunday labour thereby involved as compared with a Government art collection; that, for the above reasons, this House is therefore of opinion that the time has now come when the principle already conceded should, in the interests of religion and education, be extended to the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis" (*The Lord Thurlow*) *Mar* 19, 1326
Amendt. to leave out all after ("That,") insert ("it is not desirable to open the national collections of art and literature in the Metropolis on Sunday" (*The Viscount Midleton*); after debate, on Question, "That the words, &c.;" Cont. 78, Not-Cont. 62; M. 16; resolved in the affirmative
Div. List, Cont. and Not-Cont. 1348
Original Motion agreed to

Sunday (*Opening of Museums, &c.*)
Moved to resolve, "That it would be expedient that museums should be opened by daylight only, and should be closed during the time of afternoon Divine Service, on Sundays" (*The Lord Denman*) *Mar* 25, 1774; on Question, resolved in the negative
[See title *National Museums*]

SUPPLY
Class I., Vote 3, Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, Questions, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt), The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 15, 791
The Spending Departments of the State, Question, Mr. Rylands; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 15, 820
The Army Estimates, Questions, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 15, 824

SUPPLY
Considered in Committee *Mar* 11, 479 — CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS—Votes 1 to 15
Resolutions reported *Mar* 12, 741
Third Resolution postponed
Postponed Resolution considered *Mar* 18, 1308
(3.) £62,216, Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens
Resolved, That the Postponed Resolution reported from the Committee of Supply on the 11th March be re-committed to the said Committee
Resolved, That this House will immediately resolve itself into the Committee of Supply

[*cont.*

SUPPLY—*cont.*
Supply again considered in Committee
Moved, "That, in addition to the sum of £62,216 already granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, for the Royal Parks and Pleasure Gardens, the sum of £50,403, be granted, making together the sum of £112,619," 1308
Moved, "That, in addition to the sum of £62,216 already granted to Her Majesty, &c., the reduced sum of £48,253, be granted, making together the sum of £110,469" (*Mr. Labouchere*); after short debate, Question put; A. 65, N. 141; M. 76 (D. L. 37)
Original Question put, and agreed to
Resolution reported *Mar* 19
Considered in Committee *Mar* 15, 905—NAVY ESTIMATES
(1.) 61,400 Men and Boys, after short debate, Vote agreed to
Resolution reported *Mar* 16
Considered in Committee *Mar* 18 — NAVY ESTIMATES—Departmental Statement
(1.) £2,902,900, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines; after long debate, Vote agreed to, 1184
(2.) £964,400, Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines; after short debate, Vote agreed to, 1285
(3.) £3,403,400, Vote on Account, Civil Services and Revenue Departments; after debate, Vote agreed to, 1286
(4.) £595 12*s.* 1*d.*, Civil Service Excesses, 1307
Resolutions reported *Mar* 19, 1447
Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolutions;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Considered in Committee *Mar* 22 — ARMY ESTIMATES—Departmental Statement
(1.) 151,867 Men, Land Forces at Home and Abroad; after short debate, Vote agreed to, 1588
(2.) £4,457,300, Pay and Allowances
Resolutions reported *Mar* 23
Considered in Committee *Mar* 25, 1809—ARMY ESTIMATES, Vote 11, 1809
Committee R.P.

SWINBURNE, Sir J., *Staffordshire, Lichfield*
Drowned Persons (Discovery and Interment), 2R. 1773

TALBOT, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Marriages (Hours of Solemnization), 2R. 1454
Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment, 2R. 1742

TANNER, Dr. C., *Cork Co., Mid*
Harbours of Refuge, Res. 688
Ireland—Questions
Arms' Licences—Case of John Dunseath, 298
Royal Irish Constabulary—Alleged Assault on Mr. Patrick Corkery, 817;—Employment as Caretakers at Inniscarra, Co. Cork, 817, 818
Navy—Roche's Point Coastguard Station, 1804
Supply—Houses of Parliament, 528

Tenure Removal (Scotland) Bill
Question, Mr. J. W. Barclay; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 1162

THOMAS, Mr. A., *Glamorgan, E.*
Law and Justice—Imprisonment for Contempt of Court, 8

THOMPSON, Sir H. M. MEYSEY-, *Lincolnshire, Brigg*
Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 251
Parliamentary Elections—Polling Arrangements, 476

THURLOW, Lord
Female Inspectors of Workshops, 5
Metropolis, Disturbances in the, Res. 749
Sunday (Opening of Museums, &c.), Res. 1326

TIPPING, Mr. W., *Stockport*
Manchester Ship Canal, 2R. 282, 283

Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment Bill (*Mr. Brookfield, Mr. Farquharson*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate, and committed to the Select Committee on the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill *Mar* 24, 1742 [Bill 65]

Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill (*Mr. Norton, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr. Pomfret*)
c. Read 2°, after debate, and committed to a Select Committee *Mar* 24, 1728 [Bill 61]

Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Redemption Bill (*Mr. Thomas Bolton, Mr. Thorold Rogers, Mr. Borlase, Sir John Lubbock*) [Bill 63]
c. Read 2°, and committed to the Select Committee on the Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment Bill *Mar* 24, 1769

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
Employers' Liability Act (1880) Amendment (No. 2), 2R. 599
Italy, Commercial Treaty with — Italian Shipping Bounties Act, 1640, 1641
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 2, Motion for reporting Progress, 735, 738
Literature, Science, and Art—Sculptures at the British Museum, 462, 463
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Supply—Public Buildings, Great Britain, 534
Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment, 2R. 1749
Trade and Commerce—British Commercial Interests Abroad, 446
Commercial Intercourse with Spain and the United States, 461

TOTTENHAM, Mr. A. L., *Winchester*
Army—Soldier's Ration, 1577
Army Estimates—Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies, 1809

Town Holdings
Select Committee nominated *Mar* 18; List of the Committee, 1325
Local Taxation — Taxation of Railway Stocks, Question, Mr. Milnes-Gaskell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 19, 1367

Trade and Commerce
Annual Reports from the Colonies, Question, Mr. Hutton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) *Mar* 25, 1803
British Commercial Interests Abroad—Diplomatic and Consular Representatives, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 8, 97;—*Instructions to H.M. Agents*, Questions, Sir Julian Goldsmid, Mr. Tomlinson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 11, 446; Question, Lord William Compton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 25, 1801; Question, Mr. Hutton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 25, 1806
Commercial Intercourse with Spain and the United States, Question, Mr. Tomlinson: Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 11, 461
External Trade of the Country — A Select Committee, Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) *Mar* 15, 822
Foreign Bounties on Exports, Questions, Mr. Kimber, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 9, 300
Foreign Bounties on Sugar Production — Retaliatory Duties, Questions, Mr. Kimber, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 25, 1800
Hall-Marking of Foreign Manufactured Gold and Silver Watch Cases, Questions, Mr. Forwood; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 18, 1175; *Mar* 25, 1799
The Trade in Fish, Questions, Sir Henry Tyler, Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 12, 631
[See title *Depression of Trade and Commerce*]

Trade, Depression of—Overtime in Government Factories
Questions, Mr. Howell, Viscount Curzon; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Hibbert) *Mar* 12, 641

Trade Statistics
Question, Sir Julian Goldsmid; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 11, 443
Trade of Ireland with England and with Foreign Countries, Question, Mr. Baden-Powell; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Mundella) *Mar* 5, 10

TREASURY—First Lord (*see* GLADSTONE, Right Hon. W. E.)

TREASURY—Lord of (*see* GOWER, Mr. G. G. L.)

TREASURY—Lord of (*see* REED, Sir E. J.)

TREASURY — Financial Secretary to (*see* FOWLER, Mr. Henry H.)

Trees (Ireland) Bill (*Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Timothy Harrington, Mr. Marum, Mr. Pyne, Mr. O'Hanlon*)
c. Read 2°, after debate *Mar* 5, 88 [Bill 30]
Committee*—R.P. *Mar* 8
Committee*; Report *Mar* 11
Considered *Mar* 18, 1324; Bill re-committed in respect of New Clause; Committee; Report; Considered
Read 3°* *Mar* 19
l. Read 1ª* (*Lord President*) *Mar* 22 (No. 42)

TREVELYAN, Rt. Hon. G. O. (Secretary for Scotland, &c.), *Hawick, &c.*
Church of Scotland, 2R. 1116, 1123, 1125
Crofters (Scotland) (No. 2), 2R. 201, 202, 207, 208, 213, 826, 1184
Scotland—Questions
  Administration of Justice—The Highlands and Islands, 968
  Educational Endowments Act, 1882—Miss Lucy Campbell's Bequest, 108
  Eviction of Crofters—Return of Cases, 805
  Fisheries—Registration of Fishing Boats, 1163
  Highlands and Islands—Distress in the Hebrides, 1631
  Literature, Science, and Art—Sir David Baxter's Bequest to Dundee, 1162
  Police — Dismissal of James Martin, Police Constable, Aberdeen, 1367
  Prisons—Barlinine Prison, 629
  Public Health—Small-Pox at Woodside, 969
  University of St. Andrew's—Appointment of Dr. Donaldson, 1496
Scotland—Education Department—Questions
  Code for 1886, 300, 1363
  Gaelic in Elementary Schools, 814
  School Grants in the Highlands, 1475
  Voluntary Schools, 11

Truck Acts, The — Infringement in South Wales
Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers) *Mar* 11, 435

TUITE, Mr. J., *Westmeath, N.*
Ireland — Labourers Acts, 1883 and 1885 — Appeals to Privy Council against Schemes, 454
Labourers' (Ireland) Act Amendment, Comm. *add. cl.* 1445

TYLER, Sir H. W., *Great Yarmouth*
Army—Questions
  Enfield Small Arms Factory — Discharge of Workmen, 14, 15
  Government Contracts, 453
  War Department — Government Contracts Abroad, 809
Felixstowe Railway and Dock, 2R. 431, 432
Fishing Industries (England and Wales)—Institution of a Fishery Board, 61
London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway 2R. 965
Metropolis—Public Meetings, 16
Trade and Commerce—The Trade in Fish, 631

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill (*Mr. John Morley, Mr. Henry H. Fowler*)
c. Question, Mr. Johnston; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 12, 642
Adjourned Debate on Motion for Leave [March 1] resumed *Mar* 15, 922; Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 141]

Union of Benefices Bill [H.L.] (No. 20) (*The Earl of Milltown*)
l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *Mar* 23, 1601
Amendt. to leave out ("now,") add ("this day six months") (*The Lord Bishop of London*); after short debate, on Question, That ("now,") &c.; resolved in the negative
Bill to be read 2ª this day six months

Vaccination
Fatal Results at Ryde (Isle of Wight), Question, Mr. Picton; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 8, 109
The Island of Rügen, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Bryce) *Mar* 25, 1802
Vaccination Act—Repeal of the Compulsory Clauses, Question, Mr. Thomas Robinson; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 18, 1178

Vancouver and Japan, Steamships between—The Inter-Departmental Committee
Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Osborne Morgan) *Mar* 9, 304

VERNEY, Captain E. H., *Bucks, N., Buckingham*
Merchant Shipping — Crimping in American Ports, 816

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Verney, Captain E. H.—*cont.*
- Navy Estimates — Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines, 1252
- Parliament — New Rules of Procedure—(Rule 2, Adjournment of the House)—Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedure—Constitution of the Committee, 827
- Parliament — Representative Government, Res. 49
- Supply—Public Buildings, Great Britain, 531

Vestries, Right to Vote at — Parochial Government
- Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. J. Chamberlain) *Mar* 15, 818

Vincent, Mr. C. E. H., *Sheffield, Central*
- Army— Rifle Ranges—Wormwood Scrubbs, 294
- Army (Auxiliary Forces) — The Volunteer Force—Vacancies for Subalterns, 1363
- Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Volunteer Capitation Grant, Res. 1506, 1524
- British Commercial Interests Abroad—Diplomatic and Consular Representatives, 97
- British Museum—Dismissal of William Brightwell, 473
- Certified Industrial Schools and Voluntary Training Homes — Assisted Emigration of Children, 1354
- Imperial Federation — Conference during the Colonial Exhibition, 1500
- Westminster Hall (Restoration), 1155

Wales—Intermediate Education—Legislation
- Question, Mr. Kenyon; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 11, 463; Question, Mr. Yeo; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir Lyon Playfair) *Mar* 23, 1632

Wales—Church of England in Wales
- Moved, "That, as the Church of England in Wales has failed to fulfil its professed object as a means of promoting the religious interests of the Welsh people, and ministers to only a small minority of the population, its continuance as an Established Church in the Principality is an anomaly and an injustice which ought no longer to exist" (*Mr. Dillwyn*) *Mar* 9, 305
- Amendt., To leave out all after "population," in line 4, insert "this House is of opinion that the time has arrived for introducing, without delay, into its organisation such reforms as will enable it to adapt itself more efficiently to the religious needs and wishes of the Welsh people" (*Mr. Albert Grey*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 229, N. 241; M. 12; Div. List, Ayes and Noes, 358; Question proposed, "That those words be there added," 361; after short debate, Question put; A. 251, N. 152; M. 99 (D. L. 25)
- Main Question, as amended, proposed, 366; after short debate, main Question put; A. 49, N. 346; M. 297 (D. L. 26)

War Department—Secretary of State (*see* Campbell-Bannerman, Right Hon. H.)

War Department—Under Secretary of State (*see* Sandhurst, Lord)

War Department—Financial Secretary to (*see* Gladstone, Mr. H. J.)

Waring, Colonel T., *Down, N.*
- Army (Auxiliary Forces)—Non-Commissioned Officers of Militia Staffs, 814
- Defences of the Empire—Defence of Coaling Stations, 1561
- Ireland — Registration of Voters Act — Payment of Clerks of Unions, 437
- Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 1, 734; *cl.* 3, 919; Consid. *add. cl.* 1931

Warmington, Mr. C. M., *Monmouth, W.*
- Crown Duties, Res. 1385

WAYS AND MEANS

Excise
- *Home-grown Tobacco*, Questions, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Pyne; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 8, 114

Inland Revenue
- *Customs Department (Ireland) — Confiscated Snuff and Tobacco*, Question, Mr. Dwyer Gray; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 15, 798
- *Dog Licences—Drovers' &c. Dogs*, Question, Mr. Mark Stewart; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 11, 442
  - *Exemption of Life-Saving Dogs*, Question, Mr. Mildmay; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 19, 1370
- *Income Tax, Collection of*, Questions, Mr. Dwyer Gray; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 15, 802;—*Exemptions*, Question, Mr. Round; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 16, 967; — *Assessment*, Question, Mr. Agg-Gardner; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 16, 978
- *Licence Duty on Public-Houses*, Question, Mr. M'Laren; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir William Harcourt) *Mar* 18, 1168
- *Stamps—Newspaper Stamps*, Question, Mr. Dwyer Gray; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) *Mar* 15, 798
- *The Land Tax Commission*, Question, Mr. Francis Powell; Answer, A Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Leveson Gower) *Mar* 22, 1494

WAYS AND MEANS
- Considered in Committee *Mar* 16, 1057
- Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the ser-

[*cont.*

Ways and Means—*cont.*
vice of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, the sum of £544,772 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
Resolution reported *Mar* 17
[See *Consolidated Fund* (*No.* 1) *Bill*]
Considered in Committee *Mar* 18, 1325
(1.) Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ended on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £38,715 2*s.* 1*d.* be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
(2.) Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £8,256,018 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
Resolutions reported *Mar* 19
[See *Consolidated Fund* (*No.* 2) *Bill*]
Considered in Committee *Mar* 22, 1600
Resolved, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £4,457,300 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom
Resolution reported, and agreed to *Mar* 23, 1727
Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill, That they have power to make provision therein, pursuant to the said Resolution

Webster, Sir R. E., *Isle of Wight*
Crown Duties, Res. 1381
Ground Rents, Res. 1038
Metropolitan Board of Works—Water Supply, 87
Railway and Canal Traffic, Motion for Leave, 576
Tithe Rent-Charge Amendment, 2R. 1747
Tithe Rent-Charge (Extraordinary) Amendment, 2R. 1741

Wemyss, Earl of
New Public Offices — National Portrait Gallery, 601

West, Colonel W. C., *Denbigh, W.*
Poor Law (England and Wales) — Salaries of Poor Law Officials, 635

Westlake, Mr. J., *Essex, Romford*
Labourers (Ireland) Acts Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 12, Amendt. 1435

Williams, Mr. A. J., *Glamorgan, S.*
Law and Justice—Cardiff County Court—Welsh Witnesses, 1777

Williams, Mr. J. C., *Nottingham, S.*
Charity Commissioners—The Parochial Charities of the City of London, 110
Compensation for Damages, Comm. 1321
Marriages (Hours of Solemnization), 2R. 1448; Comm. *cl.* 1, 1726
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